

ADVANCED COURSE
Lesson Eight: Elimination and End Play

There are many times when Declarer would rather that a suit was played by the defending side. Here are some examples:

- ♦ Q73 If declarer has to play this suit combination she will almost certainly lose three tricks (AK♦ and the 10♦). The only time she wouldn't, would be if one
- ♦ J62 opponent held AK♦. However, if the opponent's lead (open up) the suit then declarer will ALWAYS make a trick, as long as she plays low as second player

- ♦ K109 This is a classic "Two Way Finesse". Declarer can either run the 10♦ from dummy OR run the J♦ from hand. This will be a complete 50 – 50 guess
- ♦ AJ8 situation (unless an opponent has bid – see Lesson 7!). However if an opponent leads diamonds, then declarer will ALWAYS make three tricks, as the position of Q♦ becomes clear.

Below are examples of declarer guaranteeing a trick (or more) if the **LEFT** hand opponent is on lead. In the last two examples, either defender can be on lead.

♦ 32 (dummy)	♦ 32	♦ 532	♦ K92	♦ K102
♦AQ (declarer)	♦ K4	♦ AJ10	♦ A103	♦ Q93
Two tricks	One trick	Two tricks	Three tricks (unless East has QJx)	Two tricks

Declarer's Strategy to End Play an Opponent

- 1 Draw Trumps** - making sure that there is still at least one trump left in either hand, so declarer will need plenty of trumps to start off with.

- 2 Eliminate** – make sure that there is no safe exit for a defender. This will often involve creating a void in both hands so the defenders will be forced to give declarer a "Ruff and Discard", once they are thrown in (given the lead).

- 3 Exit Card** – declarer needs to play a "Loser" so that the defenders will win and will then be "End Played", either giving declarer a Ruff and Discard **OR** opening up the suit that declarer would like them to play (as in the examples above).

End Play is one of the most rewarding techniques in Bridge but declarer needs to count their potential losers at the beginning of the hand and plan the End Play accordingly. Once a declarer is familiar with End Play, then they will find it much easier to spot and execute the dastardly plan to make the opponent's squirm.....examples overleaf.....

	North	Dummy
	♠ J72	
	♥ K762	
	♦ A94	
	♣ K53	
West		East
♠ K1064		♠ A98
♥ 5		♥ 93
♦ <u>K</u> Q63		♦ J8752
♣ 9862		♣ QJ10
	South	Declarer
	♠ Q53	
	♥ AQJ1084	
	♦ 10	
	♣ A74	

<u>Bidding:</u>		Dealer South		
North	East	South	West	
		1♥	Pass	
3♥	Pass	4♥*		
Opening Lead: K♦		* South has only six Losing Tricks, one less than expected for an opening hand (seven), so raises to 4♥		

- 1 Declarer counts four potential losers in 4♥, one club loser and three in spades. Can declarer get the defenders to play spades for him? Answer: Yes!
- 2 Win K♦ lead with A♦ and trump 4♦ in hand. Then *draw trumps* in two rounds, ending in dummy. Play 9♦, trumping in hand, creating a void in both hands. *Elimination* complete, now.....
- 3 *Exit* – declarer plays AK♣ and then a losing 3♣, leaving East on lead with Q♣
- 4 East has to **EITHER** play a diamond giving declarer a Ruff and Discard (ie declarer trumps in dummy and discards a losing spade from hand) **OR** open up the spade suit thus guaranteeing declarer a spade trick, as long as declarer plays low (3♠) from hand.

	North	Dummy
	♠ K852	
	♥ Q107643	
	♦ J4	
	♣ Q	
West		East
♠ Q1064		♠ 97
♥ 5		♥
♦ <u>K</u> Q63		♦ 108752
♣ K862		♣ J109754
	South	Declarer
	♠ AJ3	
	♥ AKJ982	
	♦ A9	
	♣ A3	

<u>Bidding:</u>		Dealer South		
North	East	South	West	
		2♥	Pass	
3♥	Pass	6♥*		
Opening Lead: K♦		* South bids straight to slam once North has bid a positive 3♥ (2NT would have shown 0 – 7 points)		

- 1 Declarer wins K♦ lead with A♦, *draws the trump* and plays A♣ and 3♣, trumping in dummy, thus *eliminating* clubs and creating a void in BOTH hands.
- 2 Declarer would love West to play spades for her, avoiding the 50 – 50 finesse, (low to J♠). Declarer *exits* with J♦, knowing that West has Q♦ from their opening lead of K♦.
- 3 Poor West wins Q♦ but **EITHER** has to play a club or a diamond, giving declarer a Ruff and Discard (declarer has got voids in BOTH hands) **OR** has to play a spade, away from Q♠, into the jaws of declarer's AJ♠, ensuring that declarer no longer has to take a losing 50 – 50 spade finesse. 6♠ made on an End Play.

I look forward to seeing you on the Conventions course – Happy Bridging!