

♠♥♦♣ GET SOME HELP FROM THE OPP'S ♠♥♦♣

East deals and passes. You have only 14 HP, but your distribution is sensational.

S	South
♠	Q1095
♥	
♦	AKJ10876
♣	A2

You open 1♦ and your partner responds 1♥, naturally. You try a 1♠ and your partner rebids 2♣. This is the 4th suit. It is forcing and may be artificial, saying nothing about clubs. If you can't find a fit in spades, you have no intention in playing in any suit but diamonds. You have a self sufficient trump suit and you show that by jumping to 3♦. Partner bids Blackwood and after showing your two aces, he carries you to 6♦.

West leads the ♥J and you see this imposing dummy.

N	North
♠	A64
♥	AQ73
♦	Q2
♣	KJ54

West leads ♥J

S	South
♠	Q1095
♥	
♦	AKJ10876
♣	A2

In slam contract, it is usually best to count winners. You have 1 spade, 1 heart, 7 diamonds and 2 club tricks. That means you only need one more.

You have several finesses available. You can lead up to the ♠Q, hoping East holds the ♠K. Or, you can play the ♥Q on this first trick, hoping West led from ♥KJ10(x). Finally, you can finesse the ♣J. If any one of those fails, you can hope that your second try will succeed.

Did you notice that all the finesse involve leading up to the dummy? That means that if East was made to lead a suit from his hand. He would, in effect, be giving you a free finesse. This is what is called an "end play." Usually, end plays involve stripping your hands of one or more suits to force the opponent to lead the one containing the finesse, or else, giving you a ruff and discard. But, that is not the type of end play you have here. You don't care what suit is led, as long as East does the leading and he can't lead diamonds or trump.

Therefore, leave the ♥AQ in place and ruff the first trick. Pull trump in 3 rounds and now you're ready to throw East into the lead. But how?

The solution is rather elegant. Lead the ♠Q from your hand. If West has the ♠K and covers, win the ♠A. Now all you need to do is force out the ♠J with your ♠10 and your ♠9 will be the needed extra trick.

If West plays low, you play low from the dummy. If West holds the ♠K, your ♠Q will win the trick. More likely though, East will win the ♠K. Then he will be end played. If he leads a low spade, cover with the ♠10 and if West plays the ♠J, you win the ♠A in the dummy and your ♠9 is high. If East leads the ♠J, win the ♠A and your ♠10 takes the 12th trick. If he leads either a heart or club, you take your free finesse. This is a cold slam.

This is the full deal:

14 D

W West

♠ 873
♥ J1096
♦ 953
♣ 973

6♦ South
NS: 0
EW: 0

N North

♠ A64
♥ AQ73
♦ Q2
♣ KJ54

S South

♠ Q1095
♥
♦ AKJ10876
♣ A2

E East

♠ KJ2
♥ K8542
♦ 4
♣ Q1086

WEST	NORT	EAST	SOUT
P	1♥	P	1♠
P	2♣	P	3♦
P	4N	P	5♥
P	6♦	P	P

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/yyodf5h5> , Or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.