



## Tuesday Night Tips

### The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

If you have joined our F2F session on Tuesday night, you probably already know the host Martin Clear. He is a big fan of the evening game because of his daytime job, and has been leading the group for bridge discussion after the session. This “discussion” will now continue online - Each week Martin will play in the field and pick an interesting hand from the Tuesday night BBO session. Join your bridge buddy for a game on Tuesday night (7.15pm start)!

### Make a Plan

#67992 BBO – Tuesday Night 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021

<b>3</b> D		<b>N</b> ♠ J1065 ♥ AJ1032 ♦ Q765 ♣	<b>W N E S</b> P 1♥ X 1♦ 3♠ 4♥ P 3♥ P P P
<b>W</b> ♠ 9732 ♥ 76 ♦ J10 ♣ A8763		<b>E</b> ♠ AKQ8 ♥ 85 ♦ 942 ♣ K542	
	<b>S</b> ♠ 4 ♥ KQ94 ♦ AK83 ♣ QJ109		4♥ N NS: 0 EW: 0

One of the important differences between Pairs bridge play and other forms of bridge play is that in Pairs it is not good enough to be satisfied with a plan that will make the contract. All those other declarers out there will have their score compared to yours, and if they are making an overtrick that you are not making, you lose that matchpoint just as surely as if you had failed to make the contract.

This applies especially to making a plan. As soon as dummy goes face-up on the table, you should make a plan as declarer. In IMPs and rubber bridge, the purpose of the plan is simple: the plan should be the one that is as certain as possible of making the contract. This especially applies to a game-level contract or a slam-level contract as the scoring difference between making and not making a game-level contract is at least 15 times the value of an overtrick (and a slam is 30 to 50 times the value of an overtrick!). Your plan might change during the play as various things go right or wrong, but the central intent of the plan - make the contract - never changes. Only when the contract is certain can you try to make an extended plan for an overtrick.

However in Pairs, your plan has to be flexible right from the start. You intend to make the contract, but if there is a line that makes an overtrick most of the time, you have to be prepared to take that line even if it includes some risk of not making the contract at all. Imagine you were in 4S with a trump suit of Axxx opposite xxx and your other cards were all winners apart from the suit which was led by the defenders, in which you had a singleton Ace opposite dummy's two rags. In Pairs, you can cash the trump Ace and play another, making 11 whenever the spades break 3-2 (68% chance). If you are sure that conceding the lead won't allow the opponents to ruff something, you could play a little more safely by losing the first trump trick, getting the lead back and THEN playing the trump Ace. This prevents the tragic problem with the Ace-and-another strategy of finding the suit breaking 4-1 (28% chance) where the defenders can draw all your trumps and then enjoy as many tricks as they like in the suit you are short in. But at IMPs or rubber bridge, the bridge-book-recommended strategy is to play the trump Ace, and then abandon trumps forever, playing your side winners. The opponents can make their three remaining trumps whenever they like, but your 10 tricks - and your contract - are guaranteed. Try this safe line in Pairs, however, and at least 68% of the time, you will get an inferior score to other declarers.

Occasionally in Pairs, when things go wrong, you even have to give up on an extreme hope of making the contract in order to play a line that ensures you only go one off instead of the two off that is more likely if you try for the contract, a practice you would never attempt in IMPs.

The other thing about the plan you make in Pairs is that you always have to be prepared to change your plan to try to make an extra trick when that seems possible ... or indeed several extra tricks. On Board 30 of the Sydney Bridge Centre & Friends competition on BBO on Tuesday Night 28th September, all tables bid to 4♥, and when the dummy came down after the ♠A lead, the declarers saw they were unlikely to have any problems making the contract.

Three, probably four, diamond tricks and plenty of others in the cross-ruff. If the hearts break 2-2, you can draw

trumps and make five more in the cross-ruff of the black suits. This makes 11 tricks, and this is how many players played the hand. However there is a better plan - one that can make 12 tricks most of the time, without undue chance of getting less than 11.

That plan is to ruff all four spades in the dummy, re-entering the closed hand with  $\spadesuit Q$  and a trump and only then with club ruffs. This means winning Trick 2 in hand with the  $\spadesuit Q$ . The line then goes spade ruff with  $\heartsuit K$  (not the 4, as you need a card to enter the closed hand anyway, so you might as well ruff with high cards), 4 to  $\heartsuit A$ , spade ruff with  $\heartsuit Q$ , ruff a club with  $\heartsuit 2$ , spade ruff with  $\heartsuit 9$ , ruff a club with  $\heartsuit 3$ , draw trumps with the  $\heartsuit J$  and  $\heartsuit 10$ . This caters for the trumps being 3-1, only plays one round of diamonds and two of clubs, and never risks an over-ruff in spades. It makes 12 tricks when the diamonds break (or when East has 4 diamonds and whatever remains of the  $\clubsuit A$  and  $\clubsuit K$ ).

12 tricks was worth 90%, largely by making a plan to take 12 tricks instead of just making a plan to make the contract. Most declarers drew trumps in two rounds, and then cross-ruffed the other 5 trumps to go with the 4 diamonds for 11. The only other declarer to make 12 tricks also took that line, but a defender failed to solve a quiz toward the end: holding KQ8 in spades and K54 in clubs, he had to discard on the last diamond winner. Dummy had JT9 in clubs and two trumps (West had covered the  $\clubsuit Q$  with the  $\clubsuit A$  on the first lead of the suit), and declarer was known to have two trumps and three spades. Which suit do you make sure to hold three cards in? The answer is the one that is held by the hand on lead. The  $\spadesuit 8$  in dummy was higher than the  $\spadesuit 7$  played from the closed hand, but East discarded a club, and club ruff, spade ruff, club ruff, spade ruff allowed the final club to be good. If a spade had been discarded, declarer can set up a spade winner but never cash it. It would have been more interesting if West had been faced with this situation, because discarding ahead of the declarer's card from the closed hand, his correct discard would have depended on remembering whether the  $\spadesuit 8$  was higher than the last diamond in the closed hand!

And for those who always ask, "How should we have bid to the slam?" whenever 12 tricks are taken, it should be noted that an opening trump lead and another trump lead when the defenders get in with a spade, holds declarer to 11 tricks.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

## The greatest learning experience – The Online Teams of Three



A fun event for players to learn directly from an advanced player in a relaxed environment. We invited these advanced players based on the recommendation of the NSWBA Event Committee to play Captains, who will take turn to partner with each team member throughout the day. You are not only learning from the Captain of your own team, you will also learn from other Captains when they are your opponents!

The [NSWBA Online Teams of Three](#) will be held on RealBridge, an online bridge program with built-in video support, so your Captain can give you "face-to-face" feedback.

**RED masterpoints awarded.** \$30 per player to be paid in advance via our online payment portal. We intend to run 3 separate fields for Novice, Restricted and Open players, so we can assign the most appropriate Captain to your categories. Please nominate the field you would like to compete in.

[Enter in advance](#) required on the NSWBA website. There will definitely be 3 separate fields for Novice, Restricted and Open players, so you can compete in your own league. Please nominate the field you would like to compete in.

## The Sydney Bridge Centre online sessions on BBO

Our clubroom on Goulburn Street is temporary closed under the current restriction. We are running regular club session online on BBO for the moment and will resume our F2F sessions once we can. Please keep an eye on our [website](#) for the latest announcement.

### For BBO sessions:

All are welcome. No need to book. Please find us on BBO / Featured Areas / Virtual Clubs / ABF-Australia. Tournament title "Sydney Bridge Centre & Friends". Tournament will open only 2 hours before the game starts.

24 boards, BB\$4 per person per game.