

# The I/N Crowd



**By Rod Bias**  
Phoenix, Arizona

## The Power of Quick Tricks (QT)

Quick Tricks (QT) are defined as: AK=2, AQ=1½, A=1, KQ=1, Kx=½ where the honors are together in the same suit. Last month's column discussed the need for two QT when you open the bidding holding a balanced hand (4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2) or semi-balanced hand (5-4-2-2 or 6-3-2-2) and even the most common unbalanced hand (5-4-3-1). These six common shapes cover more than 76% of all deals – three-quarters of all hands should have at least two QT to open.

QT usually win either the first or second time their suit is led. Only the first two rounds in each suit are "quick." After that, someone often ruffs in.

### Why Quick Tricks Matter

Ely Culbertson made several astute observations about QT. First he discussed "why you need" QT, giving the following two hands:

(3 QT) ♠AKQJ ♥932 ♦A63 ♣753  
(0 QT) ♠QJ109876 ♥92 ♦63 ♣75

The first hand "will win five tricks with spades as trumps. Four of the tricks will be won with the spade suit and the other with the ♦A." The second hand "will also win five tricks with spades as trumps. After losing the ♠A and ♠K, you will still have five high trumps, sure winners." Suppose you open 1♠ on each hand. [Ely liked to open four-card majors].

"If your partner happened to have, for example, a heart suit," it could safely be bid opposite the first hand 'knowing' your hand would produce two QT and probably two more tricks. If your partner thought you might hold the second hand, bidding hearts could be a disaster. At a

heart contract, your hand would not be worth one single trick!"

"Consider further the problem which your partner would face if the opponents overcalled in clubs." If your partner is sure you hold a hand like the first one, it might be correct to double the opponents holding a few trump winners and a few quick tricks. If you might hold the second hand, your partner should not double on a dare.

QT are the liquid assets of a bridge hand, good no matter who declares and no matter what the contract. They win – even on defense against the opponents' trump contract.

### Quick Tricks on Defense

Certain writers prefer to call QT "defensive tricks," ... and they are. But they are more. Let's look at the defensive value of QT. In *How Good is Your Bridge Hand?*, Ron Klinger and Andrew Kambites say: "An estimate of your potential defensive strength is better via quick tricks than by counting losers or playing tricks."

### QT matter most during the auction.

If you hold ♠AQ, during the auction you call it 1½ QT, meaning you will be able to win the first spade trick, and will win the second one 50% of the time. So, what you have is one or two QT; nobody wins a half trick! When you see the dummy, you usually change your estimate. Your hand goes up to two QT or down to one QT, depending on whether you see the king in dummy (in front of you or behind you).

Sometimes you have ♠AK and are sure you have two QT. Then the opponents name another suit as trumps and the dummy holds a singleton spade. Oops. You lost one QT. Or, worse yet, the dummy is void. Now you have lost two QT. That smarts!

## How Many Quick Tricks Does One Deal Have?

At most, one deal can contain eight QT - two in each suit. More often one, two, three, or even four half QT are lost in the shuffle. *This happens when the AKQ are in three different hands.* They do not team up to synergistically strengthen the suit. Most frequently, two half tricks will be lost and the deal will contain seven QT. The likely range of QT in any given deal is six to eight.

Once in a while a singleton king will account for the loss of half a QT. So, theoretically, if all the kings were singleton and none of the queens were with their aces, you could construct a deal with only four QT. The odds on that are astronomical.

A tech guy ran a million deals for me and counted the QT in all million deals. He said the average was 7.14, or, for all practical purposes, seven QT per deal. I should have asked how often the number of QT is 6, 6½, 7, 7½, and 8. But I didn't.

Before you and I were born, bridge players used to say it took five QT in the two hands to "go game." Intuitively, I think nine trumps and four QT will score a game. Does anyone know? Contact me.

I suspect that the seven QT in a typical deal win seven (more than half) of the tricks in that deal. Trumps, long suits, and lower honors (QJ10) win the other six. Culbertson used to tout his Rule of Eight (simplistically restated by Truscott as "about eight tricks in every deal were taken by high cards"), as if it had scientific research behind it.

He may not have been far off the mark.

### Quick Trick Requirements for Various Bids

Opening bids of 1NT (15-17) should (almost always) contain 3-4QT. Never open 1NT (15-17) without 2½ QT no matter how many HCP you hold. With only three QT, look for an excuse not to

bid 1NT. Avoid giving full value to stray lower honors: Jxx and Qx. You know they are not pulling their share of the load. With four QT and "only" 14 HCP (AK and AK), look for excuses to open 1NT (15-17): a five-card suit topped by the AK or tens in the same suits as your AKs.

If your game-forcing opening is 2♣, you should have four QT to open it. You will need at least half of the QT in the deal.

How many "points" should you have to raise partner's preempt to game expecting to make? Points Schmoits! When thinking about raising partner's three level preempt to game, use QT, not points, to evaluate. Your partner needs aces and trumps. Stray "quacks" are probably useless. Kings may be useless. Your partner often has a 7-3-2-1 shape. A king opposite that singleton is unlikely to help.

How many QT you will need depends on how strong your partner's preempts are. Four total QT will probably give you a play for game.

If you agree that your preempts will contain 1-1½ QT (many partnerships have this agreement), you need three QT and three trumps to raise to game with a shot at making it. Two trumps with an honor and three QT might also work. If you have four trumps, two QT might well be enough. I'd try it!

If you play feather-weight preempts (zero QT except maybe the trump king), you better have close to five QT before raising to game and expecting to score it. Again, with four trumps you might have a half or one QT less. Points don't win tricks with highly unbalanced hands around. Trumps do, and QT may win a few more tricks.

Points Schmoits! QT R MyT Power Full!

## Stars of Tomorrow

### I/N 0 – 299er Tournament

### Mon April 24<sup>th</sup> & Tues 25<sup>th</sup>

**Mornings: Free Coffee & Continental Breakfast**

**Afternoon: Free Coffee ALL DAY**

**Free Lunch after 1<sup>st</sup> Session**

**\$10 Entry Fee per Person**

**Guest SPEAKERS!**

**Tournament Chair: Ed Matulis**  
Phone: 702.575.8628 • email: [edmatulis@yahoo.com](mailto:edmatulis@yahoo.com)

MONDAY -- PAIRS	TUESDAY -- SWISS TEAMS
<p><b>MORNING - 10:00 AM</b></p> <p><b>AFTERNOON - 2:00 PM</b></p>	<p><b>MORNING - 10:00 AM</b></p> <p><b>AFTERNOON - 2:00 PM</b></p>

**Bill and Lillie Heinrich**  
**YMCA**  
**4141 Meadows Lane – Las Vegas, NV 89107**



**ACBL Sanction 1704190**



## Albuquerque Spring Sectional

**June 9-11, 2017**

**Duke City Bridge Center**  
8616 Northeastern NE, Albuquerque NM  
505-271-2877

**Friday, June 9**

Bracketed KO	Round 1	9:00am
Open Stratified Pairs	Single sessions	9:00am/1:00pm
199er Stratified Pairs	Single sessions	9:00am/1:00pm
Bracketed KO	Round 2	1:00pm
Stratified Swiss Teams	Single session	7:00pm
Bracketed KO	Final round	7:00pm

**Saturday, June 10**

Strati-flighted Pairs	Two sessions	10:00am/2:30pm
A/AX play together, B/C play together		
Open Stratified Side Pairs	Single sessions	10:00am/2:30pm
199er Stratified Pairs	Single sessions	10:00am/2:30pm

**Sunday, June 11**

Strati-flighted Swiss Teams	Two sessions	10:00am & TBA
A/AX play together, B/C play together		
Separate 199er Swiss Teams if sufficient entries		

**Stratified events:** A: 3000+, B: 750-3000, C: 0-750  
**Strati-flighted events:** A: 3500+, A/X: 0-3500, B: 750-3000, C: 200-750, D: 0-200 (Sun. Teams)  
**199er Pairs:** A: 100-200, B: 50-100, C: 0-50

*All events stratified by average masterpoint holdings. Mid-chart methods allowed in Flight A events and in the top flight of the KO. KO Events may be handicapped*

**Entry Fees:** \$10.00 per player/session (\$3.00 extra/session for non/unpaid members), Juniors (under 26): \$4.00 per player/session  
\$96.00 per team for Sunday Swiss (includes lunch between sessions)

Director-in-Charge:	Bill Michael	Sanction # 1706030
Co-Chair:	Bob Zipp	<a href="mailto:zipp_bridge@yahoo.com">zipp_bridge@yahoo.com</a>
Co-Chair:	Steve Lockwood	<a href="mailto:sjlockwood5@comcast.net">sjlockwood5@comcast.net</a>
Partnerships:	Bob Zipp	<a href="mailto:zipp_bridge@yahoo.com">zipp_bridge@yahoo.com</a>

**Complimentary food and beverages during all sessions..... the best in the west!**  
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Directions to DCBC: From I-40 take Wyoming Ave Exit north to Northeastern Blvd (approximately 1 mile) turn right (E) on Northeastern Blvd (traffic light), DCBC is second building on the right.