

# Charge Account

By DAVID WEISS

		North	Neither vulnerable, IMP scoring:	
		S—QJ1084		
		H—1054		
West	D—AQ2	East	South	West
S—AK5	C—J10	S—632	1H	Pass
H—K2		H—976	2C	Pass
D—8765	South	D—J1094	4H	Pass
C—9763	S—97	C—A54	Trick 1: SA, 4, 2, 9.	
	H—AQJ83		Trick 2: D8, 2, 4, K.	
	D—K3			
	C—KQ82			

A spade could be pitched before declarer broached the trump suit, so the contract was made. It is therefore apparent that at least one of the first three cards played by the defenders must have been erroneous. Who gets the charge?

After years of diligent service, Marshall Miles has been paroled to the next page. Ed Davis has agreed to replace him, assigning charges and enduring the moderator's abuse. Thank you, Marshall.

**Ed Davis:** "East gets all of the blame. The hand cannot be defeated if West holds the king of diamonds (declarer would have the other needed high cards). If West does not hold the king of diamonds, he will shift to a diamond at trick two if East discourages in spades. East is aware of this and knows that the winning defense is to continue spades and then shift to clubs. The hand would then be defeated when West has only three spades and either the king of clubs or a heart trick. The ideal way to achieve this defense is for East to play a high spade at trick one and then a higher spade at trick two. West will realize that East does not want a spade ruff or a diamond switch and that it is cash-out time in clubs."

"However, the three of spades at trick two could be from 763 with East wanting a diamond shift. West would have to guess. It is more practical for East to assume West's other high card is a heart trick (the ace, king and probably the queen, will defeat the contract) and to make sure of the spade continuation by playing the six at trick one. West will shift to clubs when he wins his heart trick. The key to the right defense is that East's play at trick one is attitude. With a doubleton spade and the king of diamonds, East should play a small spade at trick one to get partner to switch to diamonds before the spades are established."

**Steve Evans:** "West gets a slight charge for a bad guess and East gets no charge. At trick 2, another high spade, a diamond, or a club could be right depending on declarer's hand. On this hand, either another spade or a club would work but declarer might have had xx, AQJxx, xx, AKQx, in which case a diamond would be required."

The panel blew it but they are in distinguished company. This deal was played in a recent Team Trials and both pairs (Hamman-Wolff and Root-Pavliceck) had to cope with East's spade two at trick one. One West guessed to continue spades before shifting to a diamond while the other shifted to the diamond first. Both of these defenses are illogical, although one was successful.

East knows that two spades will have to cash for the defense to have a chance. Therefore, the contract will not be given away if South ruffs the second spade; West cannot have two side high cards and AKxx of spades. East also knows that a diamond shift will look very attractive to his partner if he plays his lowest spade.

However, East cannot afford to play his highest spade. West will inevitably try for a ruff as East cannot have great length in spades and one of East's two high-card hopes will evaporate. East needs his partner to have the club king or a trump trick, and the logical way to explore the options is to cash the two spades and then try two rounds of clubs. The club chance will disappear if three rounds of clubs are played. On the other hand, when West sees his partner play middle-up spades, it will be obvious that East did not want a diamond shift and so he will be forced to try clubs (West can count three spade pitches and one diamond pitch to cover declarer's club losers).

So East must hope that his partner will be able correctly to read the spade three. The two gives West no chance (and earns East a full charge) and the six could induce a disaster. Because West will be missing the deuce if the correct card is played, the defense is likely to prevail. West will know that a second spade will cash and he must allow for a doubleton in his partner's hand.