

Dec 80

# CHARGE ACCOUNT

by  
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**West**  
S-J10763  
H-1086  
D-Q  
C-A1085

**North**  
S-A82  
H-J973  
D-KJ1075  
C-J

**South**  
S-Q4  
H-KQ54  
D-A9862  
C-K9

**East**  
S-K95  
H-A2  
D-43  
C-Q76432

## IMPS, NEITHER VULNERABLE

South	West	North	East
1D	1S	Dbf.	2S
3H	Pass	4H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

- Trick 1: DQ, K, 4, 2
- Trick 2: H3, A, 4, 8
- Trick 3: D3, 8, H6, D5
- Trick 4: C5, J, Q, K

Having escaped a club loser, declarer rolled up his game. Who gets the charge?

**Marshall Miles:** "West is 100% at fault since East did nothing wrong. If East had played the three, then the four of diamonds, West's play would be correct. As a matter of theory, since West's lead was obviously a singleton, I don't know whether East's signal at trick one should be suit preference for entry or should show a doubleton. My feeling is that it should be suit preference. But either way, West's lead at trick 4 was wrong."

**Steve Evans:** "This hand is extremely simple to defend as long as the partnership has made a simple standard agreement. When an obvious singleton (sometimes there is a problem about

this, but not here) is led, partner gives suit preference on his play to the first trick unless he is trying to win it. Here, when East played the four of diamonds at trick one and followed with the three, he showed an entry in spades rather than clubs."

The panel has correctly identified the defensive suit preference lapse, but I don't think they gave sufficient thought to East's conduct of the entire campaign. East knows that South has five diamonds after the opening lead, and this fact has two important consequences. First, no pitch is available from either hand; and second, declarer has only four hearts. Thus, the hand is going down if West has the club ace, or the heart queen and club king, unless West goes crazy. East can insure the set by ducking the first heart, and should do so. On the actual hand, ducking the heart eliminates West's reason for the club underlead, since after his ruff he will have no more trumps. And, if West did not have the club ace, a heart misguess might defeat the contract.

On the actual defense, then, West made the crucial mistake. His failure to appreciate the suit preference nature of partner's diamond carding was a clear error. But, as is so often the case, it was his partner who set up the debacle by failing to consider the potential problem that an imaginative, but slightly careless, defender might face.