

MORRINSVILLE BRIDGE CLUB - CARD PLAY 101

A series of elementary card play tuition sessions at Morrinsville

May 30 Topic:

Declarer Play – With a Trump Suit



**Having a trump suit gives you many more options
But you need to manage it to the best advantage**

Contents:

- Page 2: Notes to be handed out (and talked about) at the start of the session (red numbers refer to the board which demonstrates this point)
- Pages 3-5 Travellers to go with the boards (a set of 9).
Place on top of the board with the bottom folded up so only the bidding can be seen.
Play the hand then open up the travellers and discuss the comments there
- Pages 6-8 Hand records with expanded comments to be handed out at the end

CardPlay101_DeclarerTrumpSuit

Having a trump suit means there are more resources open for declarer.

But there is a danger: you might get good trick(s) trumped!

Some Tips

[1] Draw trumps

Unless there is a **specific** reason not to, get out all the opponents small trumps. ②

To do this properly you need to count them.

Count them the easy way! That is:

[a] *When you first see the dummy* count up all the trumps in your two hands.

[b] Subtract that number from 13.

[c] The answer is how many trumps the opponents have. It should be a small number say 4 or 5

[d] Just count those ones when they appear.

It is easier to count to 5 than to 13!

Leave an opponents **single high trump at large:**

If the opponents have one winning trump left you don't normally need to get it out. Having a trick trumped by an opponent's **winning** trump never does you any harm. ⑦

Often you can manage the trumps to ultimately reach this situation.

For example if your trumps are:

♥ 7 5 4 3 ♥ A 8 6 2

It is usually best to *play low from both hands* first.

Then, when you regain the lead, play ♥A.

Then leave the trumps alone. ⑥

Each hand has two trumps and you might be able to make four tricks with them.

Avoid blocking the suit when drawing trumps

As always *lead the winning cards in the shorter hand first*. That is ♠K first in the example below.

♠ A Q J 10 4 ♠ K 2

Or with a suit like this you may need to overtake your ♥K with the ♥A.

♥ A Q J 10 4 ♥ K (alone) ④

Exceptions:

When to postpone (or avoid) drawing trumps

[a] There may be some urgent action you need to do first.

For example there may be an urgent need to discard a loser first. ⑧

Or you might need to cross to the other hand to make your first trump lead.
Or

[b] You may need to trump loser(s) in dummy ① (and be mindful if the opponents know that is your plan **they** will lead trumps).

Or

[c] The best option may be to cross-trump the whole hand. ③

[2] Don't shorten your trumps without a reason

It gains nothing and risks running out of trumps. Suppose these are your trumps:

West: ♣ A K Q 8 7 6 **East:** ♣ J 10 9

West has six club tricks. Trumping other cards in the West hand doesn't make **more** tricks.

If West's trumps are reduced to three cards he is in trouble if one opponent has all four of them.

But any card you trump in the **East** hand gives you an extra trick because **West** retains his six trumps.

Sometimes the need to preserve your trump length is so great you need to discard on an opponent's winner rather than trumping it. ⑨

[3] Watch out for short suit lead

If the opponents lead a suit you have "quite a lot of cards in" *you should immediately smell a rat*.

It might be their only card in that suit and they can trump the next one. ④

Be prepared!

If you have to do some trumping in while there are still small trump(s) at large, *trump with a high one if you can afford to* no matter how unlikely it seems it could be over-trumped. ⑤

Board 1 Dealer N Vul none
N E S W
2♠ p 4♠ all pass

Board 2 Dealer E Vul NS
E S W N
1NT p 4♠ all pass

Board 3 Dealer S Vul EW
S W N E
1♥ p 1♠ p
2♦ all pass

Trump loser(s) in dummy

If declarer draws trumps he will be left with two losers in each red suit.

He can make at least one more trick by, trumping diamond(s) with dummy's trumps before leading trumps.

Only an opening lead of a trump would limit declarer to 10 tricks.

1	♠ KJ10983	Dir: N
	♥ 94	Vul: None
	♦ K642	
	♣ 4	
♠ 4		♠ 7652
♥ AJ62		♥ K10
♦ QJ108		♦ 973
♣ 9832		♣ KQJ10
7	♠ AQ	♠ ♠♥♦♣NT
8	♥ Q8753	N - - 14 3
9	♦ A5	S - - 14 3
18	♣ A765	E 2 - - - -
		W 2 - - - -

Must draw trumps

An unlikely heart lead would give N-S the first three tricks but the ♣Q is more likely.

Declarer wins and immediately draws trumps (count them! four rounds needed).

Next he leads ♦ A to unblock that suit, then a club to ♣K so he can run dummy's diamonds to make all 13 tricks

2	♠ 9	Dir: E
	♥ Q96	Vul: N-S
	♦ 862	
	♣ QJ10973	
♠ AKQJ108		♠ 75
♥ 753		♥ J84
♦ A		♦ KQJ104
♣ 654		♣ AK8
5	♠ 6432	♠ ♠♥♦♣NT
14	♥ AK102	N - - - - -
14	♦ 9753	S - - - - -
7	♣ 2	E - 114 3
		W - 114 3

Cross-trump

With so few trumps declarer needs to try to make as many of them as he can separately. So he should cash all off-suit aces first, then cross-trump hearts and spades.

Happily neither opponent can over-trump at any stage and declarer can make 7 trump tricks

3	♠ A10732	Dir: S
	♥ 2	Vul: E-W
	♦ K53	
	♣ 9743	
♠ Q954		♠ KJ8
♥ Q864		♥ KJ10
♦ 6		♦ Q10987
♣ KQJ10		♣ 82
7	♠ 6	♠ ♠♥♦♣NT
10	♥ A9753	N 3 3 1 - -
10	♦ AJ42	S 3 3 1 - -
13	♣ A65	E - - - - 1
		W - - - - 1

Board 4 Dealer W Vul all
W N E S
1♠ 2♥ all pass

Beware short suit lead, and Overtake to run trump suit

Declarer should recognise the ♠2 lead as a singleton.

He must win with ♠A then lead ♥K overtaking with ♥A to draw all the trumps immediately.

After that he can set up the black suit tricks he needs without risking any of his spade tricks getting trumped.

4		♠ J64 ♥ AQJ105 ♦ J53 ♣ KQ	Dlr: W Vul: Both
♠ K987 ♥ 862 ♦ AK7 ♣ AJ8	♠ 2 ♥ 9743 ♦ Q862 ♣ 10964	♠ AQ1053 ♥ K ♦ 1094 ♣ 7532	♣♦♥♠NT N - - 2 2 1 S - - 2 2 1 E - 1 - - - W - 1 - - -
14 15 2 9			

Board 5 Dealer N Vul NS
N E S W
2♠ p 6♠ all pass

Beware short suit lead

The ♦3 lead might not stand out as a singleton but it costs declarer nothing to guard against that possibility.

He must trump the diamond return with a *high* trump.

He has enough high trumps to afford to do that without risk of promoting any trump winners for the opponents.

5		♠ QJ10763 ♥ 975 ♦ 10 ♣ K86	Dlr: N Vul: N-S
♠ 2 ♥ 1064 ♦ AKQ974 ♣ J73	♠ 984 ♥ J832 ♦ 3 ♣ 109542	♠ AK5 ♥ AKQ ♦ J8652 ♣ AQ	♣♦♥♠NT N 1 2 3 8 4 S 1 2 3 8 4 E - - - - - W - - - - -
6 10 1 23			

Board 6 Dealer E Vul EW
E S W N
1♥ p 2♥ p
4♥ all pass

Trump management

With this trump layout declarer should first play low from both hands, then lead ♥A.

That produces the situation where the opponents have just one winning trump.

Declarer can then cross-trump spades and diamonds losing only two trumps and a club.

6		♠ Q1096 ♥ KJ9 ♦ QJ109 ♣ 95	Dlr: E Vul: E-W
♠ 72 ♥ 7543 ♦ A842 ♣ K62	♠ AK53 ♥ A862 ♦ K6 ♣ A84	♠ J84 ♥ Q10 ♦ 753 ♣ QJ1073	♣♦♥♠NT N - - - - - S - - - - - E 3 3 5 2 2 W 3 3 5 2 2
9 7 18 6			

Board 7 Dealer S Vul all
S W N E
1♠ p 2♠ all pass

Leave one top trump out

The defence is likely to start with three rounds of diamonds then lead a heart.

Declarer should lead just two trumps leaving ♠Q at large.

After that he leads ♣K (shorter hand first!) to set up two tricks in that suit.

He can then discard his third heart on the ♣J.

7		♠ J732 ♥ K53 ♦ 975 ♣ QJ3	Dir: S Vul: Both
♠ Q104 ♥ 872 ♦ AK64 ♣ 1097		♠ 8 ♥ QJ109 ♦ Q103 ♣ A8642	
		♠ AK965 ♥ A64 ♦ J82 ♣ K5	
7 9 15	9		♠♦♥♣NT N - - - 2 - S - - - 2 - E 2 1 2 - - W 2 1 2 - -

Board 8 Dealer W Vul none
W N E S
1♣ p 2♦ p
3♣ p 4♣ p
4NT p 5♦ p
6♣ all pass

Urgent discard first

Declarer has lots of tricks but the likely ♥J lead hits the weak spot.

Declarer must lead ♦AK first and discard his other heart before touching the trumps.

8		♠ 1072 ♥ J10983 ♦ 1097 ♣ A3	Dir: W Vul: None
♠ AK5 ♥ A6 ♦ 3 ♣ KJ109642		♠ Q84 ♥ Q2 ♦ AKQJ5 ♣ Q75	
		♠ J963 ♥ K754 ♦ 8642 ♣ 8	
5 15 4	16		♠♦♥♣NT N - - - - - S - - - - - E 6 5 1 3 6 W 6 5 1 3 3

Board 9 Dealer N Vul EW
N E S W
1♥ 1♠ 2♥ p
3♥ all pass

Don't shorten your trumps

The defence will lead spades and if declarer trumps the third one he will be in trouble if one opponent has four of them (more likely than three each). Instead he must discard one of his diamond losers. If a fourth spade is led it can be trumped high in dummy.

9		♠ 64 ♥ AKJ2 ♦ A75 ♣ KQ84	Dir: N Vul: E-W
♠ 982 ♥ 98 ♦ QJ103 ♣ 10732		♠ AKQJ10 ♥ 6543 ♦ K9 ♣ 95	
		♠ 753 ♥ Q107 ♦ 8642 ♣ AJ6	
17 3 7	13		♠♦♥♣NT N 3 2 3 - 2 S 3 2 3 - 2 E - - - - - W - - - - -

Board 1 Dealer N Vul none
 N E S W
 2♠ p 4♠ all pass

Board 2 Dealer E Vul NS
 E S W N
 1NT p 4♠ all pass

Board 3 Dealer S Vul EW
 S W N E
 1♥ p 1♠ p
 2♦ all pass

Trump loser(s) in dummy

If declarer starts by drawing trumps he will make only nine tricks as he will lose two tricks in each red suit.

But by not leading trumps he can make one or two more tricks by trumping diamond(s) with dummy's spades.

Note he gains nothing by trumping clubs in his own hand (except he needs to do that once to get the lead back in his hand).

The North hand always has exactly six trump tricks whether he leads them or trumps other cards with them.

An opening lead of a trump would limit declarer to 10 tricks.

1	♠ KJ10983	Dir: N
	♥ 94	Vul: None
	♦ K642	
	♣ 4	
♠ 4		♠ 7652
♥ AJ62		♥ K10
♦ QJ108		♦ 973
♣ 9832		♣ KQJ10
7	♠ AQ	♠♦♥♣NT
8	♥ Q8753	N - - 14 3
9	♦ A5	S - - 14 3
10	♣ A765	E 2 - - -
		W 2 - - -

Must draw trumps

A heart lead would give N-S the first three tricks but the ♠Q is more likely.

Declarer wins ♣A and draws trumps (count them! Four rounds are needed).

Next he leads ♦A to unblock that suit, then a club to ♣K so he can run dummy's diamonds to make all 13 tricks.

If declarer were to attempt to cash his second club at trick 2 – that would be a calamitous blunder!

South would trump that and NS would cash three hearts AND another club.

That will be down 2 instead of making three overtricks!

2	♠ 9	Dir: E
	♥ Q96	Vul: N-S
	♦ 862	
	♣ QJ10973	
♠ AKQJ108		♠ 75
♥ 753		♥ J84
♦ A		♦ KQJ104
♣ 654		♣ AK8
5	♠ 6432	♠♦♥♣NT
14	♥ AK102	N - - - -
14	♦ 9753	S - - - -
7	♣ 2	E - 114 3
		W - 114 3

Cross-trump

Declarer might feel a bit apprehensive tackling this contract with such a flimsy trump suit (and more so if he knew what trumps were in East's hand!)

With so few trumps declarer needs to try to make as many of them as he can *separately*.

So he should cash all off-suit aces first, then cross-trump hearts and spades.

Happily neither opponent can over-trump at any stage and declarer makes all seven trump tricks which, with the other three aces, gives him ten tricks.

3	♠ A10732	Dir: S
	♥ 2	Vul: E-W
	♦ K53	
	♣ 9743	
♠ Q954		♠ KJ8
♥ Q864		♥ KJ10
♦ 6		♦ Q10987
♣ KQJ10		♣ 82
7	♠ 6	♠♦♥♣NT
10	♥ A9753	N 3 3 1 - -
13	♦ AJ42	S 3 3 1 - -
	♣ A65	E - - - - 1
		W - - - - 1

Board 4 Dealer W Vul all
W N E S
1♠ 2♥ all pass

Beware short suit lead, and Overtake to run trump suit

Declarer should recognise the ♠2 lead as a singleton (because he has 8 of them and West will have four for his bid).

That means he needs to prevent any of his spades getting trumped.

He must win with ♠A and then draw all the opponents trumps (which requires four rounds) *immediately* by leading ♥K and overtaking with ♥A so he can continue running the suit.

After drawing trumps declarer leads a spade to set up the two extra tricks he needs. EW can make 3 diamond tricks, ♠K and ♣A, but can't trump anything.

4		♠ J64	Dlr: W
		♥ AQJ105	Vul: Both
		♦ J53	
		♣ KQ	
♠ K987	♠ 2	♥ 9743	
♥ 862	♥ 9743	♦ Q862	
♦ AK7	♦ Q862	♣ 10964	
♣ AJ8	♣ 10964		
14	♠ AQ1053	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
15	♥ K	N - - 2 2 1	
2	♦ 1094	S - - 2 2 1	
9	♣ 7532	E - 1 - - -	
		W - 1 - - -	

Board 5 Dealer N Vul NS
N E S W
2♠ p 6♠ all pass

Beware short suit lead

The ♦3 lead might not be easily identified as a singleton but it costs declarer nothing to guard against that possibility.

That is even if a sneaky West were to win the first trick with ♦A and return a *small* diamond making it appear East has other diamond honour(s).

On any diamond return from West at truck 2 North must always play a **high** trump.

He can always afford to do that as he has the five highest trumps and the opponents only have four between them.

5		♠ QJ10763	Dlr: N
		♥ 975	Vul: N-S
		♦ 10	
		♣ K86	
♠ 2	♠ 984	♥ J832	
♥ 1064	♥ J832	♦ 3	
♦ AKQ974	♦ 3	♣ 109542	
♣ J73	♣ 109542		
6	♠ AK5	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
10	♥ AKQ	N 1 2 3 6 4	
1	♦ J8652	S 1 2 3 6 4	
23	♣ AQ	E - - - - -	
		W - - - - -	

Board 6 Dealer E Vul EW
E S W N
1♥ p 2♥ p
4♥ all pass

Trump management

With this trump layout declarer should first play a low heart from both hands then, after regaining the lead, the ♥A.

That creates the situation where the opponents have just one winning trump which can be left alone.

At that point declarer can cross-trump spades and diamonds losing (at worst) only two trumps and a club.

If declarer were to lead ♥A and another heart at the start North could lead a third trump and that would leave declarer a trick short.

6		♠ Q1096	Dlr: E
		♥ KJ9	Vul: E-W
		♦ QJ109	
		♣ 95	
♠ 72	♠ AK53	♥ A862	
♥ 7543	♥ A862	♦ K6	
♦ A842	♦ K6	♣ A84	
♣ K62	♣ A84		
9	♠ J84	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT	
7	♥ Q10	N - - - - -	
18	♦ 753	S - - - - -	
6	♣ QJ1073	E 3 3 5 2 2	
		W 3 3 5 2 2	

Board 7 Dealer S Vul all
S W N E
1♠ p 2♠ all pass

Leave one top trump out

The defence is likely to start with three rounds of diamonds then lead a heart. It is important for declarer to win the heart in the *South* hand (why? – see below)

Declarer should lead just two trumps leaving ♠Q at large.

After that he leads ♣K (shorter hand first!) to set up two tricks in that suit.

He can then discard his third heart on the ♣J.

East might be awkward by letting the ♣K win, taking the next club with his ♣A.

Declarer would then be cut off from North's hand if the ♥K wasn't still there.

7		♠ J732 ♥ K53 ♦ 975 ♣ QJ3	Dir: S Vul: Both
♠ Q104 ♥ 872 ♦ AK64 ♣ 1097	♠ 8 ♥ QJ109 ♦ Q103 ♣ A8642	♠ AK965 ♥ A64 ♦ J82 ♣ K5	♠♦♥♣NT N - - - 2 - S - - - 2 - E 2 1 2 - - W 2 1 2 - -
7 9 15	9		

Board 8 Dealer W Vul none
W N E S
1♣ p 2♦ p
3♣ p 4♣ p
4NT p 5♦ p
6♣ all pass

Urgent discard before trumps

Declarer has lots of tricks but the likely ♥J lead hits the weak spot.

If declarer starts leading trumps North will immediately win with ♣A and cash his heart trick.

Instead declarer must lead a diamond first to ♦A and then lead ♦K discarding his other heart.

Only after that is it time to lead trumps.

8		♠ 1072 ♥ J10983 ♦ 1097 ♣ A3	Dir: W Vul: None
♠ AK5 ♥ A6 ♦ 3 ♣ KJ109642	♠ Q84 ♥ Q2 ♦ AKQJ5 ♣ Q75	♠ J963 ♥ K754 ♦ 8642 ♣ 8	♠♦♥♣NT N - - - - - S - - - - - E 6 5 1 3 6 W 6 5 1 3 3
5 15 4	18		

Board 9 Dealer N Vul EW
N E S W
1♥ 1♠ 2♥ p
3♥ all pass

Don't shorten your trumps

The defence will lead spades and if declarer trumps the third one he will be in trouble if one of the opponents has four trumps (which is more likely than them having three each).

Instead he must discard one of his diamond losers on the third spade.

If East leads a fourth spade (**not** a good idea!) declarer can trump it high in dummy, and discard another diamond from hand, thereby making an extra trick.

9		♠ 64 ♥ AKJ2 ♦ A75 ♣ KQ84	Dir: N Vul: E-W
♠ 982 ♥ 98 ♦ QJ103 ♣ 10732	♠ AKQJ10 ♥ 6543 ♦ K9 ♣ 95	♠ 753 ♥ Q107 ♦ 8642 ♣ AJ6	♠♦♥♣NT N 3 2 3 - 2 S 3 2 3 - 2 E - - - - - W - - - - -
17 3 7	13		