

**West**

S—J2  
H—KJ73  
D—A52  
C—J876

**North**

S—KQ84  
H—542  
D—J108  
C—K42

**South**

S—A6  
H—A109  
D—KQ964  
C—Q109

**East**

S—109753  
H—Q86  
D—73  
C—A53

*Neither vul., IMPs*

**South**

INT  
Pass

**West**

Pass  
Pass

**North**

3NT

**East**

Pass

Trick 1: H3, 2, **Q**, 9  
Trick 2: H8, 10, **J**, 4  
Trick 3: HK, 5, 6, **A**  
Trick 4: D4, 2, **J**, 3

Trick 5: D10, 7, 6, **A**  
Trick 6: **H7**, C2, S3, C9  
Trick 7: D5, 8, C5, **DK**

When declarer cashed the last two diamonds (discarding clubs from dummy), East found himself squeezed between clubs and spades. Who gets the charge for this ignominy?

**Steve Evans:** This was a defense where one defender was sloppy and the other defender didn't think. East's not signalling in diamonds was stupid; there was no reason at all for not signalling. This probably lulled West into a false sense of security at trick 7. However, when partner played the spade 3 at trick 6, he obviously had 5 spades without the ace. So either partner had the club ace or declarer would have the remainder, with 3 spades, 1 heart, 2 clubs, and 3 diamonds (since declarer still has the king and queen)."

**Marshall Miles:** "West is 90% at fault, with East sharing 10% of the blame. When West cashes his long hearts, he can see that declarer has the rest of the tricks if he has both black aces. East's discard shows that he does not have the ace of spades. Even if he should have the ace of spades, he couldn't lose it if West were to return a club after South's club discard.

"However, there is the remote chance of losing the ace of clubs if clubs are not returned and if South has a five-card diamond suit. That is where East's 10% of the blame comes in. Generally I don't believe it pays for the defenders to signal their distribution as declarer is running his suits, since it may help declarer to finesse against partner's jacks and tens. But here it can't help declarer after he had led low to the jack of diamonds. A high-low in diamonds might awaken West from his slumber and call his attention to the danger of passive defense."

It is never trivial to envision an impending squeeze, but on this deal it was hardly necessary for West to be insightful. All he had to do was count declarer's tricks, assuming either one or two black aces. If declarer had both, he was home; if he had the club ace but not the spade ace, he could never make the contract. So the only situation in which West's play could matter was the one that existed, where declarer had the spade ace but not the club ace. West's failure to lead a club at trick 7 was an atrocity. The negligence attributed to East by the panelists was not contributory.