

**Esther "Pop" Quiz #0281:  
"Maintaining 'Entries' into the 'Closed' Hand  
When Playing a 3NT Contract as Declarer"**

**Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen<sup>1</sup>**

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>

Playing **NT** contracts as Declarer does present some special challenges. In her "Esther Bridge Dialogue Lessons #143" Esther discusses "**Larry Cohen's '3-Step System' for Planning Declarer's 'Line of Play' for a NT Contract**":

<https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/3Step NT.pdf>

The "**BBO Bridge Master**" website affords bridge learners the opportunity to repeatedly practice for free using Cohen's **NT** planning system.

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. Here we use the free "**BBO Bridge Master**" Level-4 **Lesson C-16** which gives you the opportunity to see and repeatedly practice playing a given bridge Board.

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<sup>1</sup> 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](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA_1_24.pdf), Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, the purported ACBL Double Triple Emerald Gold Platinum LifeMaster with 20+ million ACBL MasterPoints, in fact is a hypothetical, and not a real person! So, this article was really, really written by Bruce Thompson.

**BBO Bridge Master Level 4 Lesson C-16**

Dealer: **SOUTH**

NORTH (14)

**S:** K 9 8 7 6

**H:** A 5 3

**D:** 5 3

**C:** A K 5

WEST (5)

**S:** Q J 5 3

**H:** 8 7 6

**D:** 7 6

**C:** Q 9 8 7

EAST (8)

**S:** T 4 2

**H:** Q J T 9

**D:** A T 9 8

**C:** J T

SOUTH (13)

**S:** A

**H:** K 4 2

**D:** K Q J 4 2

**C:** 6 4 3 2

**Bidding\***

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 <b>D</b>	PASS	2 <b>C**</b>	PASS
2 <b>H</b>	PASS	2 <b>S</b>	PASS
2 <b>NT</b>	PASS	3 <b>NT</b>	PASS
PASS	PASS		

\*This bidding is by Esther and not by "BBO Bridge Master".  
\*\*N/S are playing Esther's favorite bridge convention, "2 Over 1".<sup>2</sup> Here SOUTH's 2**C** bid as Responder "shows" (1) ~13 HCPs, (2) 4 or occasionally 3 Clubs, and (3) says nothing about holding Diamond "support".

WEST leads the Spade 3 on Trick #1.

1. After the NORTH Dummy is exposed Declarer SOUTH knows exactly how many Spades higher than the Spade 3. How many? And EAST similarly knows exactly how many Spades higher than the Spade 3 Declarer SOUTH holds. How many?
2. Once the NORTH Dummy is exposed how many "missing" cards does Declarer SOUTH know are held in each Suit? What is the most likely "split" in each Suit? Can Declarer SOUTH

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<sup>2</sup> Within the "Esther Bridge Conventions Lessons" see Lesson #1: "The '2 Over 1' ('2/1') Bridge Convention":

[https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/2 over 1.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/2%20over%201.pdf)

*surmise which Opponent has the "longer" holding in each Suit?*

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:  
[https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0281\\_a1.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0281_a1.pdf)