

	<b>North</b>	
	S—J103	
	H—965	
<b>West</b>	D—10962	<b>East</b>
S—KQ52	C—1064	S—876
H—AJ		H—Q1032
D—J5	<b>South</b>	D—Q843
C—QJ873	S—A94	C—A2
	H—K874	
	D—AK7	
	C—K95	

**E-W vul, IMP scoring**

<b>South</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>
1C.	Pass	Pass	1D
1NT*	Dbl.	Pass	Pass
Pass			

\*15-17 HCP

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Trick 1: DJ, 2, 3, A | Trick 4: HA, 5, 2, 7   |
| Trick 2: H4, J, 5, Q | Trick 5: D5, 10, 4, 7  |
| Trick 3: S8, 9, Q, 3 | Trick 6: H9, 3, 8, C3. |

It wasn't easy, but with the club king and space ace slated to score, the defenders had manager to make seven tricks out of the five South began with. Who gets the charge?

**Steve Evans:** "This hand is an example of total lunacy in the bidding which led to the defense screwing up. Why East would balance with 1D on Qxxx is beyond me, and why South would bid 1NT with no tricks opposite a passing partner is also amazing. Although I don't like leading Jx of partner's suit on this bidding, there's no attractive alternative. East's play of the heart queen at trick 2 is quite dangerous, since if declarer has A8xx, K8xx, or AKxx, it will either blow a trick or create the chance of blowing a trick if declarer can get to dummy. West's plays at tricks 4 and 5 are incomprehensible. Partner discouraged in diamonds at trick 1. Therefore, he has 0 points in spades, 2 in hearts, 2 in diamonds and so must have the club ace or king. Best defense would be for West to return the club 8 (so partner won't return clubs and will play spades) and East returning a spade upon winning the club ace. I'm sure that West couldn't believe his partner had Qxxx of diamonds, which is why he defended as he did. However, since East must have a club honor, West should lead a club."

**Marshall Miles:** "West is completely at fault in the defense. I dislike East's diamond bid so much—even though it 'worked,' that I'd like to find some fault with him. But I can't. Everything East did on defense was logical, including using his entries to advantage.

"East was marked with the ace or king of clubs by the bidding: If he had xxx, KQxx, Qxxx, xx, the diamond bid would be even worse than it was—surely if East were going to bid a suit, he would bid one heart. So, at trick four, West should return a low club."

Poor West. His partner bids and defends so as to trap him and the panelists blame him for falling into the trap. What is West's picture of the hand after he wins the queen of spades at trick 3? East must have xxx, KQ10x, Qxxxx, x. This pattern is consistent with the auction and the high card structure is consistent with the defense. East discouraged in diamonds because he wanted a heart switch and he overtook in hearts, knowing it couldn't cost, to play through in spades. All sensible, including declarer's plan to eventually establish a heart (hoping for a 3-3 split) while avoiding breaking any of the other suits. Since exit cards for West were scarce, he unblocked the heart at trick 4, then the diamond to set up partner's queen (surely safe from West's point of view), waiting for as many black suit tricks as declarer or partner would sent his way. No, panelists, East is not marked with a club honor. His defense marks him with the heart king—even though he actually didn't have it.

What would have happened if East had not gotten so busy, if he had simply let the heart jack hold? West might well have defended the same way, cashing the heart ace and returning a diamond. That would almost surely have led to down one and one would shrug and say that East's bidding had confused West into achieving a sub-par penalty. But West would have had a chance to make a good play. The deuce of hearts from East at trick 2, although not at all suit-preference, might have allowed West to figure out that his partner had a club honor, and then declarer