

"Frequency of Bridge (1) Opening Bids, (2) Final Contracts, and (3) Contract Results"

Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen¹

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Bruce: Today, we are honored to have with us Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, Quintuple Gold Emerald Life Master (20 Million+ ACBL MasterPoints), who will talk us through **"Frequency of Bridge (1) Opening Bids, (2) Final Contracts, and (3) Contract Results"**. Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, thanks for taking the time to be with us today!

Esther: D**n it, Bruce! How many times do I have to tell you to **NEVER, ever** call me Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen! Always, **ALWAYS, ALWAYS** instead call me, Esther, because I am so "warm and caring"!

Bruce: Errr, well, sorry again about that, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther.

Esther: Well, Bruce. Please try to exercise at least a modicum of empathy, assuming you have at least the limited capacity to do so. Can you imagine how relentlessly all the other girls in grades K through 4 of my elementary school years relentlessly, endlessly tormented me about my last name, Klinktoast-Houstonhousen?

Bruce: Well, yes, sorry again, Esther! Well, Esther, at the outset, would you tell us from where your current report originated?

Esther: Well, Bruce, I will certainly try to help you. Well,

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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 in fact is a hypothetical, and not a real person! So this article was really, really written by **Bruce Thompson**.

today's report summarizes a study of **1,000,000 bridge deals** which was conducted by Stephen Pickett using the "**BRidgeBRrowser**" software. Surprisingly, I have not been able to locate Pickett's original report. Happily, Larry Cohen summarized Pickett's study in his March 23, 2023 article, "Online Play – A Million and Counting".²

Bruce: Errr, well, sorry again about that, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Well, would you start by summarizing **how frequently all the possible opening bids are made at the bridge table?**

Esther: Well, Bruce, yes, indeed!

Frequency of Opening Bridge Bids

Opening Bid	% Out of 1,000,000 Deals
1♣	22.7%
1♦	21.3%
1♥	15.5%
1♠	16.3%
1NT	11.7%
2♣	2.0%
2♦*	1.3%
2♥*	2.0%
2♠*	2.0%
2NT	1.8%
3♣*	0.7%
3♦*	0.7%
3♥*	0.5%
3♠*	0.5%
3NT	0.1%
4♣	0.04%
4♦	0.05%
4♥	0.3%
4♠	0.3%
Higher	0.08%

*Pre-empt bids.

² On the web see:

<https://news.bridgebase.com/2023/03/23/online-play-a-million-and-counting/>

Bruce: Errr, well, sorry again about that, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Well, would you now summarize **how frequent were various final contracts were?**

Esther: Well, Bruce, here is the answer for you:

Frequency of Final Bridge Contracts

Final Contract	% Out of 1,000,000 Deals
3NT	18.1%
4♥	11.7%
4♠	13.2%
5♣	2.3%
5♦	2.9%
6♣ or 6♦	1.5%
6♥	1.4%
6♠	1.4%
6NT	1.4%
7 level	0.5%

Bruce: Errr, well, sorry again about that, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Well, would you now summarize **how frequently the Declarer "won" a given number of Tricks on a final 1NT contract?**

Esther: Well, Bruce, I will certainly try to help you. For **final contracts set at 1NT** the 1NT contract "made" about **71%** of the time and failed about **29%** of the time. Here are the percentages for number of Tricks taken on all final contracts set at 1NT *ordered by frequency*:

Tricks	% Out of 1,000,000 Deals
7	25%
8	23%
6	17%
9	15%
5	8%
10	6%

Bruce: Errr, well, sorry again about that, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Well, would you now summarize **how many Tricks the Declarer "won" irrespective of where the final contract was set?**

Esther: Well, Bruce, I will certainly try to help you.

# of Tricks "Won" By the Declarer	% Out of 1,000,000 Deals
1	0.02%
2	0.05%
3	0.1%
4	0.5%
5	1.8%
6	4.8%
7	10.0%
8	16.2%
9	21.0%
10	20.2%
11	14.1%
12	7.2%
13	2.3%

Bruce: Errr, well, sorry again about that, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Well, Esther, how practically useful are these various revelations?

Esther: Well, Bruce, these results are quite frankly not all that practically useful. But the results will help orient you to what is and is not likely to happen at the bridge table on any given day.

More useful are statistical probabilities about when a "missing" King or Queen is likely to "drop" given your Partnership holding a given number of Suit cards and a given number of Suit Honors, or how likely you are to find an **8+** card "fit" with Partner when you hold a 2-Suited Hand that is 5-4, 5-5, or 6-5:

https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/8_probs.pdf