

Esther "Pop" Quiz #0431:
"Can You See the Unusual 'Low-Level' Finesse
That You *Must* Win to Make Your
Small Slam Contract as Declarer?"

Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen¹

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

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About Richard Pavlicek

Richard Pavlicek (1945-) has won **11** North American Bridge Championships, including a record-setting **3** straight wins in the Reisinger Board-a-Match Teams, 1982-84, and again in 1990. He won the 1973 inaugural Grand National Teams tournament and repeated a win there in 1997. He has written or co-authored several bridge books, including with co-author William S. Root their 1981 book, Modern Bridge Conventions. From 1984 until 1990 Pavlicek was the Bridge Columnist for the Fort Lauderdale News and Sun-Sentinel. Esther particularly likes the Bridge Simulation Studies presented on his bridge website:

<https://www.rpbridge.net/rpsi.htm>

and his re-posts of his newspaper bridge columns:

<https://www.rpbridge.net/rpc.htm>

The present "Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quiz" is based on the 12/30/84 Pavlicek newspaper bridge column, "Unusual Finesse Nets Slam". This is a "Real Deal" Board and Declarer SOUTH on this Board was Cliff Russell of Miami who played this Board in a 1980's ACBL Gulf Coast Regional tournament.

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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, 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.

Dealer: **SOUTH**

Vul: **BOTH**

NORTH (10)

S: 4 2

H: A J 8 7 4

D: J 9 8

C: A 7 4

WEST (5)

S: Q T 7 6

H: K T 9 5

D: T 7

C: 8 6 5

EAST (9)

S: J 8 5 3

H: Q 6 2

D: 3 2

C: K Q J 2

SOUTH (16)

S: A K 9

H: 3

D: A K Q 6 5 4

C: T 9 3

Bidding

SOUTH

1**D**

3**D**

4**S***

PASS

WEST

PASS

PASS

PASS

PASS

NORTH

1**H**

4**C***

6**D**

EAST

PASS

DBL**

PASS

*****"Partner, I hold the Ace of this bid Suit."

******"Partner, at your **1st** turn to lead, please lead a Club."

On Trick **#1** WEST led Club 8, Declarer SOUTH "ducked" in the NORTH Dummy, and EAST "won" Trick **#1** with his Club Jack. On Trick **#2** EAST led his Club King and SOUTH "won" Trick **#2** with the NORTH Dummy's Club Ace.

1. Once the NORTH Dummy is exposed what "losers" can Declarer SOUTH see?
2. What Diamonds do E/W hold? What are the probabilities of the various possible E/W Diamond "splits"?
3. What "problem" should Declarer SOUTH see? What initial "Line of Play" should Declarer SOUTH follow?

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:

https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0431_a1.pdf