

**Esther "Pop" Quiz #0155:
"Playing a NT Contract as Declarer:
Beware the 'Rule of 7' and
Some Dangers to Consider"**

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-2 **Lesson A-9**. 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.

Dealer: **SOUTH**

Board A-9, Level 2

NORTH (9)

S: 6 5 2
H: 5 4
D: 4 3 2
C: A K Q 5 4

WEST (9)

S: A T 9 7
H: K Q 8 7 6
D: 8 7 6
C: 3

EAST (6)

S: Q J 8
H: J T 9
D: J T 9 5
C: J T 9

SOUTH (21)

S: K 4 3
H: A 3 2
D: A K Q
C: 8 7 6 2

Bidding

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1NT	PASS	3NT	PASS
PASS	PASS		

On Trick #1 WEST leads the Heart 7 as 4th from the "top" of his "longest and strongest" Suit thus enabling EAST (and Declarer SOUTH) to invoke the "Rule of 11". The "Rule of 11" says, "If you count (1) the number of Heart cards in the Dummy higher than the Heart 7 plus (2) the number Heart cards higher than the Heart 7 in your Hand, and subtract that number from 11, the result tells you the number of Heart cards higher than the 7 held in the "hidden" Hand of the Declarer (or Declarer's RHO).

So $11 - 7 = 4$. And (1) Dummy's 0 cards higher than the Heart 7 plus (2) the 3 Heart cards higher than the Heart 7 tells EAST that Declarer SOUTH holds $4 - 0 - 3 = 1$ card higher than the Heart 7. And (1) Dummy's 0 cards higher than the Heart 7 plus (2) Declarer's 1 Heart card higher than the 7 tells Declarer SOUTH that EAST holds $4 - 0 - 1 = 3$ Heart cards higher than the Heart 7.

1. What Heart card should Declarer SOUTH play on Trick #1?

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:
https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0155_a1.pdf