

By David Weiss

And so, despite a brilliant beginning, the defenders allowed the contract to make. Who gets the charge?

"Nearly all of the charge goes to East since not cashing the ace of diamonds is a clear and costly mistake."

The spade eight was as careless as the heart four was careful. There is no conceivable way for that card to help. Surely East did not need to be told to cash his hypothetical heart ace with the bare king in dummy. With five spades to choose from, and with that freedom of choice known to his partner, West found the only card that could induce a disaster. Since West's error could never be justified, while East's purported error could have been a necessary play, West gets the charge. I exonerate East completely.