

3.

	♠ Q 10 9	
	♥ A 7 6 5	
	♦ Q J 3	
	♣ K Q 2	
♠ 7 5		♠ 6 4 3
♥ Q J 10 8 3	♠ N	♥ K 9 4
♦ K 8 7 5	W	♦ 10 9 4 2
♣ 9 4	E	♣ 8 7 6
	S	
	♠ A K J 8 2	
	♥ 2	
	♦ A 6	
	♣ A J 10 5 3	

You are declarer in 7♠ and West leads the ♥Q. How do you plan the play?

This grand slam isn't as lay down as you might have hoped and it looks as though you might be forced to take the diamond finesse for the thirteenth trick. A grand slam on a 50-50 shot isn't ideal however, so you have to look around to see if you can improve the odds and indeed you can.

If trumps break 3-2, which is around a 68% chance, then you should be OK. Win the heart in dummy and ruff a heart high. Return to dummy with a club and ruff another heart high, then use a trump to get back to dummy and ruff the last heart high and finally draw trumps. You jettison your losing diamond on the third spade and you will have pulled off a perfect dummy reversal.

4.

	♠ A 7 3 2	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ 9 5	
	♣ A Q 10 6 3	
♠ K Q J		♠ 10 9 8 4
♥ 8 6 5	♠ N	♥ J 10 7 4 3
♦ Q 6 2	W	♦ 4 3
♣ K 8 4 2	E	♣ 7 5
	S	
	♠ 6 5	
	♥ K Q 9	
	♦ A K J 10 8 7	
	♣ J 9	

You are declarer in 6♦ and West leads the ♠K. How do you plan the play?

Without the spade lead the contract would have been excellent, depending on a successful finesse in either minor, but here you absolutely need the club finesse to work so that you can dispose of your losing spade. But if you try that immediately then if either defender started with a doubleton club they would be able to ruff the ace, forcing you to overruff and your discard would be gone. To prevent this happening you must cash the two top diamonds first. If the queen falls then you can draw the last trump and hope for the club finesse to work and, if not, then as long as trumps are 3-2, if anyone does ruff the ace of clubs it will be with the master trump while you pitch your spade loser.