

**Esther "Pop" Quiz #0493:
"A Clever Way for the Declarer to
'Unblock' a 'Long' Suit"**

Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen¹

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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/rpco.htm>

The present "Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quiz" is based on the 4/8/90 Pavlicek newspaper bridge column, "Clever Play Overcomes Blocked Suit".

As Pavlicek noted, "A blocked suit is an occasional problem for declarer, especially at a notrump contract. This occurs when the *spot cards* in the shorter hand are higher [e.g., J,T,9,8] than the *spot cards* in the longer hand [e.g., 7,5,4,3]." {italics added)

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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 (7)

S: 3

H: A 9 7 2

D: J T 9 8

C: Q 8 6 5

WEST (14)

S: K J T 9 8 7

H: K 8 6

D: 6

C: A K 3

EAST (5)

S: 6 4 2

H: Q J T 5

D: Q 2

C: T 9 7 4

SOUTH (14)

S: A Q 5

H: 4 3

D: A K 7 5 4 3

C: J 2

Bidding

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 D	1 S	DBL*	PASS
2 D	2 S	3 D	PASS
3 NT	PASS	PASS	

*NORTH's "**Negative DOUBLE**" "shows" (1) exactly 4 Hearts, (2) "shortness" in Spades, and (3) likely 4-card "support" for the unbid Minor and (4) does not "deny" Diamonds.

On Trick #1 WEST led the Spade Jack as the "top" of an "interior sequence".

1. Why did SOUTH set the final contract at 3**NT**?
2. Once the NORTH Dummy is exposed what "winners" can Declarer SOUTH see?
3. What "problem" must Declarer SOUTH see? How can Declarer SOUTH solve this problem?

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:
https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0493_a1.pdf