

ELIMINATION AND THROW IN PLAYS

Normally you must do some “elimination” homework (pulling trumps, getting rid of at least one side suit in your hand and dummy) before a classic end play will work. The idea is that you give an opponent the lead (you “throw in” the opponent) at a time when s/he has no choice but to do something good for you.

Sometimes the throw-in play can come as early as Trick One or Trick Two.

You are North and are dealt:

AQ

AQ864

K852

A5

Your partner (South) passes and West (on your right) opens 1C. You are too strong to simply overcall one heart, so you double first. East passes. Partner bids 1S (showing fewer than 9 HCP). West passes and you bid 2H—showing at least 5 hearts and about 17-19 (or a bad 20) HCP. Everyone passes.

East leads Jack of clubs and Dummy comes down with

109542

J102

Q107

Q3

You have 19 HCP and partner has 5. That leaves 16 for the opponents. You expect West (who opened) to have both major Kings, King of clubs and Ace of diamonds. Therefore, your best play is to DUCK the jack (if you cover with the Queen, West will play King and you'll promote East's 10). You want to end play WEST. Take the Ace and play a club to the Queen. Now, poor West must either:

- 1) give you a free finesse in spades
- 2) give you a free finesse in hearts
- 3) give you a ruff and sluff
- 4) open up the diamond suit which practically guarantees you lose only one diamond trick.

This hand was from the La Jolla Unit Game of 9/11/2011 and North can make 5 hearts with a simple throw in at trick two. (Depending on what West does, you may also have to finesse East for the Jack of diamonds at some point.)