

vulnerable.

An opportunity for South to demonstrate their newly developed declarer prowess.

♠ KQ53
 ♥ A1042
 ♦ K10
 ♣ J108



♠ A974
 ♥ J7
 ♦ AQ7
 ♣ AK72

West	North	East	South	
-	1♣	pass	1♠	
pass	2♠	pass	4NT	
pass	5♠(2key+♠Q)	pass	6♠	all pass

West leads ♦2.

In a suit contract South counts and plans to reduce their losers.

1st Step: Losers from South, 1♥+1♣ = 2

2nd Step: Reduce losers by? Cannot avoid the ♥ loser, put all energies on how best to eliminate the ♣ loser (into your planning).

3rd Step: Your plan. Option one, lead ♣J and finesse East for ♣Q, a 50% chance. Option two, discard ♣8 from North on 3rd round of ♦s and ruff ♣2, if the ♣s divide 3-3 the ♣7 is high. Option three, play ♣A, ♣K, if the ♣Q falls, the ♣J is high and ruff ♣7.

It is a slam, which option do you choose? To help, the chance of success of Option two is 36% (for a 3-3 break) and the chance of Option three, the ♣Q falling when you play ♣A then ♣K is 18%. Choose wisely, a hint, can you combine any of these options?

Yes you can, as long as you are careful with the order in which you play. You can combine Option three and two in that order. Play the ♣A and ♣K, if the ♣Q falls all is well (Option three), if no luck only now do you discard dummy's ♣J on ♦Q, and ruff a ♣ in dummy (Option two, if ♣s are 3-3 you smile). South's total chance of success, playing in this order is 36+18=54%, better than the 50% finesse of Option one.

South may need to play the 3rd round of diamonds to discard ♣J from North after they have both drawn trumps and played ♣A and ♣K, to allow this win ♠K at Trick 1, so later South can continue with ♠A and ♠Q. South only plays to Trick 1 after making their plan.

Trick 1: ♠2, ♠K, ♠3, ♠7. Win ♠K (you can recover if you play low).
 Tricks 2, 3, 4: Draw trumps starting with ♠K, trumps divide 3-2, that's good news. South follows their plan. Try option three followed by option two
 Tricks 5, 6: ♣A and ♣K, all follow but no ♣Q (first shot missed but South has a second shot).
 Tricks 7, 8: ♠A and ♠Q, discarding the ♣J
 Trick 9: ♣2 ruffed with ♠5. The ♣s divide 3-3, South's second shot scores!

South claims three of the last four tricks with: ♥A, ♠9 and ♣7, winning 12 tricks and making 6♠. Virtue is rewarded as these are the EW hands, South's 54% plan wins but the 50% finesse of ♣Q fails, off to the bar! The full hand:

	♠ KQ53										
	♥ A1042										
	♦ K10										
	♣ J108										
♠ J82	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ .106
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 653		♥ KQ98									
♦ J962		♦ 8543									
♣ Q65		♣ 943									
	♠ A974										
	♥ J7										
	♦ AQ7										
	♣ AK72										

Club Results: No club South out of twenty executed the 54% plan, the three who made 6♠ went all in on option two and their 36% chance won whereas those who took the 50% chance perished, luck's a fortune.

Summary:

Make the best plan you can, especially when playing a slam. Work at it and the rewards will come. Always ask yourself whether you can combine chances to reduce your losers, but be careful to take your chances in the right order. The greater chance you give yourself to succeed, the more often you will.