

## ENDPLAY

♠ Q 10 9 2  
♥ J 7 5  
♦ 9 7 6  
♣ K 10 3

♠ 5 4  
♥ K 10 6  
♦ K Q J 3  
♣ Q 8 5 4

♠ 6  
♥ A Q 9 8  
♦ 10 8 5 4 2  
♣ 9 7 6

♠ A K J 8 7 3  
♥ 4 3 2  
♦ A  
♣ A J 2

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1 ♠
pass	2 ♠	pass	4 ♠
all pass			

West leads the ♦ K

In this hand declarer is eager to jump to 4 ♠ with his powerful hand. Declarer is looking at 3 heart losers and a possible club loser.

The north - south clubs are a perfect example of a holding where you want the defenders to break the suit first. If declarer plays clubs first ( breaks the club suit) he must decide which opponent to finesse for the queen. Declarer can avoid this decision by making the defenders break the suit.

On this hand declarer should win the opening lead, pull trumps in two rounds ending in dummy. Then ruff a diamond and return to dummy with a trump. Ruff a second diamond and then play a heart.....after the defenders take three heart tricks they will have to either play a heart, diamond or club.

If the defence plays a heart or a diamond declarer can ruff in dummy and discard a club from his hand ( called a ruff and discard or a “ruff and a sluff”)

If the defender on lead plays a club declarer will have achieved his goal of having the defence break the club suit....either way the contract will succeed without declarer having to gamble on the club finesse.

Note it was necessary to ruff diamonds twice, or the defenders would have been able to play a diamond after winning the 3 heart tricks. The technique of ruffing out diamonds first is called an **elimination** or **strip**.

In order to recognise **endplays** in the heat of battle at the bridge table, it is necessary to realise certain features :

- 1 There is at least one suit that declarer wants the defenders to lead
- 2 Declarer can prevent the defenders by having a safe card with which to exit their hands by stripping the hand ie, either drawing all cards in a suit out of their hands or by setting up a ruff and a sluff.
- 3 In order for a ruff and a sluff to be successful, declarer cannot have any cards in the suit played by defence in his hand or dummy, and must have at least one trump in each hand
- 4 Declarer must find an appropriate way to lose a trick to the defenders.

If the defence had taken three heart tricks before the hand was stripped, the endplay would not be possible.