

CHARGE ACCOUNT

by
David J. Weiss

Charge Account Hand 4

North		
S-KJ		
West	H-K3	East
S-Q1085	D-J10953	S-763
H-AJ542	C-KJ65	H-10987
D-K8		D-742
C-Q9	South	C-1042
	S-A942	
	H-Q6	
	D-AQ6	
	C-A873	

IMP scoring, both vulnerable.

The auction:

South	West	North	East
1NT	2C* ¹	2NT* ²	P
3C* ³	P	3NT* ⁴	P
P	P		

*¹ = Landy, both majors

*² = Lebensohl, forcing 3C from South

*³ = as ordered

*⁴ = stoppers in both of opponent's suits

The Play:

Trick 1: Heart 4, K, 9, 6.

Trick 2: Diamond J, 2, 6, K.

Trick 3: Heart 2, 3, 7, Q.

Declarer now made twelve tricks. Well?

Marty Shallon: "So, what's the problem?"

South has 15-18 HCP for his 1NT opening. This means that he must have all of the missing points. Therefore, the proper play at trick 3 is the heart ace. Any other play will let declarer in and allow him to make his contract.

Let's assume that South opened 1NT with only 14 HCP. Then it is possible that East has the heart queen. The heart ace is still the proper play. If East has QX of hearts left he will play the queen under the ace. If East has

because West had no choice as to what to do. If he counted points, he would know East has at most one. Therefore, his only hope is that South has stiff queen of hearts remaining, and he should lead his ace.

There is a theoretical problem of interest raised by this heart suit even though on this hand other considerations obviate it. How does West differentiate between East's 10xxx or Qxx on the one hand or 10xx and an outside entry on the other. There will be guesses sometimes. I agree that East should encourage with 10xxx or Qxx and discourage with 10xx. This will solve most problems, and hopefully West will guess right the rest of the time."

Perhaps the editor should apologize for setting a trivial problem before the panel. But I couldn't resist, since one of the panelists was East when this problem occurred. (And I was South, and we lost the match, and this publicity is a consolation . . .) Perhaps the generality of the problem would be more obvious if I had moved the club queen to the East hand. There should be a means by which East can communicate his holding in the critical suit to his partner. When dummy wins the heart king, East's primary duty should be to deny the heart queen. Thus he should play low. Then East should utilize the special signal described in this column by Marty two months ago. When declarer leads a diamond from the table, East should play the nine. The meaning of a high card in the first suit attacked by declarer is "Partner, I have a bet-

QXX of hearts left he will play low. Then at trick four, West will lead a low heart to the queen, and East will come back to West's JX.

Therefore, there is no reason for West to blindly take East's play of the 9 at trick one as a come-on showing the queen."

Steve Evans: "The hand as given is very easy to solve

ter holding in the suit you led than appearances suggest." Here East would be signaling extra length since he has already denied the crucial honor. The point is that East should signal, rather than attempting to direct the defense. In general, East cannot **direct** the defense because he is uncertain of his partner's length.