

I want to discuss a simple topic (**Attitude**) and a more complex topic (**End Play**).

ATTITUDE: Here is what Larry Cohen says about it:

Attitude is used in two very important situations:

a) Partner leads to the trick. If partner or dummy is winning the trick, tell partner your attitude. Play a high spot card if you like it, low if you don't. For example, partner leads a spade and dummy's ace takes the trick. Play the ♠8 if you have ♠KQ82. Play the ♠3 if you have ♠843.

b) You make your first discard. Throw the ♥9 if you like/want hearts; throw the ♥3 if you don't like hearts.

Do not make attitude signals with cards above the 10. Don't signal with what could potentially be a trick. Of course, you won't always be dealt the right card to signal with.

Note: There are many possible variations to what is shown here. There are many methods I like (such as odd-even) or upside-down. This is just intended as a mainstream summary.

Attitude is an essential part of the game. We need to understand it and use it.

“STRIP and ENDPLAY”: We have talked before about getting help from the opponents. This technique can do that. It sounds a bit tawdry, but It is an approved technique for consenting bridge partners. It is worth studying. It is powerful. Many club members use it as a basic part of their arsenal. It gives them a sizeable edge over those that don't.

Basically, the idea is to eliminate a suit or two and then put the opponents into the lead. After they take their trick(s), they have no safe exit. They must give us a trick. Sometimes it does not matter which opponent is put into the lead. That is the case in this example.

Example:

Declarer	Dummy
♠AK742	♠QJ63
♥KT7	♥AJ4
♦K73	♦A82
♣J7	♣A62

You are in **4S**. Looks like you might lose a heart a diamond and a club. You should make 4. You might get 3 heart tricks and make 5. You can finesse for the 3rd heart trick – a 50% chance - but before you do that, examine whether you can make the opponents help you get that 3rd heart trick.

The opening lead is a the **♦Q**. Take the **♦K** and then get the trump out. Now take the **♣A** and give up a club.

- If the opponents lead a heart back, they give you three heart tricks. Done.
- If they lead a club back, ruff it and play the **♦A**.
- If the lead a diamond back, play the **♦A** and ruff your last club.

You have now “stripped” the clubs and have just one small diamond left. Lead the remaining diamond. The opponents are in and they are endplayed.

- If they lead a heart back, you take 3 heart tricks. You make 5.
- If they lead a club or a diamond, ruff it in one hand and discard a heart in the other hand. Again, you make 5. No need to take the heart finesse.

To review: You “stripped” the clubs and the diamonds and your 3rd diamond was the exit card. You must lose the **♦** anyway. Choose the right time to lose it.

I know that some of you are going to tell me that this topic is too advanced for you. It is complex. If this is too much for you right now, you might try just a part of the technique. Forget endplay and just work on clearing and exiting one suit (in attempting to get opponents to break a specific suit for you.)

Determine which suit(s) you do not want to lead (hearts in the above example). Then clear out another suit before giving up the lead. Give them a chance to make a mistake. Maybe they will “break” one of your suits. Maybe they will have to! You may endplay the opponents without knowing that you are endplaying them. If that happens, **do not** act as if you were lucky. Keep a stoic demeanor. Your opponents will fear you in the future. That’s good!

As usual, this topic has books written about it. It is far greater than my brief excursion into it. But, we must start somewhere.

Somewhat heavy. If you read this far, Thanks!

Arne