

**Esther "Pop" Quiz #0136:
"As Declarer, the *Critical* Importance of
Protecting Against *Extremely* Unlikely But
Possible 'Splits', and of *Correctly* Selecting
Sluff Discards in NT Contracts"**

Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen¹

To return to the "Esther Bridge Lessons," CLICK:

<https://esther-bridge.com/index.html>

To return to the "Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quizzes", CLICK:

<https://esther-bridge.com/quiz.html>

Esther on her "**Esther Bridge Lessons**" website has previously recommended the "**BBO Bridge Master**" website:

<https://www.bridgebase.com/v3/anon/bridgemaster>

The "**BBO Bridge Master**" website allows you to declare your skill level, then shows a series of Hands and announces the final contract, each of which you then play as Declarer. At the end of play you can then request a solution in which the optimal "Line of Play" is discussed step by step. The present "Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quiz" question is drawn from "**BBO Bridge Master**" Level-1 **Lesson A-31**. Note that across repeated play "**BBO Bridge Master**" may change some Hands in given lessons. Esther may have altered some cards in some Hands.

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¹ As noted in an article in the Winter/Spring, 2024 article in The American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Journal, https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA_1_24.pdf, Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen in fact is a hypothetical, and not a real person! So this article was really, really written by Bruce Thompson.

Board A-31, Level 1

NORTH (20)

S: 2
H: A 2
D: A K 2
C: A K Q T 9 8 7

WEST (6)

S: K 9 8 7 3
H: K 5 4 3
D: 7 6 5 4
C: --

EAST (7)

S: A 6 5 4
H: Q 7 6
D: 8 3
C: J 6 5 4

SOUTH (7)

S: Q J T
H: J T 9 8
D: Q J T 9
C: 3 2

Bidding

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1C	PASS	1H	PASS
2C	PASS	2NT	PASS
3NT	PASS	PASS	PASS

EAST and WEST were both silent throughout the auction, so WEST on lead has no guidance from Partner that is "lead directing." WEST also holds no "touching Honors" in a "long" suit. So WEST leads 4th from the "top" of his "longest and strongest" Suit, the Spade 7, so that EAST (and the Declarer, SOUTH) can invoke the "Rule of 11"² to guide their later play.

1. Once the NORTH Dummy comes "down", what "winners" can Declarer SOUTH see?

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:
https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0136_a1.pdf

² Within the "Esther Bridge Lessons", see: "Some 40 or So Bridge Bidding/Play 'Rules'":
<https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/rules.pdf>