

Hand 1 N

♠ J52		
♥ 743		
♦ AQ4		
♣ AQ65		
♠ KQ104	□	♠ 98763
♥ KJ5		♥ 10986
♦ 87532		♦ 109
♣ 10		♣ 94
	♠ A	
	♥ AQ2	
	♦ KJ6	
	♣ KJ8732	

N	E	S	W	
1NT	NB	3C†	NB	† slam try
3D*	NB	6C		* cue-bid, accepting slam try

K♠ led. Declarer assesses one certain heart loser - 2♥ - and a finesse. Alternatively, South can endplay West into leading a heart to her. The lead marks West with Q♠ - and that is important. South draws trumps, ruffs 5♠ in hand, and plays all the diamonds ending in dummy. Now, J♠ is led on which South must discard her 2♥ loser, forcing West to win. Unable to lead a spade or diamond without conceding a ruff and discard, West must try a heart, which is just as South wants.

Hand 2 E

♠ J93		
♥ K765		
♦ AQJ		
♣ 764		
♠ AK1065	□	♠ Q74
♥ J43		♥ 2
♦ 106		♦ 87432
♣ KJ2		♣ 9853
	♠ 82	
	♥ AQ1098	
	♦ K95	
	♣ AQ10	

N	E	S	W
-	NB	1H	1S
3H	NB	4H	

West starts with ♠AK5; South ruffs. Having bid, West could easily hold K♣ and J♣, so guard against this by setting up an end position. Draw all trumps, then cash all the diamonds, finishing in dummy. Now, a club can be led from dummy and, when East plays low, insert either Q♣ or 10♣. West wins but, because you have eliminated diamonds and spades, West must lead another club or concede a ruff-discard.

Hand 3 S

♠ AQ3		
♥ Q983		
♦ AQ64		
♣ 86		
♠ 1098	□	♠ KJ542
♥ 62		♥ 54
♦ 52		♦ KJ87
♣ KQJ1092		♣ 43
	♠ 76	
	♥ AKJ107	
	♦ 1093	
	♣ A75	

N	E	S	W	
-	-	1H	NB*	* West might bid 3C
2NT†	NB	4H		† Jacoby Raise or similar

All roads lead to 4H and K♣ lead. There is a spade finesse to take and two diamond finesses. All lose: can you still prevail? Win A♣; return 5♣. West wins and switches to 10♠. Try the finesse: it loses. East returns a spade or heart. Win, cash A♠, ruff 3♠ in hand. Ruff 7♣ in dummy, and draw trumps finishing in hand. When you take the first diamond finesse, this loses, but East is stymied: a spade provides a ruff/discard; if she leads a diamond, South no longer has a second loser there.

Hand 4 W

♠ Q3		
♥ AQ986		
♦ A		
♣ KJ876		
♠ J9864	□	♠ 1075
♥ J5		♥ K432
♦ KQ1053		♦ J8742
♣ 3		♣ A
	♠ AK2	
	♥ 107	
	♦ 96	
	♣ Q109542	

N	E	S	W	
1H	NB	2C	NB	
4C*	NB	4S†	NB	* forcing
4NT	NB	5D	NB	† cue-bid
6C				

West leads K♦. Hearts do not need to be established; there is simply the finesse to take. Try to avoid it. A free extra chance would be to win, play 3♠ to K♠ and ruff 6♦ in dummy. Now play Q♠ and overtake with A♠ in hand before ruffing 2♠ in dummy. Diamonds and spades are now eliminated, so exit with a trump. If East wins with A♣ - as she must here - she is endplayed and must lead a heart or provide a ruff/discard. If this fails, there is always the heart finesse to try at the end.