

Avoidance Play

In bridge, an avoidance play may be made when declarer needs to prevent a particular defender from gaining the lead.

Very often when you are playing a hand you will be anxious to keep one of your opponents out of the lead

The aim of the avoidance play is to **prevent the dangerous Opponent** from gaining the lead.

An Opponent is the danger man because:

- A. he holds the winners of a **long suit**, often after your hold ups
- B. or he sits **in front of** a vulnerable **K x (x)** either in Dummy or in Declarer's hand.
If the danger man gains the lead he can lead that suit so that his **partner can capture your King** and leave the suit unprotected.
- C. or, **in a trump contract**, the danger man may be able to lead a suit which can be **ruffed** by his partner.

When you must give up a trick in order to effect some suit-establishment play, you should try to lose the trick to the opponent who cannot make the lead that you fear. Two simple methods of keeping a dangerous opponent out of the lead are to choose the direction of your finesses properly, and to duck a trick to the other opponent. For example:

Dummy

♠ K6

♥ AQ8

♦ AJT9

♣ —

Declarer

♠ A84

♥ KJ7

♦ K53

♣ —

The contract is notrump; no suit but clubs has been played. Suppose you know that East has several established clubs; but West has no club. Therefore, you lead a heart, which dummy wins with the Queen. Dummy now leads the ♦ 9, and you play the ♦ 3. Even if West has the Queen and wins the trick, he cannot lead a club.

