

**Esther "Pop" Quiz #0497:
"On Defense Can You Play 'Correctly'
Including When You as a Defender
Hold a 'Side' Suit Q,x Doubleton?"**

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>

The example and ideas presented here are drawn from Larry Cohen's article, "The Real Deal: Expert Routine", published in the August, 2026 issue of the ACBL Bridge Bulletin (p. 55). This "Real Deal" Board was played in the 2026 quarterfinals of the United States Bridge Championships Mixed Team Trials. All N/S Pairs ended up playing a Club contract of 5C, 6C, or 7C **DOUBLED**.

About Larry Cohen

By the age of 22, **Larry Cohen** had won his first two of **25** National Bridge Championships, the Blue Ribbon Pairs and the prestigious Spingold Teams. Between 1979 and 2008, Cohen won **57** first or second place finishes in national and world competitions. In 2002, the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) named Cohen "Player of the Year". Cohen is also listed on the ACBL's "Top 10 Living Most Influential Bridge Personalities". In 2020, in his first year of eligibility, Cohen was elected to the ACBL Hall of Fame. Cohen has had long-term bridge partnership with players such as Marty Bergen and David Berkowitz.

Cohen's bridge writings have been massively influential. Cohen for many years has published a monthly column in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin. Cohen has authored numerous books including **6** books that have won the American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) "Bridge Book of the Year Award".

© Copyright, Bruce Thompson, 2026. All rights reserved.

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: **WEST**

Vul: **E/W**

NORTH (3)

S: T 7

H: 8 4

D: K 9 8 7 6

C: 9 7 3 2

WEST (19)

S: K J 6 3

H: A K Q 9 6

D: A T 4

C: Q

EAST (5)

S: Q 9 5 4 2

H: J T 7 5 3 2

D: Q 2

C: --

SOUTH (13)

S: A 8

H: --

D: J 5 3

C: A K J T 8 6 5 4

Bidding*

WEST

NORTH

EAST

SOUTH

1H

PASS

3H

4C

4H

5C

5H

6C

DBL

PASS

PASS

PASS

PASS

*This bidding is by Esther. At all tables the auction was competitive and N/S played in Clubs.

On Tricks **#1** WEST led his Heart Ace and Declarer SOUTH ruffed.
On Trick **#2** Declarer SOUTH "cashed" his Club Trump Ace and the **1** E/W Trump Club, the Club Queen, "dropped".

1. On Trick **#3** Declarer SOUTH led a "low" Diamond. Sitting WEST on Defense what Diamond card would you play on Trick **#3**?

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:
https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0497_a1.pdf