

Esther Discusses "Sitting 'Over' the *Exposed* Dummy Playing in the (1) '*Full Surround*' or a (2) '*Near Surround*' Position"

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 "Sitting 'Over' the *Exposed* Dummy Playing in the (1) '*Full Surround*' or a (2) '*Near Surround*' Position".² 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!

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?

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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.

² "Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quiz #107" also deals with related issues:

https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0107_q.pdf

Bruce: Well, yes, sorry again, Esther! I do understand that young girls can indeed be quite vicious to each other. Well, in any case, Esther, may we start by you defining what these terms "**'Over' Exposed Dummy**", "**'Full Surround' Position**" and "**'Near Surround' Position**" mean?

Esther: Well, Bruce, I will certainly try to help you. First, I feel obligated to note that the present discussion is drawn from **Tips #86** and **#87** (pp. 126-127) from Ron Klinger's 2003 book, 100 WINNING BRIDGE TIPS for the Improving Player. The examples have been slightly modified by Esther.

Bruce: Errr, well, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Who is this Mr. Klinger fellow? Could you tell us a little about him, please?

Esther: Well, Bruce, of course. **Ron Klinger** (1941-) is an Australian contract bridge player who has written more than **70** bridge books including his 1990 book, Guide to Better Card Play, which won the "American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Bridge Book of the Year Award." His book, Right Through the Pack Again, won the 2010 "International Bridge Press Association Book of the Year Award." He was Editor of Australian Bridge for 13 years (1972-1985). For many years he has written, and still currently writes, a weekly bridge column for both the Sydney Morning Herald and The Sun-Herald.

Klinger is also the inventor of the Ron Klinger "**Suit Quality Test ('SQT') Score**". The "**SQT Score**" is computed by adding together (1) the number of cards you hold in a Suit plus (2) the number of Honors (including the Ten) that you hold in the Suit. *Suit contracts* set no higher than "**SQT Score**" - 6 are generally pretty "safe".

Bruce: Errr, well, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther. Back to my original question, please. Please, please tell us what these terms "**'Over' Exposed Dummy**", "**'Full Surround' Position**" and "**'Near Surround' Position**" "**Passive Defense**" mean?

Esther: Well, Bruce, of course:

1. **Sitting "Over" the Dummy** means that on any lead, whether on lead from the Dummy, Partner, or by Declarer toward the Dummy, you will play *after* a card is played from the Dummy.

2. "**Full Surround' Position**" means that in a given Suit you sitting LHO to the Dummy hold the cards both *immediately above* and *immediately below* the highest card in the Suit held by the Dummy. An example would be:

Dummy
J 7 5

YOU
A Q T 4

3. "**Near Surround' Position**" means that in a given Suit you sitting LHO to the Dummy hold the card both *immediately above* the highest card in the Suit held by the Dummy, but you are just "short" of holding the card *immediately below* the highest card in the Dummy, or *vice versa*. An example would be:

Dummy
Q 6 5

YOU
K T 9

Leading RHO "**Over**" the "Exposed" Dummy and You Hold a "**Full Surround' Position**"

Bruce: OK, fair enough. So, Esther, once you are on the lead, which card should you play from your "**Full Surround**" Suit?

Esther: Well, Bruce,

When you are leading in the "**Full Surround' Position**" "**Over**" the Dummy, you should lead the card in the Suit immediately "above" the Dummy's highest card in the "**Full Surround' Position**" Suit.

Bruce: OK. Well, Ms. Klinktoast..., err, I mean Esther, can you give us some examples to show *why* this lead is *superior* to leading the *lowest* card in the Suit?

Esther: Well, Bruce, of course. Consider the following Hands:

	Dummy	
	J 6 4	
Partner		YOU
8 3 2		A Q T 5
	Declarer	
	K 9 7	

If you sitting EAST lead either (1) your 5 or (2) your Ace and then your 5, Declarer will take **2** Tricks, 1 in his Hand and 1 in the Dummy. However, if you sitting EAST lead your Queen, Declarer SOUTH will win only **1** Trick with his King, but you sitting EAST will take at least 2 other Tricks.

Bruce: Well, OK, Esther. Can you give us another example?

Esther: Well, Bruce, how about these Hands?

	Dummy	
	T 5 2	
	<u>1</u> 3 2	
Partner		YOU
8 4 3		K J 9 6
1 3 2		3 2 1
	Declarer	
	A Q 7	
	<u>3</u> <u>2</u> 1	

The Trick on which a card was played is represented by the **number** below each card. The lead is ***italicized***. The number of the "winning" card is **underlined**.

If you lead either your 6 or your 9, Declarer SOUTH will take **3** Tricks by playing "second Hand low" and letting the NORTH Dummy Ten win, and then leading the NORTH Dummy 2 and assuming that EAST led "bottom of something" plays his Queen and then his Ace.

	Dummy	
	T 5 2	
	3 2 1	
Partner		YOU
8 4 3		K J 9 6
3 2 1		<u>3</u> 1 <u>4</u> 2
	Declarer	
	A Q 7	
	<u>2</u> <u>1</u>	

However, if EAST leads his Jack, Declarer SOUTH can be held to only **2** Tricks if EAST waits for WEST to eventually "return Partner's lead".

Bruce: OK. Well, how about one more example please?

Esther: Well, Bruce, how about this example?

	Dummy	
	T 5 2	
Partner		YOU
A 4 3		K J 9 6
	Declarer	
	Q 8 7	

If you sitting EAST lead your 6 or 9, Declarer SOUTH takes **1** Trick by playing "second Hand low". If you sitting EAST lead your Jack, Declarer SOUTH takes **0** Tricks!

Bruce: OK. Well, Esther, is there anything else you would like to say about what you should lead when you sit "**Over**" the Dummy in a "**'Full Surround' Position**"?

Esther: Well, Bruce, of course. The way you need to think about your Hand is to *pretend* that your Hand held the Dummy's highest card. Thus, in Example #1 with the NORTH Dummy holding the **Ten**, and you sitting EAST holding **K J 9 6**, imagine that *instead* you held:

K J T 9 6.

From this holding you would *routinely* lead from the "top" of your interior "touching card" sequence. That means you should lead your Jack!

Bruce: Neat! Shall we now turn our attention to playing when you sit "Over" the Dummy playing *third* in the "**'Near Surround' Position**"?

Playing *Third* "**Over**" the "Exposed" Dummy and You Hold a "**'Near Surround' Position**"

Esther: Well, Bruce, remember that a "**'Near Surround' Position**" exists when, for example, NORTH is Dummy containing an Honor in a Suit and "the higher or lower card with EAST is one or two cards away from the perfect [or 'full'] surround" (Klinger, 2003, p. 126). When you sit "**Over**" the Dummy in a "**'Near Surround' Position**" what you should play sitting *third* will vary based on exactly what cards you hold. Here are some examples each presuming that WEST led a 3.

Example #1

Dummy
K 5 2

YOU
A J 4

This is a "'**Near Surround**' Position". Here you should play your Jack, reserving your Ace to later "kill" a King.

Example #2

Dummy
K 5 2

YOU
A T 4

This is also a "'**Near Surround**' Position". Here you should play your Ten, reserving your Ace to later "kill" a King.

Example #3

Dummy
K 5 2

YOU
A 8 4

This is not a "'**Near Surround**' Position". Here you should play your 4, or your Ace when you decide to take a Trick in this Suit.

Example #4

Dummy
Q 5 2

YOU
A J T

This is a "'**Near Surround**' Position". Here you should play your Ten. In general you should **play the lower or lowest card of "equal" cards** when sitting in the third seat (Klinger, 2003, Tip #83, p. 123).

Example #5

Dummy
A T 5

YOU
Q 9 4

This is a "'**Near Surround**' Position". Here you should play your 9, and not your Queen.