

CHARGE ACCOUNT

David J. Weiss

	North	
	S-Q1096	
West	H-J94	East
S-2	H-J94	S-AJ87543
H-A73	D-KQ93	H---
D-J874	C-J10	D-105
C-KQ973		C-A854
	South	
	S-K	
	H-KQ108652	
	D-A62	
	C-62	

Both vulnerable, IMP scoring

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

Trick 1: S2, 6, **A**, K
 Trick 2: S3, **HQ**, C7, S9
 Trick 3: H5, 3, **J**, S4
 Trick 4: **DK**, 5, 2, 4
 Trick 5: D3, 10 **A**, 7
 Trick 6: D6, 8, **9**, S5

Declarer now pitched a club on the fourth diamond and claimed the contract. Who gets the charge?

Marshall Miles: "West is at fault. Since he has a trump holding that cannot be promoted, he should over-ruff at trick two and cash the king of clubs, followed by low to the ace.

East's play at trick two could have worked out badly if West had held: x, Q10x, Axx, Kxxxxx; but that is a little unlikely. My inclination would be to lead the four of clubs at trick two, but that could also work out badly. East's play was reasonable, but West's was not."

and led the king and a low club. West can see there is no hope for the defense to get any more tricks since he has no heart spots. East defended correctly in my opinion, although on certain hands a club return would work better than the spade return he chose."

The panelists agree completely, but I think they're wrong. Certainly West's defense was short-sighted and wrong; but I can guess what was going through his sleepy mind. He had the trump ace, how could anything get away? East's play of the spade three was more outrageous. He was in the captain's seat for this defense, and should have taken the time to figure out what to do after he won the spade ace.

What can the double be based on? Surely one or two trump tricks and either the club king or the diamond ace. Can West have promotable hearts? Not with J9x in the dummy. So the spade return is wrong, because it may allow South to pitch an inevitable club loser while West ruffs with a natural trump trick. West **can** have AQ tight of hearts; a weak eight-card heart suit is not inconsistent with South's bidding. What should East return? A low club. If West has the club king, the defense will get all of the tricks it is entitled to; if West does not have the club king, he will have the diamond ace and will be able to snatch it and get the club ace cashed. The profit from the club play arises when South has both the king and jack of clubs; he is forced to guess the suit before he knows which defender has the diamond ace. The only case in which a low club shift might hurt is where declarer has a singleton king of clubs, but this holding is inconsistent with both

Steve Evans: "West was just plain stupid during this defense. When his partner returned the spade three, East must have the club ace. If he had no card in either minor, he would play a middle spade, so the spade three must guarantee a club card. Also, if East has the club ace, South must have all the outstanding high cards for his bidding. So, West should have overruffed the heart queen

this holding is inconsistent with both South's bidding and West's bidding. Even then, though, the contract is likely to be defeated because West will (should?) have two trump tricks along with his diamond ace. Since the club play can hardly lose, and it may well gain an extra undertrick on some hands, I assign this defensive charge to East, even though West made the last, and most expensive, mistake.