

Esther "Pop" Quiz #0445:
"When as Declarer You Are Playing a
Suit Contract Holding 'Weak Trump'
There IS a Solution and
the Solution Does NOT Involve Surrender!"

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:

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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 11/17/85 Pavlicek newspaper bridge column, "Weak Trumps Cause Undue Alarm". This is a "Real Deal" Board played in a local Club game in 1987.

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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: **E/W**

NORTH (9)

S: K Q 8 2

H: 7 4 3 2

D: 8 5

C: A 6 2

WEST (11)

S: J 4

H: K Q 9

D: Q 9 7 4 2

C: K 7 5

EAST (5)

S: T 9 7 6 5

H: A 8

D: J 6

C: 9 8 4 3

SOUTH (15)

S: A 3

H: J T 6 5

D: A K T 3

C: Q J T

Bidding

SOUTH

1**NT**

2**H**

PASS

WEST

PASS

PASS

NORTH

2**C***

4**H**

EAST

PASS

PASS

*NORTH is bidding the "**Stayman Convention**", not invented by Sam Stayman,² to "show" (1) **8-10** HCPs and at least **1** 4-card Major. Some players only bid "Stayman" holding **9-10** HCPs because with this bid you may end up playing a **NT** contract and that "extra" point can make a difference in **NT** contracts!

Every bridge player eventually finds himself playing a Suit contract when the Partnership holds "weak" Trump cards. These Declarers often (incorrectly) shy away from leading Trump! But as Pavlicek emphatically notes:

"Instead of commiserating, 'How did I get in this mess?' you should be plotting, 'How can I get out of it?' The solution is usually to lead trumps. In general, **the weaker your trumps, the more desirable it is to lead that suit so the enemy high trumps fall together**. Otherwise, the opponents will win their high trumps separately." (emphasis added)

² Within the "Esther Bridge Lessons" see "Happy 100th Birthday, Bridge!!!: A 'Brief History' of Duplicate Bridge": https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/br_hist.pdf

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S: T 9 7 6 5

H: A 8

D: J 6

C: 9 8 4 3

SOUTH (15)

S: A 3

H: J T 6 5

D: A K T 3

C: Q J T

At the actual table WEST led the Diamond 4 as **4th** from "top" of his "longest and strongest" Suit. Declarer SOUTH "won" Trick **#1** with his own Diamond Ace. On Trick **#2** SOUTH "cashed" his Diamond King. On Trick **#3** SOUTH being desperate to secure "winning" Tricks from the Dummy led a **3rd** Round of Diamonds and ruffed from the NORTH Dummy. EAST then Overruffed. E/W later also "won" **3** Trump Heart Tricks and the N/S 4**H** contract failed.

1. What "Line of Play" should Declarer SOUTH have followed instead of the actual "Line of Play"?

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:
https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0445_a1.pdf