



Trumps Update

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Showing them up

by Derrick Browne

Holding the cards below, you open 1NT, which partner raises to 5NT. This is an unusual call; what are you supposed to do?

SOUTH

♠ K J 10 9
♥ Q 10 8
♦ K Q 10 9
♣ A Q

The raise of your notrump bid to 5NT invites you to grand slam. With a minimum, you would sign off in 6NT, but here with 17 HCP plus excellent intermediates (all those juicy tens and nines), you accept the invitation by bidding 7NT.

The ♣10 is led and this is what you see:

NORTH

♠ A 5 4
♥ A K J
♦ A J
♣ K 5 4 3 2

□

SOUTH

♠ K J 10 9
♥ Q 10 8
♦ K Q 10 9
♣ A Q

Counting your winners you see you have two top spades, three hearts, four diamonds and three clubs, a total of 12 top tricks. If the opposition clubs are split 3-3 (a 36% chance) then that will see your contract home, as would a successful spade finesse (50% chance). Which should you try first?

You want to combine both chances, so test the clubs first, knowing you can always fall back on the spades later (whereas an immediate spade finesse would, if it lost, see you defeated immediately).

Accordingly, you unblock the A-Q of clubs, then cross to dummy with the ♦A, and cash the ♣K, throwing a spade. East, however, shows out.

You shift your attention to spades. Because you have both the jack and ten of spades, there are two possible ways to finesse. If you think West has the ♠Q, you could lead the ♠J (or ♠10) from hand and run it, whereas if East has the ♠Q you would lead a spade from dummy, finessing towards your honours.

The expert approach in such situations is to cash the winners in the other suits to try to find out more about the hand. Doing this – and keeping track of the data – requires a cool head with good concentration. You play the three heart winners and observe that West discards a spade on the third round. As you cash the diamond winners, you arrive at this situation:

NORTH

♠ A 5 4
♥ —
♦ —
♣ 5


SOUTH

♠ K J 10
♥ —
♦ 10
♣ —

On the first three rounds of diamonds, both opponents followed, but when you lead you ♦10, West discards a spade. What do you know about the hand?

In fact, you have a complete count of the opponents' distribution. East followed suit to only two rounds of clubs, so West started with four cards there, while West followed only twice to hearts and three times to diamonds. West must have started with four spades, to make up the 13 cards. That means East started with only two spades. A rudimentary understanding of probability will tell you that the odds are 4:2 (or twice as likely) that West rather than East started with the ♠Q.

Thus we have given even better odds of making this contract, by knowing which way to finesse for maximum odds of success. Can we do even better? Yes – a bridge player's favourite odds, 100%. In hanging on to the boss club (to stop dummy's clubs being winners), West has been compelled to throw two spades. That means West has only two spades left, and as East started with only two spades, there is no need for any finesse at all – the ♠Q is sure to fall.

If you want to impress the opponents you can claim, stating that you will play the spades from the top and that the queen will fall. If they are puzzled as to how you knew, explain that you are psychic and tell them that for a modest charge you will read their palms after the bridge session.

NORTH

♠ A 5 4
♥ AKJ
♦ AJ
♣ K 5 4 3 2

WEST

♠ Q 6 3 2
♥ 7 6
♦ 8 6 4
♣ 10 9 8 7

EAST

♠ 8 7
♥ 9 5 4 3 2
♦ 7 5 3 2
♣ J 6

SOUTH

♠ K J 10 9
♥ Q 10 8
♦ K Q 10 9
♣ A Q

Bidding Forum moderated by Alex Kemeny

You are South with the hand shown. Choose a call then compare with the experts. On our panel, Derrick Browne and leading world bridge authority Ron Klinger are joined by Phil Markey who will represent Australia at the Bermuda Bowl in Denmark this month, Nick Fahrer from The Bridge Shop, 2024 Australian Bridge bidding forum top scorer Alexander Cook, and NSW rep. players Nick Hughes and Nicoleta Giura.

Dealer East, Both Vulnerable, Pairs Scoring

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	Pass
1♠	Dbl	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	3♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	?

♠ —
♥ J 7
♦ J 10 9 6 3
♣ J 6 5 4 3 2

Votes by our panellists	
CALL	VOTES
4NT	4
4♠	1
3NT	1
Pass	1

We have a hand with hardly any high cards, but partner won't stop doubling.

Klinger: 4NT. Minors. Only 8 losers. If this is wrong, opener will not be doubling 3S next time. However, if our systemic agreement is that the third double is penalty, I will trust partner and pass.

Yes, that is the usual agreement. Unless the level is very high, most pairs play that the first two doubles are for takeout, The second takeout double shows that the hand has extra values; at least a trick better than a minimum opening. With this in mind:

Cook: Pass. Partner should have enough to beat 3♠ on strength and there's no guarantee that we will make a plus score if I choose to bid.

As the third double is primarily for penalty, Alexander Cook has respected partner's decision. However, a lot of the panel chose to bid. Let's hear their reasons why:

Fahrer: 3NT. For the minors. If I had a hand that could bid 3NT naturally (as an offer to play) then I would score more by passing 3♠X. *Presumably planning to pass 4 of either minor from partner.*

Browne: 4NT. An interesting, unusual and somewhat amusing situation. If partner has four aces and a normal sort of shape, we are in with a chance of making 5-minor, and partner should have more strength than that, so I think I will try 4NT for minors. But I also think that after showing weakness by passing over 2♠, I would have bid 4♣ over the 3♠ bid on the prior round.

Markey: 4NT. Assuming we can only make 10 tricks is a bit too pessimistic, so just ask partner to choose their better minor.

Hughes: 4NT. Might be too high but at least we will find our fit. With 6-5 round the other way, 4♠ would be better, allowing partner to bid 4NT with equal length, and then I could choose 5♣.

Giura: 4♠. Pick a minor. Not many points but great shape, so 5minor may well make.

World class expert and author Marty Bergen wrote a book entitled "Points, Schmoints!". The book showed that hands with great shape can make contracts even with minimal high card points.

On the actual hand, which arose in a Trumps session, partner held ♠QJ9♥AK82♦K82♣AQ8. Both opponents held 5 spades but East raised spades only cautiously due to the vulnerability and a poor 5332 shape hand with ♠K and ♦Q as their only high cards. Our side can make 11 tricks in either minor, losing just two diamond tricks. EW can make 8 tricks in a spade contract.



Lessons & events

Beginner Lessons

October 2025 (Tba)

Intermediate training

10.30am Mondays

Improvers' play

10am Wednesdays

Improvers' training

10.30am Wednesdays

Beginner card play

2pm Thursdays

Improver lessons

7pm Thursdays

Intermediate/open Training

10am Fridays



Red (or gold) points

Usually held 1.20 for 1.30pm Fridays, and some other days.

Also, some other times e.g. 7pm some Fridays and Sunday teams and Festival (per schedule)

State Open Teams (Butler Pairs)

1.20 for 1.30pm Fridays to 12 Sep

Australia-wide Pairs

7 for 7.20pm Tuesday 26 August

State Open Pairs (Trumps Day)

1.20 for 1.30pm Fridays 19 &26 Sep

State Open Pairs (Trumps night)

7 for 7.20pm Fridays 19 &26 Sep

Spring Teams 10am Sun 28 Sep

State Open Pairs (SB)

1.20 for 1.30pm Fridays 3 - 24 Oct

(see page 7 for regular session schedule)

Pianola

♥ Partner Finder ♥

Looking for a bridge partner?

Try the Partner Finder feature in Pianola. Contact us if you need help.

♣ Month winners ♣

To work this out, we take the best three scores by member pairs from the 4 or 5 matchpoint sessions that make up each monthly event. (**Seven pairs** need to have played three or more times for meaningful results)

Ryde Eastwood Monday afternoon

- Martin Stone & Sharon Lovelock (June)
- Martin Stone & Sharon Lovelock (July)

Monday afternoon

- Glenys Beaumont & Kaye Swanson (June)
- Wendy Bagot & Elaine Pickles (Jul)

Manly Club Tuesday morning

- Judy O'Malley & Patricia Turner (June)
- Judy O'Malley & Patricia Turner (July)

Tuesday morning

- James Taylor & Warwick Birch (Jun)
- Faye McIntosh & Elizabeth Price (Jul)

Tuesday afternoon

- Stef Savanah & Darryl West (Jun)
- Anthony Smuts & Heather Olsen (Jul)

Tuesday night

- Martin Curtis & Martyn Simmons (Jul)

Wednesday afternoon

- Eric Lippey & Kerry Boytell (Jun)
- Eric Lippey & Kerry Boytell (Jul)

Wednesday night

- Heather Parker & Gordon Parker (Jun)
- Heather Parker & Gordon Parker (Jul)

Thursday morning

- Kitty Biro & Kerry Boytell (Jun)
- Kitty Biro & Kerry Boytell (Jun)

Thursday afternoon

- Catherine Turner & Yvonne Bartels (Jun)
- Tony Franklin & Virstine Yazdanparast (Jul)

Warringah bowling Thursday afternoon

- Bob Clayton & Mary Sifis (Jun)
- Bob Clayton & Mary Sifis (Jul)

Saturday afternoon

- Susan Salvage & Barbara Lane (Jun)
- Timothy Bestelink & Jillian Raymond (Jul)

Bridge at other venues:

Beside our regular games at Trumps (58 Spit Rd) we also run weekly games at following venues:

Bridge @ Ryde-Eastwood

12:30 for 12:45pm Mondays

**Social duplicate @ RAC,
Circular Quay**

10.30am Tuesdays

Bridge @ The Manly Club

1pm Tuesdays (*bookings required*)

Bridge @ Warringah bowling

1pm Thursdays (*bookings required*)

Balmoral (members only)

Trumps fill-in players

WhatsApp group



Scan or upload this QR code using the WhatsApp camera to join this group

**BRIDGE HOLIDAY
Canberra Mercure**


Sun 14 Sep to Wed 17 Sep
\$819 twin share or \$1039 single

♣ Most improved Rating ♣

		Old	New	Gain
1	Elizabeth Price	44.84	46.34	1.50
2	Faye McIntosh	47.66	49.01	1.35
3	Angela Sandford	50.01	50.91	0.90
4	Therese Finn	46.31	47.21	0.90
5	Roslyn Smith	47.14	48.03	0.89
6	Clive Todd	42.97	43.80	0.83
7	Margaret McCann	51.36	52.18	0.82
8	Mel Stray	43.25	44.04	0.79
9	Susan Salvage	52.50	53.29	0.79
10	Timothy Bestelink	60.39	61.18	0.79

♣ Top Rated ♣

		Rating
1	Kerry Boytell	64.85
2	Eric Lippey	64.24
3	Kevin Murray	61.43
4	Simon Moore	61.40
5	Timothy Bestelink	61.18
6	Barbara Gassmann	61.02
7	Trish Armstrong	60.78
8	Kim Dalling	60.50
9	Tony Franklin	60.45
10	Noreen Armstrong	60.39

(Members with ABF number who have played 13 times in the last six months are rated).



♣ ABF masterpoint promotions ♣

John Rendle	State
Richard Samuels	Bronze <i>Regional</i>
Wendy Bagot	<i>Regional</i>
Elaine Healey	Silver Local
Leif Rasmussen	Silver Local
David Hutchinson	Bronze Local
Debbie McWilliams	Local
Bryanna Whitaker	Club
Elizabeth Price	Club
Jennifer Heath	Club
Marie Amestoy	Club
Rebecca Higgs	Club
Louise Baker	Graduate

Congratulations!

What to bid?

Choose your call then compare with the experts (published in the next edition).
Standard bidding and Pairs scoring.

Dealer West, NS Vulnerable, Pairs Scoring

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	?

♠ K J 10 9 8
♥ K
♦ K J 8
♣ 7 5 4 2

Timetable

Open Duplicates

	Morning	Afternoon	Night
Mon	join training	1.20* (some sup players)	
Tues	join other game	1.20*	7pm*
Wed		1.15*	7pm*
Thurs	9.50*	1.20*	
Fri		1.20*	7pm*
Sat		1.30	

*These games start with a short talk.

Red/gold points usually 1.20pm & 7pm Fridays.

Supervised

Mon	9.30/10.30 lessons	1.20*	7pm*
Tues	9.50*		
Wed	10,10.30am (lessons)	see p5 lessons	
Thurs		2pm*	7pm*
Fri	10am (lessons)	see p5 lessons	
Sat	10am*		

*Supervised games start with a talk.

(Check bridge at other venues on the previous page)

Benefits

Of Trumps membership

- A regular update of news, views and tips
- Save \$3 on duplicate sessions at and lessons at Trumps
- Discount on prepaid game vouchers.
- Reciprocal membership rights at Warringah Bowls Mosman Bridge Group, Bridge @ The Manly Club & Social Bridge (Ryde-Eastwood).
- Special events for members
- We pay your ABF and NSWBA fees if we are your home club.
- Eligibility for the ABF's travel insurance. See abfinsurance.com.au or call (07) 3252 5254

Rights and duties

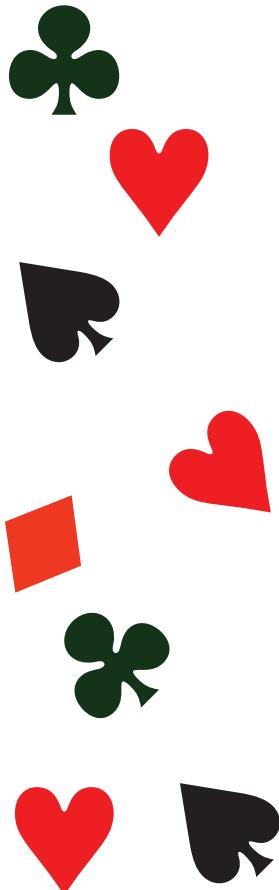
- We cater for players of all levels
- Use the suggestion box in the main foyer
- Greet your opponents
- Let us know if you are available as a "fill-in" player, to be called in at the last moment (as our guest) if we are short
- Post mortems should never hold up play
- Support those who support bridge! *Australian Bridge* magazine (also in club edition), The Manly Club, Trans Restaurant, Hotel Mosman, Lok Lok Dumpling Bar, Fourth Village, and Baytree Greenwich.



♠ ♥ Happy Trumpling! ♦ ♣

Develop your Bridge Skill

Main teacher Derrick Browne



Weekly schedule

- **10am Mondays**
- **10am Wednesdays**
- **10.30am Wednesdays (easier)**
- **2pm Thursdays (easier)**
- **7pm Thursdays**
- **10am Fridays**



Walk in welcome | All levels welcome

- Learn with set hands
- Improve bidding
- Sharpen play
- Master defence

\$17 (\$14 members)



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