

2013 Summer NABC
Appeals Casebook



Foreward

The appeal hearings and commentary descriptions are now being compiled and edited by the American Contract Bridge League. They are published on the ACBL web page. This internet publication is intended to be a tool to help improve the abilities of Tournament Directors and to communicate decisions and the process to arrive at those decisions to the membership at large.

A total of seventeen (17) cases were heard.

Twelve (12) cases were from unrestricted (by masterpoints) North American Bridge Championship Events. The names of the players involved are included.

Five (5) cases were from all other events. The names of the players involved are included when the event from which the appeal came was a Flight A/X event or was the top bracket of a bracketed knockout event. When the names of the players are not used, the player's masterpoint total is included.

The cases are first presented without commentary. After the official Panel of commentators has had an opportunity to provide their commentary and any corrections to the cases, the commentary is added, corrections are made and the internet publication is finalized.

Everyone involved in this process is due praise for their efforts. Special thanks to the NABC Appeals Committee and the Tournament Directors serving on the Review Panels and commentators. Without their considerable contribution of time and effort, this publication would not exist.

ACBL Headquarters
Horn Lake, MS

Abbreviations used in this casebook:

AI	Authorized Information
AWMW	Appeal Without Merit Warning
BIT	Break in Tempo
CoC	Conditions of Contest
LA	Logical Alternative
MI	Misinformation
NOS	Non-Offending Side
OS	Offending Side
PP	Procedural Penalty
TD	Tournament Director
UI	Unauthorized Information

Expert Panel

Jeff Goldsmith is an American bridge player originally from Schenectady, NY, currently residing in California. He graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Caltech and works as a software engineer, focusing on computer graphics and animation and internet programming, all with a heavy mathematical perspective. He created computer animation for JPL for several years including the movie about Voyager's encountering Neptune. He ice-dances and plays many other games, particularly German board games. Goldsmith is an ACBL Platinum Life Master and serves on the ACBL Competitions & Conventions Committee and ACBL Laws Commission.

Ton Kooijman has been a tournament director in the Netherlands for almost fifty years and has been involved in international bridge for almost thirty. He became the operations director for both the European Bridge League and the World Bridge Federation in the mid 90's. He became a member of the WBF Laws Committee in 1994 and in 1997, he replaced Edgar Kaplan as chairman. His approach as member of the commentating group is to concentrate more on the technical application of the laws. Since he is European, the differences in approach between both continents might draw his attention.

Rui Marques was born in 1962 and grew up in Portugal. He is Chemical Engineer, with a M.Sc. in Applied Mathematics and a Ph.D. in Chemometrics. Married to Connie Goldberg, he currently splits his time between Philadelphia (U.S.A.) and Cascais (Portugal). Having started as a Tournament Director in 1989, he directed his first international championship in 1992. He has been the Assistant Chief TD for the WBF since 2011, Chief TD for the EBL since 2015, Sports Personality of the Year in Portugal in 2016. He also is a Lecturer and Group Leader in the EBL International Tournament Directors Courses. He joined the ACBL Tournament Director Staff in 2017 and was promoted to Associate National Tournament Director in February of 2021.

Adam Wildavsky was born in Ohio and grew up in Berkeley and Oakland, CA and London, England. A graduate of MIT, he is a retired software engineer and now spends winters in Keystone, CO and much of the rest of the year in New York City. Mr. Wildavsky has won numerous national championships, including the Blue Ribbon Pairs twice, the Reisinger BAM Teams once, and the USBF Open Team Trials twice. He won a bronze medal for the USA in the 2003 Bermuda Bowl and represented Switzerland in the 2012 World Bridge Games. Mr. Wildavsky is a member of the WBF Executive Council, vice-chair of the ACBL National Laws Commission, a member of the WBF Laws Committee, and a former chairman of the ACBL National Appeals Committee. His interest in the Laws is informed by his study of Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand.

Kit Woolsey is a world-class bridge and backgammon player, analyst, and writer, born in Washington, DC. He graduated from Oberlin College in 1964 and earned a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a three-time World Champion and holds more than a dozen NABC titles. His most recent major victory was winning the Cavendish Invitational Pairs in 2011. He was elected to the ACBL Hall of Fame in 2005 and lives in Kensington, CA. He has been one of the Panelists on *The Bridge World* Master Solvers Club since 1984. He also serves on the ACBL Competitions & Convention Committee and the Bridge Integrity Task Force.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: N1
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Event	von Zedtwitz LM Pairs	Event DIC	Chris Patrias
Date	08/02/2013	Session	First Qualifying


Auction

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass
1NT ¹	2♣	2♦ ²	2♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 11 – 14 HCP
2: ♥ Transfer, No Alert

Hand Record

Board	12	N	Bar Tarnovski		
Dealer	W	♠ AQ863	♥ AQ		
Vul	N/S	♦ K10	♣ K1053		
W	Matt Leung			E	Robert Shore
♠	K1094			♠	7
♥	74			♥	J10965
♦	A542			♦	QJ87
♣	A98			♣	Q76
		S	Melanie Tucker		
		♠	J52		
		♥	K832		
		♦	963		
		♣	J42		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♠ by N	Down 2	E/W +200	♥ J

Facts Determined at the Table

North summoned the director at the conclusion of play. West had not Alerted East's 2♦. Per their convention card, the pair played "systems on" over balancing No Trumps and over a 2♣ intervening bid. North declared, therefore, placing long diamonds and the ♦A in the East hand. North won the ♥J lead with the ace, cashed the ♥Q and played the ♠Q from hand, West ducking. North then exited with the ♦K, won by West. At trick five, the play continued with a low diamond to East's jack. East switched to the ♥10, covered by the king and ruffed by West, North pitching a club. West returned another diamond, which declarer ruffed. Declarer cashed the ♠A and exited with a spade to West's king, East pitching his last diamond and a heart. West cashed the last diamond on which North pitched a club. In the three-card ending, West exited with a club, and North misguessed the position.

Director Ruling

North failed to play on clubs to set them up and lost control of the hand. The decision to take this line of play was not attributable to the failure to alert. The director ruled that the misinformation did not cause the damage and let the table result stand.

Director's Ruling	2♠ by N, Down 2, E/W +200
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The Appeal

North/South appealed the ruling, and North, East and West appeared at the hearing. North stated that with knowledge of the transfer bid, he would not have played the ♦K early in the play. North further stated West must have known that East held long hearts and that he should have Alerted or Announced the transfer. North had placed long diamonds in East's hand and misguessed as a result.

The Screening Director determined that East/West were a new partnership with only two hours of discussion before playing and that they had not discussed if transfers were on in this specific auction. They confirmed they were playing systems on over a balancing 1NT and that they were playing systems on over an intervening 2♣ bid. E/W felt that the lack of an Alert (if one was due) was not the cause of declarer going down two. They maintained that declarer had enough information in the end position to guess clubs correctly.

Committee Findings

The Appeals Committee found that East/West had not discussed whether transfers would apply in this auction, although they would apply absent the 2♣ interference. The committee determined that this was a new partnership which had had limited discussion and that they had no agreement about whether transfers applied to the sequence. Because the failure to have an agreement is not Alertable, the committee found that West's non-Alert of 2♦ was not an infraction. The committee also found that declarer's play of the hand was sufficiently weak to warrant a finding that even had there been misinformation, the chain of causality from it was broken and that any putative misinformation was not the cause of the bad result (Law 12C1b). Therefore, the table result was allowed to stand.

Committee Decision	2♣ by N, Down 2, E/W +200
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Committee Members

Chair	Richard Popper
Member	Ed Lazarus
Member	Craig Allen
Member	Bruce Reeve
Member	Blair Seidler

Commentary

Goldsmith: There was misinformation. It was established that E/W play systems on over the balancing 1NT, and their system is to play that, over a 2♣ intervention, Double is Stayman and transfers, etc. are on.

The MI didn't damage N/S. The bidding convinced North that the ♦A and ♦QJ absolutely had to be reversed? And in the endgame, the bidding convinced him that West had balanced on an 8-count?

The appeal had no merit.

Kooijman: This is an astonishing start. The first time in my life that a pair insists they have an agreement and both the TD and AC deny it. My partner offers me his convention card, I go through it, accept all, we start play and if there is confusion and the TD decides that there is an infraction, we appeal and the AC will save us, explaining to us that we do not have an agreement, because we did not discuss it properly. Fantastic.

The TD focuses on the clubs and rules that the way North played is not related to the infraction. That may be true but would declarer have played the ♦K to trick 4 had 2♦ been alerted? I do not believe it. Yes, the play was poor, regardless the lack of an alert. But the criterion here is: would North have played diamonds the same way with an Alert? No, so the score should be adjusted to minus 1.

And if, as the AC felt, there is no infraction there is no need to tell declarer that she played the board poorly. The weaker the player, the more protection is needed.

Marques: The director should have established the facts regarding the existence or not of an agreement by EW about the meaning of 2♦. The argument about the quality of the play might be valid, but the correct decision should have been "no infraction, no adjustment."

Wildavsky: As I understand our Alert regulations, a pair that does not have an agreement should not alert. Few pairs would be on firm ground here.

If there was no irregularity, then there can be no adjustment.

Whether our regulations could be improved is a separate matter. I don't like to ask pairs about auctions where there were no alerts, but perhaps I should do so more often.

Woolsey: Playing transfers on this auction is pretty unusual. If I had to guess, that wasn't really the partnership agreement, and East got confused when he bid 2♦. It does appear perhaps strange that West didn't raise to 3♦ if he thought 2♦ was natural, but he does have fair defense against 2♣.

At any rate, declarer's line of play (leading out the king of diamonds) was really ridiculous. Also, at the end declarer knew what had happened in the auction since West had ruffed the third round of hearts. Thus, the failure to alert had nothing to do with West's misguess in the club suit.

In conclusion, I agree with the committee.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: N2
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Event	von Zedtwitz LM Pairs	Event DIC	Chris Patrias
Date	08/02/2013	Session	First Qualifying


Auction

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT ¹	Pass
2♣ ²	Pass	2NT ³	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 16 – 18 HCP
2: New Minor Forcing
3: Explained as maximum

Hand Record

Board	4	N	Andrew Stark
Dealer	W	♠ 97643	
		♥ QJ	
Vul	Both	♦ K3	
		♣ QJ97	
W	Abe Paul		
♠	K52		
♥	K10753		
♦	Q1092		
♣	2		
		S	Franco Baseggio
		♠	QJ
		♥	A842
		♦	J65
		♣	8643

E Charles Hubert

♠ A108
♥ 96
♦ A874
♣ AK105

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 3	E/W +600	♠ Q

Facts Determined at the Table

North/South summoned the director after play of the hand had ended. At the end of the auction, South had asked about the bids. West made it clear that they had no firm agreement, but said that past experience led him to believe that 2NT showed a maximum. North asked how East would show a minimum and West said that he thought 2♦ would be weaker.

South led the ♠Q. Declarer won the ace and ran the ♥9 to North's queen. The ♣Q return was won by declarer, who played another heart to the 10 and jack. The spade exit went to the jack and dummy's king. Declarer called for dummy's ♥K (North pitching a spade) and South won the ♥A. At trick seven, South exited with the ♦5 to the 10, king and ace. East took three spades, four diamonds and two clubs to make the contract.

Director Ruling

East should have attempted to clarify their partner's explanation. South was in a position at trick seven where he could have defended properly if he played declarer to have 15 HCP rather than 18 HCP. Accordingly, the director assigned a score of 3NT by East, down one, North/South +100.

Director's Ruling	3NT by E, Down 1, N/S +100
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and South, East and West appeared before the committee. West made it clear that E/W had no firm agreement about the auction, and East confirmed this. East thought that, had he bid 2♦, it would have shown five diamonds. Further, East thought the position of the ♠10 was clear, and it could not cost for South to take their other heart winner and play a club.

South did not think it so clear that E/W had no agreement about 2♦, but that West thought that East had a maximum. Given that East had a maximum, he would have the ♦AK, and a diamond lead could not cost a trick. A club lead was dangerous, because North would have continued clubs with Q-J-10-x. South did not think it clear that East had the ♠10. A diamond lead would make East work for their tricks.

The screening director determined that the lead of the ♠Q showed the ♠K or shortness in the suit (at most two cards). N/S use upside-down count and attitude.

Committee Findings

The Committee determined that East/West had no firm agreement about whether 2NT showed a maximum or minimum as stated by West. East was under no obligation to tell the opponents what his hand was.

Additionally, if East had held the hand that South feared (♠Axx ♥9x ♦AKxx ♣AK10x), it would have been trivial for declarer to play the ♦10 on South's diamond switch, guaranteeing two diamond entries to the dummy to set up and use the long heart, as well as four sure diamond tricks, making 3NT.

The Committee decided that North/South were not damaged by the misinformation and the table result was restored, 3NT by East, making 3, E/W +600.

Committee Decision	3NT by E, Made 3, E/W +600
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Committee Members

Chair	Douglas Doub
Member	Eugene Kales
Member	Michael Huston
Member	James Thurtell
Member	Mark Bartusek

Commentary

Goldsmith: Was there misinformation? I think there was not. West clearly said that his understanding of 2NT was a guess based on general bridge experience. That's not a legal explanation, but I don't think it qualifies as MI, either. Despite that, if I were East, before the opening lead, I'd speak up and say something like, "the correct explanation is that we have no agreement. He's not supposed to guess what I think the difference is between 2♦ and 2NT."

I have sympathy for South. It's hard to know how to deal with West's explanation. And while South might have got the defense right anyway, in a matchpoint event, it's very attractive to place the ♦K in East's hand, and get the play moving forward. On the other hand, South played East to have an 18 count most would upgrade, and for his partner to have failed to continue spades with the ♠10 (did North encourage at Trick 1?), which also seems unlikely.

While I have sympathy for South and not for East/West, I'd rule result stands, as the AC did.

Kooijman: Another case that creates questions. What does 'firm agreement' mean? Your opponent tells you that there is no firm agreement but that there is past experience. Is it strange then to translate this as: we do not have an explicit agreement here but the implicit agreement is this. It is past experience that creates implicit agreements, so I tend to support the TD who decided that East should have clarified the situation.

The Committee uses 'firm agreement' too. It may be true that there was no such agreement, but it would be much better if we strictly apply the laws, where 'firm' is not a necessary condition. The analyses telling South that he played poorly is correct but not relevant. In a role as Reviewer I would have instructed the committee to reconsider the case and find a better ground for the conclusion that there was no misinformation.

In cases 1 and 2, there is too much focus on less than optimal play and too much protection for the side causing the problems.

Marques: As in N1, the director should have investigated E/W's agreements a little deeper. And once again, "no infraction, no adjustment." Good decision by the Committee.

Wildavsky: I agree with the AC ruling. If there was no irregularity, then there was no reason to adjust the score. The AC could have stopped there.

Woolsey: As I understand the facts, West said when questioned that there was no firm agreement about the 2NT call and that he was just guessing based upon past experience. Assuming that is an accurate statement by West of the partnership understandings, East is quite correct to not correct the explanation. It wasn't misleading at all – it was the partnership understanding.

The committee came up with the correct ruling. However, I don't like the wording of the ruling. They say that N/S were not damaged by the misinformation. The proper wording should be: There was no misinformation.

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N3
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Event	von Zedtwitz LM Pairs	Event DIC	Chris Patrias
Date	08/03/2013	Session	Second Semi-Final


Auction

West	North	East	South
	1NT ¹	Pass	Pass ²
2♦ ³	Pass	2♥ ⁴	Pass ⁵
Pass	Db1 ⁶	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15 – 17 HCP
2: Break in tempo
3: ♦ & a Major suit
4: Pass or correct
5: Break in tempo
6: Takeout

Hand Record

Board	21	N	Lynn Deas		
Dealer	N	♠	AK96		
		♥	763		
Vul	N/S	♦	QJ		
		♣	AQ84		
W	Roy Welland			E	Sabine Auken
♠	Q7			♠	10853
♥	KQ84			♥	J105
♦	K9742			♦	A5
♣	75			♣	J1032
		S	Steve Landen		
		♠	J42		
		♥	A92		
		♦	10863		
		♣	K96		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♥X by E	Down 2	N/S +300	♣ K

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned by West after play of the hand had completed. West stated that twice during the auction, South had broken tempo, which conveyed Unauthorized Information to North. South had hesitated for about 12-15 seconds before passing over North's 1NT, and again for about 6-8 seconds following East's 2♥ call, after receiving an explanation of the E/W bidding agreements. North acknowledged hesitations by her partner, but not as large as West maintained, and stated that South "is always slow."

Director Ruling

Examination of South's hand showed that the holding was likely to prompt a break in tempo over 1NT. The first hesitation was likely to have conveyed this UI to North. The second hesitation increased the likelihood that action by North would be more successful than inaction. Pass was a logical alternative to doubling, so, per Laws 16B1 and 12C1e, the result was changed to 2♥ by East, down 2, N/S +100.

Director's Ruling	2♥ by E, Down 2, N/S +100
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The Appeal

North/South appealed the ruling, and they along with West attended the hearing. South was experiencing vision problems, and in order to avoid missorting his hands, he had been taking considerable extra time. Evidence supporting this existed in that N/S has received a late play, even though North was a very fast player. Also, South said he led the ♣K because he thought it was a doubleton (South did not say what he thought his actual pattern was).

North presented as evidence that she held four cards each in the unbid suits, with the majority of the hands strength in those suits. She was an aggressive player, and would always compete with a double. South had been consistently slow, and the tempo had not influenced North's decision to double.

West reiterated that South had hesitated prior to both of his first calls, but the third Pass was instantaneous. South's tempo at the first two turns suggested values that made double more attractive to North. There was no assurance at that point in the auction that either E/W or N/S had a fit, and therefore Pass was a logical alternative to a double.

Committee Findings

The amount of time that South took at his first turn constituted a clear Break in Tempo. The second pass came after a borderline BIT. Combined, they clearly suggested values that made North's double more attractive.

Although most of North's values were in the black suits, the intermediates in those suits were only moderate. The opponents did not have a proven fit, North did not have shortness in hearts, and the ♦QJ were more defensive values than offensive ones.

The AC had considerable sympathy for North, who likely would have always doubled, and for South, with his vision problems. However, they judged that Pass was a logical alternative to the suggested double. Therefore, the director's ruling was confirmed.

Committee Decision

2♥ by E, Down 2, N/S +100

Committee Members

Chair	Douglas Doub
Member	Eugene Kales
Member	Michael Huston
Member	James Thurtell
Member	Marc Rabinowitz

Commentary

Goldsmith: Didn't the directors take a poll? If they had polled eight players holding the North cards, and all had said, "double, what's the problem," would the ruling have been the same? I don't think that would happen; I think a poll would end up showing that it's close between passing and doubling. Therefore, I think the ruling is correct, but we ought to have poll results to back it up.

North's argument to the AC, "she was an aggressive player, and would always compete with a double. South had been consistently slow, and the tempo had not influenced North's decision to double," means, "please give me an AWMW." I think doubling is normal enough that North does not get a PP for abuse of UI; it should be easy to find players whose judgment matches North's in that double is automatic.

Kooijman: Why are these write-ups so confusing? Does the TD decide on her/his own that pass is a LA? Is the AC transformed into a polling group for a while? Anyway, if it appears that pass is a LA I feel no sympathy for North. Only the fact that no clear poll seems to have been taken prevents me from awarding an AWMW.

Marques: Despite South's vision problems, or even maybe because of them, the very significant BIT suggests values and makes the double significantly more attractive than the pass by North. Once pass is established to be a LA, there's nothing much to add. Good decision by the director and the Committee.

Wildavsky: The TD and AC rulings look right to me.

Woolsey: As is so often the case, the cards speak. The South hand says there was a BIT. Consequently, if E/W claim there was a BIT, there was.

Given the fact that there was a BIT, the ruling is very clear. North's double (as opposed to passing) was clearly indicated by the UI. While the double is a reasonable action, it is far from automatic IMO. If that assessment is accurate, then the committee ruling was correct.

One thing puzzles me: Why was no poll taken? This is a model situation where the North hand should be given as a bidding problem (with no UI, of course), to see if passing is a LA. If everybody re-opened with a double and thought the action clear-cut, that would be meaningful.

Subject of Appeal:	Unauthorized Information	Case:	N4
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Event	von Zedtwitz LM Pairs	Event DIC	Chris Patrias
Date	08/04/2013	Session	First Final


Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♦ ¹	1♥
2NT ²	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 10 - 16 HCP, unbalanced
2: Explained as weak, ♣ & ♦

Hand Record

Board	18	N	David Caprera
Dealer	E	♠ J4	
		♥ J102	
Vul	N/S	♦ J76	
		♣ QJ954	
W	Zygmunt Marcinski		
♠	Q82		
♥	KQ8		
♦	AQ95		
♣	1032		
		E	Nicolas L'Ecuyer
		♠	K1076
		♥	7
		♦	K8432
		♣	A76
		S	Anne Brenner
		♠	A953
		♥	A96543
		♦	10
		♣	K8

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by W	Made 5	E/W +460	♥ J

Facts Determined at the Table

North/South summoned the director after play of the hand concluded. The opening bid of 1♦ by East, shows 10-16 HCP, unbalanced, and could be made with no diamonds. An opening bid of 2♦ would be 10-16 with six diamonds, QJ9xxx or better.

West's 2NT was Alerted and explained as showing a weak hand with both minors. The actual partnership agreement was that it showed five of the other major plus five in either minor, invitational. The director determined that West had forgotten their agreement and bid 2NT as an invitation.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The director polled five players and found that four of the five passed 3♦ after making an invitational 2NT bid. This poll established that pass was a logical alternative to bidding 3NT.

Director Ruling

The director found that the unauthorized information (UI) from the explanation of the 2NT bid suggested bidding 3NT. Pass was a logical alternative to bidding 3NT. Accordingly, the director ruled that the result be adjusted to 3♦ by East, making four, E/W +130.

Director's Ruling	3♦ by E, Made 4, E/W +130
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and West appeared at the hearing. He stated that if East had known the 2NT bid was invitational, his partner's bid of 3♦ improved his hand enough to bid 3NT. He now knew his side had at least five tricks in diamonds, two in hearts and could most likely find one or two more in the other suits.

Committee Findings

The Committee determined that there was a substantial set of hands with which East would have bid game over the 2NT invitational bid. Since East had Alerted and explained the 2NT bid as weak with both minors, the UI told West that East could have many holdings where he would have bid 3NT if he had treated 2NT as invitational. Therefore, the UI suggested bidding 3NT. Because the Appeals Committee further found that pass was a logical alternative, it declined to change the previous adjustment, 3♦ by East, making four, E/W +130. The AC issued an Appeal without Merit Warning.

Committee Decision	3♦ by E, Made 4, E/W +130
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Committee Members

Chair	Adam Wildavsky
Member	Craig Allen
Member	James Thurtell
Member	Richard Popper
Member	Aaron Silverstein

Commentary

Goldsmith: Seems right. Why can't East have AKxx x Kxxxx xxx? 3NT doesn't look so automatic opposite. that. The AWMW seems warranted, as is a 1/4 PP to West. Is 130 the right adjustment? South has a nasty opening lead problem, and the ♥A seems a very likely choice.

Kooijman: Ok, though I would have preferred an additional \$100 fine.

Marques: The AWMW looks like a light slap on the wrist. Apart from that, a very good decision overall.

Wildavsky: I chaired the AC. I've not changed my mind.

Woolsey: This isn't close. West intended his 2NT call as natural, which would make East's 3♦ bid a signoff. The West hand certainly doesn't justify then bidding 3NT after a signoff, as the poll indicated. Obviously, the UI suggests bidding 3NT vs. passing.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Case:	N5
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Event	Wernher Open Pairs	Event DIC	Ken Van Cleve
Date	08/06/2013	Session	Second Qualifying


Auction

West	North	East	South
			1♣ ¹
1♦	1♠	1NT	Db1 ²
Pass	Pass	2♦	2♥
3♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Out of Turn, Accepted
2: Intended as Support Double

Hand Record

Board	22	N	Jill Hunter		
Dealer	E	♠ 10862			
		♥ 1043			
Vul	E/W	♦ 106			
		♣ AJ106			
W	Bruce Ohmann			E	Robert Dennard
♠	AQ53			♠	J7
♥	86			♥	AJ92
♦	KQJ83			♦	742
♣	92			♣	KQ85
		S	Matthew Fienberg		
		♠	K94		
		♥	KQ75		
		♦	A95		
		♣	743		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♦ by W	Made 4	E/W +130	♠ 8

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned by East/West before the opening lead was made. There had been no Alerts during the auction, but before North could make the opening lead, South stated that there has been a failure to Alert the Double. The director explained that this was the improper time for a defender to make such a declaration, cautioned North to avoid use of the Unauthorized Information, and told E/W to summon him back after play of the hand if they felt damaged.

East summoned the director back after completion of play. South had intended the double as a support double showing three card spade support. North had considered that the double might be support but was worried that the 1NT call had been conventional and did not want to "wake up the opponents" by Alerting the double. East stated that if he had been informed that the double was for support, he would have passed 1NTX rather than bid 2♦.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The director provided a dozen players with the East hand and the auction up to East's second call. Half would have passed 1NTX while the other half would pull either to 2♦ or some other call.

Director Ruling

It was unclear whether N/S had the agreement that a Support Double applied in this sequence, so it was also unclear if Misinformation had been provided. What was clear was whether South had meant the double as penalty (no alert) or South had meant it as support and North converted it to penalty, East had decided to pull when faced with a penalty double situation, which meant any damage was self-inflicted rather than caused by any infraction. Per Law 12C, the table result of 3♦ by West, making 4, E/W +130 stands.

Director's Ruling	3♦ by W, Made 4, E/W +130
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The Appeal

East appealed the ruling and was the only player to attend the committee. He stated that their partnership made sound 1♦ overcalls, and that West could have had at most a king less in strength. He restated that he would have passed 1NTX if he had been informed that South had intended it as Support and North had passed to convert it to penalty.

Committee Findings

As North/South had not attended the hearing, the committee had to assume that there was misinformation due the failure to Alert. East was entitled to know that the double was support and that North had passed for penalty.

However, for there to be any rectification, the misinformation must have been the cause of the damage. East had pulled the contract when it appeared that South was doubling for penalty, so it was only his statement that said he would do differently if North was applying the penalty. E/W were vulnerable, and as East did not hold a true spade stopper, they could be looking at going down one for -200 while potentially having a making diamond part score. The director poll showed that the decision to pull was 50-50, so East's assertion after the fact had to be taken with a grain of salt.

The committee therefore ruled that the misinformation did not cause East to run from 1NTX, that the damage was self-inflicted, and that the no score adjustment was appropriate.

Committee Decision	3♦ by W, Made 4, E/W +130
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Committee Members

Chair	Richard Popper
Member	Ed Lazarus
Member	James Thurtell
Member	Eugene Kales
Member	David Caprera

Commentary

Goldsmith: The wrong poll was run. Players needed to be polled with the information that the double was penalty and then that it was support to see if the correct vs. incorrect information affected the decision to pull. That it was reasonable to bid 2♦ or to pass is obvious and not particularly useful.

Why wasn't N/S's agreement about the meaning of the double ascertained? If it wasn't a support double, then the case is trivial.

I think I'd be more inclined to run from 1NTX if North converted the double behind partner's spades and diamonds than if the double had been penalties, so had there been MI, that MI did not suggest the losing action over the winning one, but that's just my opinion; a poll would be helpful here.

I don't like the word "self-inflicted." The poll shows that what East did was a reasonable action, and "self-inflicted" implies that the director and AC think he made a serious error. Just say that the MI did not damage the NOS.

East brought no new argument or information to the appeal, and the AC ruled exactly as the director did, and for the same reason. Despite that, I think the appeal had merit, because it hinges on bridge judgment, and the director never did a poll to determine the core decision that needed to be made. If a poll had been taken, and a bunch of players demonstrated that it was irrelevant whether the double was penalties or support (as I suspect would have happened), and E/W still appealed, then I'd issue an AWMW.

Kooijman: I have read this case four times and still do not understand a word of the decisions. North considers it to be a support double, uses a wrong argument not to alert it and then passes. Too clever for me. The TD doesn't care whether there is an infraction or not. East pulled the supposed penalty double and therefore the damage is self-inflicted? Who cares, next case please.

There is a poll in which the table case is presented, but not the case declarer claims he would have treated differently. And the AC completes the mess with statements as 'it is only his statement' (what else can it be?) and 'with a grain of salt'. Then it uses a 50-50 outcome of a poll which in itself is not relevant and ignores it.

Let us see how the case should have been dealt with. Yes, there is an infraction. The TD conducts two polls, one with the double being for penalty and one as support double. Also asking if there is a difference. If there is not, the result stands. Only if the poll shows that it becomes more likely to play 1NTX when the double shows a 3-card spade support, which would not surprise me, is there reason to adjust the score.

Marques: Good job by the director, polling players and establishing that pulling the double was basically a coin toss. Also, good reasoning on the way to a very nice decision by the director and the Committee.

Wildavsky: The TD's poll was meaningless. He ought to have asked those polled whether the meaning of the double affected the decision as to whether to pull. The AC judged that it was unlikely to, so their decision was reasonable, whereas the TD may have come to the same conclusion only by accident.

Woolsey: It looks clear to me that North was convinced that the double of 1NT was penalty. If North thought it was, or even might be, a support double, I can't imagine North sitting the double.

Even playing support doubles, the meaning of a double of 1NT in this auction is not universal. I think it pretty clear that N/S did not have a firm agreement about the double, so there was no MI.

At any rate, I can't see why whether South was making a penalty double of 1NT or North was converting a support double of 1NT into penalties would make it more or less attractive to sit the double. What East would like is to know that South thought he was making a support double but North took it is penalties, which would make it easy to pass 1NTX. East doesn't get that knowledge. If it was judged to be a support double in the partnership then East received MI, but he doesn't get to know that North was giving him MI.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Case:	N6
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Event	Spingold Knockout Teams	Event DIC	Olin Hubert
Date	08/06/2013	Session	Round of 64, First Session


Auction

West	North	East	South
1NT ¹	Pass	Pass	2♦ ²
Pass	2NT ³	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 14-16 HCP
2: One Major
3: Invitational

Hand Record

Board	16	N	Mitch Dunitz		
Dealer	W	♠ Q543			
		♥ Q10			
Vul	E/W	♦ QJ63			
		♣ AQ8			
W	Uday Ivatury			E	Christal Henner
♠	AK96			♠	1087
♥	AK5			♥	J2
♦	74			♦	1052
♣	7532			♣	J10964
		S	Ed Davis		
		♠	J2		
		♥	987643		
		♦	AK98		
		♣	K		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥ by N	Made 5	N/S +450	♣ J

Facts Determined at the Table

East/West summoned the director at the end of play. There had been no questions during the auction itself, but before East made her opening lead, she inquired about the auction. North explained that they play re-transfers but that this was not one of the sequences where it would apply. East/West contend that North/South stated that South "could have spades." N/S agreed that description might have been given, but it was in relation to the initial 2♦ call. East stated that the comment dissuaded her from making a spade lead.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The director polled three players concerning the East hand, the auction and explanations for both diamond calls, without the comment concerning spades. All three indicated they would lead a club. After they stipulated the club lead, they were all asked if the spade statement would have effected their decision and all replied negatively.

Director Ruling

The player poll showed that the lead of the ♣J was a natural choice amongst experts, even with the possibility that South held spades. As there was dispute about the timing and applicability of the spade comment, it was determined that any misinformation from the comment was not the cause of damage. Accordingly, there was no basis for adjustment.

Director's Ruling	4♥ by N, Made 5, N/S +450
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and all of the players attended the committee. Before making her opening lead, East had asked about the 3♦ bid. She stated that North's reply was, "South could have hearts or spades; we play re-transfers but not on this sequence; South might have a diamond fragment." Since West had not doubled 3♦ for lead direction, East was going to lead a black suit. North's statement that South might have spades dissuaded her from a spade lead, toward the unsuccessful club lead.

North/South maintained that the explanation that South could hold hearts or spades only applied to the 2♦ bid. North denied saying that 3♦ might have shown spades.

Committee Findings

The rambling nature of the N/S response to the question about the meaning of 3♦ should have made it clear that N/S did not have a firm agreement regarding the bid. When South raised 3♥ to four, it was clear from the auction that he held long hearts.

East had a blind guess as to which black suit would be more successful, and she selected her stronger, solid sequence to lead. She was not damaged by misinformation, and the table result was allowed to stand.

It should have been clear by North's answer and by the way he answered the question about South's 3♦ bid that South had not shown spades. Thus, there was no misinformation and there was no basis on which to appeal the result of the deal. Therefore, E/W were assigned an Appeal without Merit Warning.

Committee Decision	4♥ by N, Made 5, N/S +450
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Committee Members

Chair	Douglas Doub
Member	Craig Allen
Member	James Thurtell
Member	Chris Moll
Member	David Berkowitz

Commentary

Goldsmith: Good job.

Kooijman: See case N4 and change \$100 in \$200, this appeal is ridiculous.

Marques: Again, as in N5, good polling and decision by the director, well complemented by an AWMW.

Wildavsky: I agree that this appeal had no merit.

Woolsey: I agree that the explanation of "could have spades" referred to the 2♦ call. At any rate, a full understanding of the auction would not make a spade lead more attractive, and East has a clear club lead. East was grasping for straws. The ruling and the AWMW were quite correct.

Subject of Appeal:	Disputed Claim	Case:	N7
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Event	NABC Fast Pairs	Event DIC	Charlie MacCracken
Date	08/08/2013	Session	2 nd Qualifying

Auction

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

**Explanation of Special Calls
and Points of Contention**

Hand Record

Board	25	N	Rajan Iyer		
Dealer	N	♠ A1084			
		♥ Q			
Vul	E/W	♦ Q54			
		♣ KQ1032			
W	Barbara Shnier			E	Barry Senensky
♠	QJ			♠	K97632
♥	J872			♥	10954
♦	K63			♦	8
♣	J954			♣	76
		S	Ben Yang		
		♠	5		
		♥	AK63		
		♦	AJ10972		
		♣	A8		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by S			♦ 3

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned by East/West at trick five. Declarer had faced his hand, stating he would lead the ♥Q, the ♠A was good, and that he would run the diamonds. Play had gone diamond to the Jack, the ♠A, the low club to the King, and then the ♠Q, East discarding the ♠7 and South pitching the ♥3. The ♥6 and ♠5 had been detached from the rest of South's hand.

The remaining cards at this point were:

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|
| ♠ A 10 8 4 | | |
| ♥ Q | | |
| ♦ Q 5 | | |
| ♣ 10 3 | | |
| ♠ Q J | | ♠ K 9 6 3 2 |
| ♥ J 8 7 2 | | ♥ 10 9 5 4 |
| ♦ K 6 | | ♦ — |
| ♣ J | | ♣ — |
| | ♠ 5 | |
| | ♥ A K 6 | |
| | ♦ A 10 9 7 2 | |
| | ♣ — | |

Despite the detached cards, the director viewed only the heart as a stated played card to the fifth trick. He believed the remainder of Declarer's statement did not constitute an order of play but rather a statement of what tricks Declarer expected to take on the hand.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The director initially ruled that the defense would take three tricks, requiring that the ♠A be led before attacking diamonds, but felt more investigation was needed. He polled three players, describing the situation generically. All three felt the ♠A would not be cashed until after the long suit was played. This appeared to eliminate the question as to the order of play.

Director Ruling

The player poll showed that players of South's caliber would not cash the ♠A prior to establishing the diamond suit. Accordingly, the director changed his preliminary ruling to 3NT by South, making 5, N/S +460

Director's Ruling	3NT by S, Made 5, N/S +460
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and all of the players attended the committee. E/W believed that a line of play was established by South's claiming statement. If he played the ♠A after cashing the ♥Q, the defense would come to three tricks after West won the ♦K either on trick seven or eight (a diamond, a club and a spade).

Committee Findings

Although declarer forgot that the ♦K was outstanding, he was clearly focused on his own hand as a source of tricks. After taking the ♥Q, he would undoubtedly have played the ♦Q, expecting it to win, followed by another diamond to the Ace. He would have been shocked by West's King on trick six, but would have taken the remainder of the tricks after West cashed the ♣J. Therefore, the AC upheld the director's ruling of 3NT by South, making 5, N/S +460.

Committee Decision	3NT by S, Made 5, N/S +460
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Committee Members

Chair	Douglas Doub
Member	Barry Harper
Member	Richard Straus

Commentary

Goldsmith: Nope. I agree with the point that the ♠A statement wasn't meant to imply that South would cash it early, but there's no reason for South not to overtake the ♦Q and run diamonds from hand. That's not even a careless or inferior line; it's one of the equally viable normal lines available to South if the ♦K had been played at Trick 1, as South believed. If so, West will win the ♦K, cash a club and exit with the ♠Q. Declarer's choice of plays now will cause him to take anywhere between eight and ten tricks. I think it'd be very strange to find one of the ways to take eight, but taking nine or ten are reasonable possibilities, so I'd give him +400. Oddly, cashing the ♠A early would ensure +430. Declarer ought to have insisted that his statement indicated that he would do so!

Kooijman: In judging how play could have developed had the claim not been made, the TD has to assume the possibility of careless play. That is why a poll is questionable: players will not play carelessly when asked. So, the question should be whether it is considered in practice impossible to play the ♠A in trick 6. Only if that answer is 'yes' the claim can be accepted. Is it strange to play ♠A and ♥Q in trick 6 and 7 and then claim for the remainder of tricks pointing to the diamond suit and AK in hearts? I could play it like that, if I had seen the ♦K being played.

Marques: As stated in the writeup for R1, there are bad claims and badly worded claims. In this case, we have a bad claim badly worded. In my opinion the initial poll is flawed. The pollees should not have been given a general description of the situation. Instead, they should be convinced that the diamonds were solid. They will give the director a strange look, but that will be the opening for the director to ask something like "of course you have enough tricks, in which order do you cash them?" The way the poll was done, the pollees know for sure that there is a problem with the claim, and they will tend to protect themselves. The situation has little to do with the caliber of the player. The important question is "in which order does a player cash his tricks when he is absolutely sure they're all good".

I would not be shocked if the decision had been to award the case to the defenders.

Wildavsky: I find these rulings puzzling — likewise the reference to declarer's caliber. If I were to play on with the ♠A in dummy and all winners in my hand, I might play them in either order. More often than not, I'd cash the ♠A and then make the most straightforward claim, "My hand is good."

Per Law 70D, as it was in 2013:

"The Director shall not accept from claimer any successful line of play not embraced in the original clarification statement if there is an alternative normal line of play that would be less successful."*

** For the purposes of Laws 70 and 71, "normal" includes play that would be careless or inferior for the class of player involved.*

Cashing dummy's winners first is normal, as is cashing declarer's first. Remember that declarer was certain that his diamonds were good. If he were not, he would not have claimed.

Woolsey: Declarer's line of play of cashing the clubs first makes it clear that he was out of touch with the hand. Obviously, he should cross to the queen of hearts and take a diamond finesse, making at least 12 tricks.

Despite this, he stated he would cash the queen of hearts, but did not state he would cash the ace of spades. The implication is that he is unblocking the hearts preparing to run the diamonds, and the ace of spades would cover his small spade. I agree with the ruling. I doubt if many, if any, matchpoints were at stake.

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N8
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Event	Spingold Knockout Teams	Event DIC	Olin Hubert
Date	08/08/2013	Session	Round of 16, 2 nd Session


Auction

West	North	East	South
			2♥
Pass	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Dbl	Pass	Pass
3♠ ¹	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo (1 minute)

Hand Record

Board	3	N	Steve Weinstein		
Dealer	S	♠	AK4		
		♥	K62		
Vul	E/W	♦	QJ84		
		♣	J93		
W	Okay Gur			E	Mustafa Cem Tokay
♠	J86			♠	Q7532
♥	AQ43			♥	(void)
♦	A965			♦	K7
♣	Q2			♣	K108654
		S	Bobby Levin		
		♠	109		
		♥	J109875		
		♦	1032		
		♣	A7		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by E	Made 4	E/W +620	♥ J

Facts Determined at the Table

North/South summoned the director after play concluded. The players were behind screens, but all of the players agreed to prolonged break in tempo while the bidding tray had been on the South/West side prior to the 3♠ bid. East/West had the agreement that East's pass over North's double showed a stronger hand than bidding 3♠ himself.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The director polled eight experts concerning the East hand, the auction and explanations of the E/W system. Following 3♠, three bid something (either 4♣ or 4♠) and five chose to pass. This established that passing 3♠ was a logical alternative. The BIT suggested that bidding would be more successful than passing.

Director Ruling

The player poll showed that pass was a logical alternative, and the UI from the BIT suggested bidding. Accordingly, per Laws 16B and 12C, the score was adjusted to 3♠, making 4, E/W +170.

Director's Ruling	3♠ by E, Made 4, E/W +170
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and all of the players, as well as the N/S team captain, attended the committee. East said that he chose to pass with his hand over the double because he still had some slam aspirations, but that he always intended to bid game at a minimum. East thought that cue bidding 4♥ was too strong a bid for his hand and

bidding 4♣ would have shown more slam interest than his hand justified. E/W did not have an agreement about the meaning of redouble at that point. When West did not continue to game (3♥ had shown at least three Spades and at least a strong invitation to game), East canceled his aspirations to try for slam and settled on game.

Committee Findings

According to Law 16, if there is UI which demonstrably suggests a line of action, then successfully choosing that line of action is an infraction if there existed a logical alternative which would have been less successful. In this case, there was such information available to East (the hesitation before bidding 3♠ suggested that West was considering bidding on himself) and the issue was whether there was a logical alternative to bidding 4♠. The directors polled a group of eight experts, giving them the bidding agreements up to that time. Five of those polled said that they would have passed, instead of bidding on to game and three would have bid (two of them 4♠, and one of them 4♣). All three of those who chose to bid believed that doing so was "automatic."

While most or all of the AC would have chosen to bid 4♠ in this position, the AC believed from their own experience as well as from the poll conducted by the directors that passing was a logical alternative. Accordingly, the AC determined that adjusting the result on the board to 3♠ by East, making 4, E/W +170 was correct.

Committee Decision	3♠ by E, Made 4, E/W +170
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Committee Members

Chair	Michael Huston
Member	Douglas Doub
Member	Joel Wooldridge
Member	Ishmael Del'Monte
Member	Giorgio Duboin
Member	Chris Moll

Commentary

Goldsmith: Good job. We don't award AWMWs when the decision made is one that the AC thinks is normal, even if it is judged to be a violation.

Kooijman: Well done, and good discipline shown by the committee. All of them bidding 4♠ in East but accepting the outcome of the poll.

Marques: I would have liked to see the pollees asked what they thought the BIT suggested, and if it was clear who was breaking tempo on the other side of the screen. This said, and because the answers seem pretty clear, I still think the results of the poll as made are valid. Shouldn't a AWMW have been awarded?

Wildavsky: Sound decisions. I do not doubt that this East always intended to bid a game, but East's intent is not the standard the law requires. If it were, then TDs would need to be able to read minds.

Woolsey: East's statement that he passed because he had slam aspirations looks like just talk. It would be hard to imagine partner having passed over 2♥ and there still be a slam which could be reached intelligently. Anyway, the reason East passed over the double doesn't have anything to do with the issue.

Even though screens were in use, it is clear that West caused the BIT. South logically could not have had a problem here on the auction.

Clearly the BIT suggests bidding vs. passing. Is pass a LA? That's what polls are for. The poll indicated that pass is a LA. End of story.

Subject of Appeal:	Unauthorized Information	Case:	N9
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Event	Freeman Mixed BAM	Event DIC	Steve Bates
Date	08/09/2013	Session	First Final


Auction

West	North	East	South
		1NT ¹	Pass
Pass	Db1 ²	Pass	2♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 10-12 HCP
2: Explained as minors

Hand Record

Board	2	N	Mike Cappelletti, Sr.		
Dealer	E	♠	KJ93		
		♥	AK75		
Vul	N/S	♦	AQ4		
		♣	85		
W	Kit Woolsey			E	Sally Woolsey
♠	Q4			♠	87
♥	943			♥	QJ106
♦	J863			♦	1097
♣	7432			♣	AKJ10
		S	Eileen Easterling		
		♠	A10652		
		♥	82		
		♦	K52		
		♣	Q96		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by N	Made 5	N/S +660	♣ K

Facts Determined at the Table

East/West summoned the director following the opening lead and dummy being displayed. The North/South convention cards both showed that Double showed the minors. North had meant the double to show values.

Director Ruling

South's alert and explanation provided Unauthorized Information to North. Per Law 75A, North has to continue to bid as if she had explained his double as a strong hand with penalty possibilities. Her 2♣ bid would therefore be a run out to her long suit. North used the UI to take action based upon his knowledge that she likely did not hold clubs. Therefore, the contract and result was changed to 2♣ by South, making 2, N/S +90, per Law 12C1

Director's Ruling	2♣ by S, Made 2, N/S +90
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The Appeal

North/South appealed the ruling, and they, as well as West, attended the committee. During screening, North explained that systemically, his double followed by a new bid showed 16+ HCP. His partner had not included this in her explanation at the table.

North explained that the partnership defense over a No Trump opening was the same for both weak and strong no trumps. Following South's explanation, he was unsure whether she would remember their agreement that double and then bidding 2NT showed a balanced 16+ HCP hand, and therefore decided to gamble that she held some useful values and bid 3NT. His choices were between bidding either 2NT or 3NT. When asked what he would have done if his partner had explained his double as minors or a strong hand, he stated he would have bid 2NT.

West stated that the only explanation provided at the table was that the double was for the minors. East had asked for an explanation when the alert was made, and North made no attempt to correct this before the opening lead, nor when the director was called when dummy was displayed. West believed North had intended the double as penalty and ran to 3NT after his partner removed it. If their actual systemic agreement was to bid 2NT after the double to show a balanced 16+ HCP, then why depart from the system to bid 3NT? Bidding the correct systemic bid should be sufficient to prompt South to give the complete explanation of the systemic agreement.

Committee Findings

The Committee discerned from the facts that North had forgotten that the partnership agreement was for either a strong hand or the minors and had been reminded by South's explanation. The failure to give a corrected explanation of the agreement prior to the opening lead, as required by Laws 20F5b and 75B, served as evidence that North forgot. His original intent for the double was likely to have been for penalty. Per Law 75A, North was required to continue to bid as if South had explained his double as penalty and that her 2♣ bid was to play. Pass would be a logical alternative in this situation, and it was the UI from the explanation that suggested bidding. Bidding 2NT or 3NT were both bids suggested by the UI, with 3NT being an egregious use. Based upon this judgment of the violation, an Appeal without Merit Warning was assigned and the matter referred to the Recorder. The director ruling of 2♣ by South, making 2, N/S +90, was upheld.

Committee Decision	2♣ by S, Made 2, N/S +90
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Committee Members

Chair	Richard Popper
Member	Patty Tucker
Member	Bruce Rogoff
Member	Michael Rosenberg
Member	Bruce Reeve

Commentary

Goldsmith: I'm not sure passing 2♣ is a logical alternative if double is just penalties, but I'm happy to let them stew in 2♣ when North expressly stated that his action was based on UI. Probably, North ought to be required to bid 2H (maybe 2♣ was Stayman or takeout). Eight tricks is an odd number to score in 2♣; seven or nine seems more likely, but it probably doesn't matter at all at BAM.

I'd add in a 1/2 board PP for egregiously blatant use of UI.

Kooijman: What was North's reaction after being told that he behaved unethically? If he is not a beginner (and his name suggests he isn't), a procedural/disciplinary penalty might (should) have been awarded.

Marques: Good decision (AWMW and report) by the Committee. Maybe the table director could have been a bit more forceful, regarding the egregious 3NT bid?

Wildavsky: I agree that the appeal had no merit. If the write-up is accurate, then North carefully explained that he had taken advantage of unauthorized information. I would have assessed a procedural penalty in addition.

Woolsey: Since I was involved, my views might not be completely objective. Suffice to say I totally agree with the committee, including the decision to refer the matter to the Recorder. In fact, I suggested to North that if he appealed the ruling this would be a likely result.

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N10
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Event	Freeman Mixed BAM	Event DIC	Steve Bates
Date	08/09/2013	Session	First Final


Auction

West	North	East	South
1♥	1NT ¹	DbI ²	Pass ³
2♠	3♣	4♠	5♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-18 HCP balanced
2: Penalty
3: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	16	N	Val Kovachev		
Dealer	W	♠	(void)		
		♥	Q8		
Vul	E/W	♦	QJ72		
		♣	QJ109865		
W	Irina Ladyzhensky			E	Alex Ladyzhensky
♠	98754			♠	AKQJ6
♥	AKJ1062			♥	75
♦	(void)			♦	10643
♣	32			♣	74
		S	Lynne Rosenbaum		
		♠	1032		
		♥	943		
		♦	AK985		
		♣	AK		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♣ by N	Made 6	N/S +420	♠ A

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned by East/West following the 5♣ bid. South had asked the meaning of the double and was told it was penalty. After the explanation, she took about a minute before passing. E/W felt the long hesitation influenced North to bid on over 2♠.

Director Ruling

While the long hesitation did provide Unauthorized Information (South held some values), the UI itself did not suggest a particular course of action. North was therefore free to bid his hand based upon his own judgment of the situation. No adjustment to the table result was necessary.

Director's Ruling	5♣ by N, Made 6, N/S +420
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and all of the players attended the committee. E/W believed that the lengthy hesitation made North's 3♣ bid more attractive. Their contention was that knowing that South held values meant 3♣ was less dangerous and that passing 2♠ was a logical alternative. They also expressed concern about the frequency of psychic bids by North and the possibility that his partner might be aware of them.

North stated that bidding 3♣ would be more attractive if South held little or no values and that the UI made bidding less attractive. His 1NT psych had been to confuse the opponents, and 3♣ was just showing clubs and continuing to "make it harder for the opponents". Passing 2♠ was not a logical alternative.

South, while agreeing to the hesitation, did not believe it was as long as a minute. She was trying to figure out the bidding, as the points did not add up. She held 14, North was showing 15+, and both of the opponents were bidding. Her pass systemically showed values, as it said she was content to play 1NTX or had no place to pull the contract. She knew her partner did not hold significant spades, as he would have doubled for penalty rather than bidding. 3♣ therefore showed a club suit.

Committee Findings

The committee determined that the UI did not suggest bidding 3♣ with the North hand. Bidding was more compelling when South held fewer values, not more. The AC also explained to E/W that the frequency of psychic action by North is a matter for the Recorder. If E/W wished to pursue that issue, then they were encouraged to complete a Player Memo.

Committee Decision	5♣ by N, Made 6, N/S +420
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Committee Members

Chair	Michael Huston
Member	Craig Allen
Member	Blair Seidler

Commentary

Goldsmith: North knows that South has considerable values, enough to work out that he'd psyched. That makes it safer to bid and far riskier to pass, as his side may have a making contract. The opponents seem to have a spade fit and have found it, since partner didn't bid spades, which strongly suggests coming out of the bushes and finding our fit. I think the UI emphatically suggests bidding over passing, and that pass is a logical alternative. In 4♣, a diamond lead is likely, so I'd rule E/W +710. Is there a substantial chance that South will double 4♣? Yes, but it's probably not likely and may not be at all probable. She's probably seen enough of her partner's 1NT overcalls to know not to double, but it's also reasonable to give E/W +710 and N/S -1390.

Furthermore, North gets a 1/4 board PP for blatant use of UI. Since this was on a hand on which he psyched, I think a player memo might be in order, too. Players who psych frequently need to be extra careful about UI on those hands, as UI will frequently help a lot after psyching.

Kooijman: Often forgotten: does the pause for thought suggest the action taken?

Marques: Good decision overall.

Wildavsky: I see no merit to this appeal. Someone might have explained to South, though, that she ought to make her call promptly once she's decided on it. If there's no choice to make, then figuring out the bidding can wait.

Woolsey: Clearly correct ruling. South's huddle doesn't suggest that bidding will work out more favorably for North.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: N11
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Event Freeman Mixed BAM	Event DIC Steve Bates
Date 08/09/2013	Session First Final


Auction

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	2♣ ¹
(P ²) X	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Forcing, could be short
2: Changed bid after Alert

Hand Record

Board	21	N	Bar Tarnovski
Dealer	N	♠ QJ852 ♥ 843 ♦ K103 ♣ AJ	
Vul	N/S		
W	Nancy Spear		E Jack Spear
♠ K7 ♥ QJ9 ♦ 954 ♣ KQ1073			♠ A1064 ♥ 1075 ♦ J87 ♣ 984
		S Melanie Tucker	
		♠ 93 ♥ AK62 ♦ AQ62 ♣ 652	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by N	Down 2	E/W +200	♣ 9

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned by West during the second round of bidding. North had alerted South's 2♣ call, but both opponents stated they did not notice the Alert. West passed, and after North bid 2NT, N/S drew additional attention to the Alert. 2♣ was a forcing bid but could be made on as few as two clubs. West, away from the table, informed the director that she wished to change her call. As her partner had not yet bid, the Director backed the auction to her bid and allowed a change of call (Law 21B1a). West doubled, North repeated his 2NT bid and the auction continued as shown.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

In a later conversation with East, it was revealed to the director that East treated the double as showing clubs, although he had not previously discussed this with West. West maintained that she would have always doubled if she had been properly alerted.

Director Ruling

Following this later conversation, the director decided that West's reasons for requesting a change of call were suspect, related more to the additional attention given by N/S following the 2NT bid rather than a failure to hear the initial Alert. Law 21B1a defines a failure to Alert as misinformation, allowing a change of call. A player failing to ask for an explanation of an alerted call does not qualify as misinformation. The director therefore reversed his decision allowing the change of call. Without the double to direct the club lead, it was likely that East would lead the unbid heart suit, allowing N/S to take eight tricks (three hearts, four diamonds and one club) for down1, E/W +100.

Director's Ruling	3NT by N, Down 1, E/W +100
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and they attended the committee. West stated that she did not hear the initial Alert, and she was not aware that 2♣ showed anything but clubs until after North's 2NT bid when the opponents drew additional attention to the bid. As the ACBL General Convention Chart defines a natural response in a minor as showing three or more cards in the suit, the N/S systemic agreement that 2♣ only promised two made the bid artificial. E/W play that a double of an artificial bid shows that suit, and West wished to change her call, in order to inform her partner that she held clubs. She expressed this concern to the director as soon as she became aware of the artificial nature of the club bid.

Committee Findings

As North/South had not attended the hearing, the Committee could not ask them as to how their Alert had been made. The AC believed West's statement that she had not heard the Alert. As the ACBL Alert Procedures state that it is the Alerting side's responsibility to ensure that the opponents are aware that an Alert has been made, the AC judged that the definition of misinformation due to a failure to Alert in Law 21B1a had been met. The AC restored the initial ruling by the director and the table result, 3NT by North, down 2, E/W +200.

Committee Decision	3NT by N, Down 2, E/W +200
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Committee Members

Chair	Richard Popper
Member	Patty Tucker
Member	Bruce Rogoff
Member	Michael Rosenberg
Member	Bruce Reeve

Commentary

Goldsmith: I understand the director's reasoning, but I think West's hand makes it probable that if she had heard an Alert, she would have asked, so I like the AC's ruling.

On the other hand, what was this "bringing additional attention to 2♣" after 2NT was bid? If that which brought attention to it was East's asking about it, then the TD got it right. If North just volunteered the information, why? Because he was certain the opponents had heard the Alert?

This is the sort of ruling on which we tend to stick with the table director's ruling. He knew better what was actually said than did the AC, but he changed his ruling, so maybe he wasn't sure.

Kooijman: Why this change of mind by the TD? It looks like an obvious case, with no good reason not to trust E/W.

Marques: From the writeup it seems like the director was a bit overzealous here.

Wildavsky: The TD's actions seem curious. He was apparently more intent on punishing what he saw as "bridge lawyering" than objectively applying the laws. I prefer the AC's ruling.

Woolsey: The issue is quite clear. If the alert was properly given but West did not ask the meaning of the 2♣ call then there was no MI, and West is not permitted to change her call. If the alert was not properly given, West is entitled to change her call if that can be done before her partner has acted.

I'm very puzzled by the facts. They say that after North bid 2NT, N/S drew additional attention to the alert. Why would N/S ever do that at this point in the auction? The alert had been given, West had passed without asking any questions, and North had bid 2NT. What sense would there be at this point for N/S to drawing additional attention to the alert, particularly since it almost couldn't matter to East at this point what the meaning of 2♣ was. East will surely be passing regardless of anything. That description of what happened just doesn't add up.

What I think happened is that after the 2NT call, East asked about the meaning of 2♣. This is perfectly proper for East to do even if it doesn't matter to East. In fact, it is what East is supposed to do. If one always asks, then partner can't get UI from ones asking vs. failure to ask. When the bid was described as what it was, West realized that she wanted to make a lead-directing double, so the director was called, etc.

The determination of the director was consistent with my interpretation, namely that the desire to change the call was based on the additional information, not failure to hear the alert.

It is a shame that N/S weren't at the committee hearing, so only the E/W side of the story could be heard. However, the director was in the best position to determine the facts, and he determined that the alert was properly given. I don't see any justification for the committee to overturn this determination.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Case:	N12
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Event	Freeman Mixed BAM	Event DIC	Steve Bates
Date	08/09/2013	Session	Second Final


Auction

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♥	1NT	Dbl ¹
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
2NT	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Explained as Penalty

Hand Record

Board	11	N	Uday Ivatury
Dealer	S	♠ A3	
		♥ J9875	
		♦ 76	
Vul	None	♣ 8732	
W	Marvin Rosenblatt		
♠	K752		
♥	1043		
♦	Q932		
♣	Q6		
		E	Lynda Rosenblatt
		♠	J86
		♥	AK
		♦	AJ1085
		♣	A94
		S	Christal Henner
		♠	Q1094
		♥	Q62
		♦	K4
		♣	KJ105

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2NTX by E	Down 2	N/S +300	♥ 2

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned by East/West at the end of play. South had intended her double as support for hearts. East said that due to the misinformation, she had played South to hold a better hand, and went down two on the hand. North stated the partnership agreement was that the double was for penalty. The play had gone as follows:

- Trick 1: ♥ 2 – 3 – 7 – K
- Trick 2: ♦ A – 4 – 2 – 7
- Trick 3: ♦ 5 – K – 3 – 6
- Trick 4: ♥ Q – 4 – 5 – A
- Trick 5: ♠ 6 – 4 – K – A

The defense proceeded to cash three hearts and three spades for down two. East had reasoned that South had to hold the ♠A in order to have bid so strongly.

Director Ruling

E/W had 24 HCP, leaving 16 for N/S. If South had a better hand, then North's would have been worse. North had pulled the first double, but then doubled 2NT, so he must have possessed some values. East could have cashed her diamonds and the ♠A for seven tricks, then considered playing spades. The misinformation was not the cause of the damage, so no adjustment to the table result necessary.

Director's Ruling	2NTX by E, Down 2, N/S +300
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The Appeal

East appealed the ruling, she appeared before the committee. She repeated her reasoning that she had played South to hold all the values on the hand because she had apparently made a penalty double of 1NT.

Committee Findings

East was faced with opponents who had a total of sixteen high card points between them, yet both bid and both had made penalty doubles of no trump bids. East had every reason to believe that South held three hearts based upon the plays at tricks one and four. East should have been able to deduce that South's double of 1NT was not penalty since other assumptions about the auction (the penalty double by North) would not make sense if it was.

East could have cashed out for down one, but instead chose to try and win the board by finding the ♠A onside. This is not an irrational play, but it is not a play without risk. The damage on the hand was a result of her choice of play, not of misinformation. Accordingly, there was no basis for adjustment to the table result.

The connection between the infraction and any damage was tenuous at best. East had a difficult choice of plays, but playing North to have no values was not rational following their penalty double. The screening director had explained the rationale for the table ruling, and East presented no new evidence to counter the ruling. Therefore, the AC gave her an Appeal without Merit Warning.

Committee Decision	2NTX by E, Down 2, N/S +3
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Committee Members

Chair	Michael Huston
Member	Blair Seidler
Member	Craig Allen
Member	Chris Moll

Commentary

Goldsmith: Was there misinformation? Neither the director nor the AC seemed to worry about that. The first step in any MI case is to determine the OS's actual agreement.

N/S can probably show system notes that support doubles don't apply over strong NT overcalls. If so, there was no MI. There was, however, UI for South. I don't see that the UI affected her decisions. In fact, the UI suggested she pull partner's penalty double, and she did not. Well done, South.

If there was MI, then I agree that East's playing North to have doubled 2NT on a 1-count seems a little suspect, but we probably didn't have to go that far.

No AWMW, because the director didn't find out the correct agreement. After all, had the director said, "the actual agreement was penalties. Therefore, there was no misinformation, and the result stands," E/W would have been substantially less likely to have appealed. Since that is what the director is supposed to do, it seems unfair to trap E/W into an appeal and then give them an AWMW, even though the appeal as it was had no merit.

Kooijman: I don't agree with the procedure followed. The main question here is what was the agreement about South' double and nobody seemed to care. If it is for penalty there is no misinformation, a (automatic?) word used by TD and committee, and no ground for an adjustment. If this pair uses a support double in this situation there was an infraction and then I feel considerable (see case N3) sympathy for declarer. So much that I might consider adjusting with some weight for down 1. Which also means that the AWMW is not given then.

Marques: A waste of the Committee's time. Good AWMW.

Wildavsky: I also think that this appeal had no merit. I can see Kit's point, but I disagree.

Woolsey: The facts don't add up. If the play went as described, with the defense then cashing 3 heart tricks and 3 spade tricks, that is down 3, not down 2. Furthermore, it would be very unnatural for declarer to play a spade at trick 5. Much more normal would be to cash the diamonds, forcing each opponent to make 3 discards -- declarer doesn't need the diamonds for communication. Probably South would discard 2 clubs and a spade, North would discard 3 clubs. If declarer then led a spade to the king and ace, the defense could take the rest. I'll bet that's what really happened.

It is true that if declarer looks at the big picture South can't have a penalty double of 1NT. That would give North a complete yarb, in which case North would never have doubled 2NT. Still, it is easy to miss this inference when one is flatly told that the double of 1NT is penalties.

I'm not saying that East played the hand to best advantage. Obviously, she didn't. Also, whether she would have gone right and cashed out for down 1 with the correct information is debatable. Still, she was totally blinded by the MI,

thinking that she was basically claiming her 8 tricks when the ace of spades was onside as from her point of view it had to be. On that basis, I believe she was damaged by the MI, and would revert the result to down 1.

At any rate, calling this an AWMW is absurd.

Subject of Appeal:	Disputed Claim	Case:	R1
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Event	Grand National Teams, Flight A	Event DIC	Matt Smith
Date	08/02/2013	Session	Round of 16, First Session

Auction

West	North	East	South
			3♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board	3	N	5050 MPS		
Dealer	S	♠	A		
		♥	AK9632		
		♦	J86		
Vul	E/W	♣	AK6		
W	1480 MPS			E	1500 MPS
♠	Q653			♠	KJ1042
♥	Q85			♥	4
♦	2			♦	K3
♣	J10543			♣	Q9872
		S	4790 MPS		
		♠	987		
		♥	J107		
		♦	AQ109754		
		♣	(void)		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
6♦ by S			♠ 5

Facts Determined at the Table

Declarer won the spade lead in dummy, called for the club ace and played a heart from hand and exposed the rest of hand, saying "I have the tricks." After silence from opponents, she made the statement, "I'll play a diamond to the ace, ruff a spade, and play a diamond". The director was called, and she repeated the statement. When the opponents asked about the spade loser left in hand, declarer said she would ruff it in dummy. When the opponents objected that dummy would have no more trumps, dummy volunteered that the spade can be discarded on the good king of clubs.

Director Ruling

In a case of a disputed claim, the TD must distinguish between a poor claim and a poorly stated claim. In the table director's view, the declarer had lost focus here, as their statement would result in going down one trick. Per Law 70, that result was assigned.

Director's Ruling	6♦ by S, Down 1, E/W +50
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The Appeal

N/S appealed the ruling stating that declarer knew she had all the tricks but for the king of trump, but that she just had trouble explaining it.

Panel Findings

Law 70 instructs the director to adjudicate a claim as equitably as possible to both sides, but to resolve any doubtful points against the claimer. South's clarified line of play results in her going down one which creates a doubtful point. The panel agreed with the table director that it appeared claimer lost focus, so the table ruling was upheld.

Panel Decision	6♦ by S, Down 1, E/W +50
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Kevin Perkins
Member	Charlie MacCracken
Member	Ken Van Cleve

Commentary

Goldsmith: I think the ruling is technically correct, but as E/W, it would never have occurred to me to dispute this claim, except that we are getting the ♦K.

Kooijman: Just some advice for N/S. If it is difficult to explain your claim then better to continue play.

Marques: Good decision. Why would the declarer think there was any chance of winning this appeal?

Wildavsky: I agree with the rulings. To tell declarer that she would take a line other than the one she stated would be unlawful and would disrespect her.

Woolsey: Not an issue. Declarer was clearly not in touch with the hand. A line of play was stated, and that line of play leads to down 1.

Subject of Appeal:	Disputed Claim	Case:	R2
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Event	AX Pairs	Event DIC	Dianne Barton-Paine
Date	08/07/2013	Session	First Session

Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♠	2♦	3♦	5♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board	26	N	4330 MPS		
Dealer	E	♠	83		
		♥	A732		
Vul	Both	♦	KQ1076		
		♣	A7		
W	1050 MPS			E	1880 MPS
♠	KQJ52			♠	A109
♥	QJ86			♥	K10954
♦	9			♦	83
♣	1083			♣	Q42
		S	1290 MPS		
		♠	764		
		♥	(void)		
		♦	AJ542		
		♣	KJ965		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♦ by N			♠ A

Facts Determined at the Table

The opening lead was the ♠A, followed by a spade to West's king. At this point, North claimed, stating, "I am pulling one round of trumps and crossruffing." E/W called the director.

Director Ruling

The director believed North's statement was evidence that he had miscounted trumps (Law 70C: "When a trump remains in one of the opponents' hands, the Director shall award a trick or trick to the opponents if ... it is at all likely that the claimer at the time of his claim was unaware that a trump remained in an opponent's hand ... and a trick could be lost to it by any 'normal' play"). The director thought that "normal" play for someone who did not realize a trump was outstanding might include cashing the ♦K, playing the ♣AK and trumping a club to hand, crossing to dummy with a heart ruff, and ruffing another club low and being over-ruffed by East with the ♦8. The director therefore assigned a score of 5♦ by North, down one, E/W +100.

Director's Ruling	5♦ by N, Down 1, E/W +100
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The Appeal

N/S appealed the director's ruling, and all four players attended the review. There was disagreement among the players as to exactly what was said when the claim occurred. All agreed that North stated he would draw one round of trumps; E/W believed he then said something to the effect of "having the rest". North believed he just showed his hand.

The statement about crossruffing seemed to have been made to the director after he arrived at the table. North told the reviewer that it was obvious he knew what was happening and that he had not miscounted trumps. When asked by the reviewer how he knew an opponent might not have a singleton club and that the second round might get ruffed he said that was "impossible".

Panel Findings

The panel considered two primary points.

- 1) Was it "at all likely" that North had miscounted trumps?
- 2) Even if not, could a trick be lost to a trump "by any normal line of play" prior to it being drawn (Law 70E1 - Unstated Line of Play)?

Two players of North's approximate experience were given the scenario of the claim and asked what they thought it said about North's state of mind at the point of his claim. Both believed that it was obvious from his statement that he knew the trump situation, and that unnecessarily ruffing a good club would never happen.

The panel was persuaded that North's choice of words was convincing evidence that it was not "at all likely" that he had miscounted trumps. Had he miscounted them in the mistaken belief he was on a 6-5 fit, his specific statement that he would draw one round of trump would still not leave him knowing in advance that both would be pulled in one round. As to the idea that he might not notice the fall of the club queen and ruff a good club low and be overruffed, the panel believed that scenario would be well worse than "normal" play.

Law 70A describes the general objective in dealing with contested claims: "In ruling on a contested claim or concession, the Director adjudicates the result of the board as equitably as possible to both sides, but any doubtful point as to a claim shall be resolved against the claimer." The panel believed that while North certainly could have made his intentions clearer, his actions did not create any doubtful points that should result in the defense being awarded a trick. The score of 5♦ by North, making five, NS +600 was assigned by the panel

Panel Decision

5♦ by N, Made 5, N/S +600

Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Smith
Member	Charlie MacCracken
Member	Chris Patrias

Commentary

Goldsmith: I think the ruling is technically incorrect, but as E/W, it would never have occurred to me to dispute this claim.

Kooijman: A somewhat lazy ruling by the TD on a somewhat lazy claim. Why not drawing the last trump? But declarer is saved by the 3-3 split in clubs.

Marques: From the report, the claim statement is unclear. It is mentioned that the Panel found out that the reference to crossruffing was made only after the director came to the table. Was the initial statement only "I am pulling one round of trumps", or was there an initial statement at all?

It seems to me that the main inspiration for the director's decision was a quick leap from the claim statement to the conclusion that declarer had miscounted trumps. Good recovery by the Panel, assuming that they got the facts right (but this should have been done by the director in the first place).

Wildavsky: As in case R1, I would take declarer at his word. He said he would cross-ruff, and a cross-ruff leads to down one. I prefer the TD's ruling to the Panel's.

Woolsey: According to the facts, which I have no reason not to believe, Declarer made his statement before any rounds of trumps had been drawn. The trumps might well have been 3-0. This wasn't a question of whether declarer had or had not miscounted trumps. He simply thought that pulling one round of trumps was sufficient to guarantee making the contract by then crossruffing. He is held to this line of play, even with the clubs turning out to be 3-3, since he didn't specify anything else. Also, there is no reason why he would know to ruff the third club low and the fourth club high. From the timing of his claim, it appears that he thought he had a high crossruff. Note that had declarer drawn one round of trump, he could then have drawn the second round of trump and claimed, taking 8 trump tricks, 1 heart trick, and 2 club tricks. Declarer was definitely not in touch with the hand. He should be ruled down 1. I disagree with the panel on this one.

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	R3
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Event	Mini-Spangold II KO Teams	Event DIC	Tom Marsh
Date	08/07/2013	Session	Quarterfinals, 1 st Session


Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣	2♠
Dbl	3♠	4♥	Pass ¹
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo (30+ sec.)

Hand Record

Board	9	N	650 MPS		
Dealer	N	♠ J984	♥ K3		
Vul	E/W	♦ A105	♣ 10763		
W	270 MPS			E	340 MPS
♠	K65			♠ (void)	
♥	J865			♥ A742	
♦	9642			♦ Q73	
♣	J8			♣ AKQ952	
		S	610 MPS		
		♠	AQ10732		
		♥	Q109		
		♦	KJ8		
		♣	4		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by S	Made 4	N/S +420	♣ J

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was called after North's 4♠ bid, and again at the end of the hand. All agreed that South broke tempo after East's 4♥ bid. The N/S convention cards show that jump overcalls are weak. North told the table director he was never planning to sell out to 4♥ but hoped to buy the contract in 3♠. He said he was even considering bidding to the five level if necessary. E/W said they thought 4♠ was made more attractive by South's hesitation.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Two players of North's approximate experience were polled, and both passed 4♥. Therefore, the director determined that pass was a logical alternative according to Law 16B1.

Director Ruling

The director decided that there was unauthorized information and that it demonstrably suggested the 4♠ bid selected by North. Per Law 12C1e, he assigned the score of 4♥ by East, down two, NS +200.

Director's Ruling	4♥ by E, Down 2, N/S +200
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The Appeal

N/S appealed the director's ruling, and all four players attended the review. All players agreed that South's pause over 4♥ was at least thirty seconds and perhaps longer.

N/S confirmed to the reviewer that they play weak jump overcalls and that they have no special agreements about the bid beyond that. North reiterated that he never intended to let E/W play below the level of 4♠. He was thinking about bidding to the level of 5♠ if necessary, but he hoped to buy the contract for 3♠.

West stated that he believed passing 4♥ had to be reasonable since good bidding theory dictated that if a player is willing to compete to the level of four in this kind of case, he should do it immediately over the double of 2♠.

Panel Findings

The panel decided that there was an “unmistakable hesitation” and that any hesitation by a pre-emptor “demonstrably suggested” a 4♠ bid (Law 16B1). To determine whether pass was a “logical alternative” to the 4♠ bid selected by North, the panel conducted its own poll of peer players. Only those who agreed with North's initial 3♠ bid were considered, so the first player polled who wanted to bid 4♠ over the double was ignored.

The next two players questioned both bid 3♠ over the double. One of them bid 4♠ when 4♥ came around to him, but he thought it was close between bidding 4♠ and passing. The other player passed and thought it was clear to do so.

Given that input, and given that a logical alternative according to Law 16B1b is “one that, among the class of players in question and using the methods of the partnership, would be given serious consideration by a significant proportion of such players, of whom it is judged some might select it”, the panel upheld the director's adjustment to 4♥ by East and agreed with his assignment for both sides of down two for N/S +200 according to Law 12C1e. The appeal was found to have merit.

Panel Decision	4♥ by E, Down 2, N/S +200
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Smith
Member	Charlie MacCracken
Member	Chris Patrias

Commentary

Goldsmith: Good ruling other than that the panel forgot to award the obvious AWMW and 1/4 board PP.

Kooijman: The poll is very helpful once more and I do not see any merit for the appeal.

Marques: North's argument is a bit self-serving. Good polling and decision by the Panel.

Wildavsky: I see no merit to this appeal. I'd have considered a procedural penalty against NS in addition.

Woolsey: It is interesting that South wasn't thinking about bidding 4♠, he was thinking about doubling 4♥. Still, the BIT does suggest action by North, even though that action taken wasn't what South was rooting for. Since the poll indicates that passing is a LA, the ruling looks clear.

Subject of Appeal:	Incomplete Designation	Case:	R4
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Event	2 nd Friday Morning Side Game	Event DIC	Karl Miller
Date	08/09/2013	Session	

Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board	7	N	1270 MPS		
Dealer	S	♠	7		
		♥	J1065		
Vul	Both	♦	J1096		
		♣	AKJ9		
W	180 MPS			E	25 MPS
♠	AK954			♠	1063
♥	93			♥	AKQ82
♦	K7			♦	A853
♣	10864			♣	7
		S	2880 MPS		
		♠	QJ82		
		♥	74		
		♦	Q42		
		♣	Q532		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♥ by E			♣ 3

Facts Determined at the Table

Clubs had been played to the first two tricks, with declarer trumping the second round. On the third trick, declarer led a small diamond up to the ♦K7 on the board and called "Diamond". Dummy did not pull the 7 and instead put his hand on the King. At this point, the director was called.

Director Ruling

The director allowed the play of king to correct an unintended designation as allowed by Law 45C4b. It was the director's judgment that although dummy's actions were improper it was never declarer's intent to play the ♦7 instead of the king.

Director's Ruling	2♥ by E, Made 3, E/W +140
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The Appeal

N/S appealed the ruling. The play had been clubs all around at trick one. A second club was led and trumped by declarer at trick two. They now led a small diamond to the dummy at trick three, which was when this incident occurred.

Dummy said he moved his hand and tapped the table near the ♦K7, inviting declarer to specify which diamond. The defenders said he actually tapped the King. Dummy admitted that he didn't pull a card because "the call of a [small] diamond was so strange".

The defense felt that dummy's actions suggested declarer call for the king. Declarer stated that she was always planning to play a diamond to the K, a diamond back to the A, and a diamond ruff. Declarer also claimed that her full statement was going to be: "play the diamond king" and the actions by dummy cut off her full statement.

The defense did not agree that the timing of the actions at the table validated this comment. There was more time between the statement and declarer saying "king" than would be expected had declarer simply been interrupted during a continuous statement.

Panel Findings

The panel felt it was obvious that declarer's intent was always to play the ♦K. During discussion, it was pointed out that the director's ruling, based on Law 45C was not the appropriate citation. Law 46B (incomplete or erroneous call of a card) was the law that should have been applied and cited for this ruling, both at the table and during screening.

"In case of an incomplete or erroneous call by declarer of the card to be played by dummy, the following restrictions apply, *except when declarer's different intention is incontrovertible.*"

While the call of "diamond" would normally be deemed to designate the lowest diamond (46B2), incontrovertible intention overrules this.

During the screening, a discussion with West about dummy's rights and limitations occurred. At first, West did not understand what he had done inappropriately, but after the discussion with the screener, he recognized the violation.

The panel upheld the director's ruling of 2♥ by East, making three. Since dummy's actions were a violation of procedure, and since the table director cited the wrong law governing this situation, the panel deemed the appeal to have merit.

Panel Decision	2♥ by E, Made 3, E/W +140
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Panel Members

Reviewer	William Michaels
Member	Kevin Perkins
Member	Matt Koltnow

Commentary

Goldsmith: I like Law 46B. In general, when dealing with unintended calls from dummy of any sort, the directors need to aim for equity; this time they did. Good.

Kooijman: This is an impossible case for anybody not being at the table, and difficult even for the TD on the spot. And I do not like declarer's statement that she was interrupted by dummy, this looks close to lying. It is a firm decision to say that declarer never intended to play the ♦7. Couldn't declarer be in the next trick already? Couldn't he erroneously have thought for a moment to have played the ace himself instead of a small one? Only if declarer thought that 'diamond' in the case of Kx of course means the king (like in the case of AKQJ5 in dummy) he used an unintended designation. I would have liked some more research by the TD.

And then the panel overrules the TD on a point of law, telling us that Law 46B applies and not Law 45C. Well, for what it is worth, I would have chosen 45C also. If the TD decides that declarer never intended to play the ♦7, 45C covers the case. The default position in Law 46 leads to the play of the ♦7 but declarer escapes using the phrase: 'unless... different intention...'. This brings us back to Law 45, so why this superior view?

Marques: On a different hand, a case could be made for declarer to be ahead of himself (like having Ax in hand and Kx in dummy, intending to cash the A and the K in any order, but playing small and calling for small from dummy). It's not the case here. It looks like the panel got it right.

It's surprising that the director quoted the wrong law (45C only applies to complete designations).

Wildavsky: I'd have ruled that the ♦7 was played. When dummy violates the proprieties, we should no longer grant declarer the benefit of the doubt.

Woolsey: Obviously East intended to play the king of diamonds. Regardless of what dummy did, that doesn't change East's intentions. I agree with allowing the king to be played.

Incidentally, this is one case where I might let the quality of the event and the skill level of the player affect my decision. If this were the finals of the Platinum Pairs, I might decide that the player knows what he is supposed to do, and if he has a mental slip and calls "diamond" he pays the price even though obviously he meant to play the king. But in a side game where the player is a near beginner, it is surely right to allow the king to be played, of course explaining to him that when he says "diamond" that is assumed to designate the smallest diamond.

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	R5
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Event	AX Swiss Teams	Event DIC	Marie Killoran
Date	08/09/2013	Session	First


Auction

West	North	East	South
	1NT ¹	2♣ ²	DbI ³
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass ⁴
Pass	2NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: One Suited Hand
3: Stayman
4: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	29	N	1000 MPS		
Dealer	N	♠ QJ10	♥ A		
Vul	Both	♦ AQ5	♣ K97652		
W	4200 MPS			E	3300 MPS
♠ 642				♠ AK9853	
♥ J76432				♥ K9	
♦ 10832				♦ 97	
♣ (void)			♣ AJ10		
		S	750 MPS		
		♠ 7			
		♥ Q10853			
		♦ KJ64			
		♣ Q843			

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2NT by N	Made 2	N/S +120	♠ 8

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was called at the time of South's BIT and instructed the table to continue play. After the opening lead, North won the jack, and then played four rounds of diamonds. East discarded two spades. North scored one spade, one heart, four diamonds, and two clubs, for eight tricks. East did not find the shift to the heart nine, when in with the ♣A..

Director Ruling

The director ruled that South's BIT conveyed UI which demonstrably suggested that North not pass 2S. After polling some experts, the director also ruled that passing 2S was a logical alternative, not suggested by the UI. The contract was adjusted to 2♣ by East, making 2 following a trump lead, E/W +110, per Laws 16B and 12C1e.

Director's Ruling	2♣ by E, Made 2, E/W +110
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The Appeal

N/S appealed the director's ruling, and all of the players attended the review. The facts were agreed to as above, with N/S stipulating that even if South's BIT was not that long, his interest in the auction and its meaning made it clear that he did not have a weak hand with both majors. If South had held a bad hand, he would never have entered the auction, once East bid 2♣. He clearly held invitational values. N/S stated that while the UI from the BIT suggested values, it duplicated Authorized Information from the auction itself.

E/W claimed South might still have entered the auction with a weak hand, if he was very distributional. The BIT ruled this out, suggesting values and that bidding would be more successful than passing.

East also said she had difficult pitches on the run of the diamonds. North could have held five spades, and West a singleton. East also said a trump lead against 2♠ wasn't clear, and their side might have made nine tricks.

Panel Findings

Since the event TD had polled experts, the Reviewer polled peers of North. Obtaining a reasonable polling sample was made more difficult by the somewhat eccentric opening bid, but eventually some appropriate players were found. None would have passed 2♠. They differed on calls, including 2NT, 3♣, and double, but none would have passed. They all agreed a BIT by South suggested some sort of balanced, invitational hand.

The Panel decided that, for this player's peer group, passing 2♠ was not a logical alternative. There was some thought among the Panel that the 2NT call was demonstrably suggested by the UI, whereas a 3♣ call was not. Since a 3♣ contract would have resulted in ten tricks for N/S, for +130, this result was not considered. The Panel restored the table result of 2NT by North, making 2, N/S +120.

Panel Decision	2NT by N, Made 2, N/S +120
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Gary Zeiger
Member	Kevin Perkins
Member	Matt Koltnow

Commentary

Goldsmith: If South had promised invitational values, what was North doing passing 2♥? That could have ended the auction in his singleton. Once the opponents chose to play in his QJ10, it is now more attractive to act? North's pass of 2♥ demonstrated that for him, passing 2♠ was a LA, and it's enforced after his receipt of UI that South doesn't want to play 2♠.

The opening lead doesn't matter, unless it's a club. On a red suit lead, North will win and play a trump. He can ruff the second heart (on a heart lead) and play another trump, so 2♠ is making 8 tricks. How often will South lead a club? He's not leading a heart, but any of the other three suits seems possible. I think the singleton trump is least likely, so it's mostly a toss-up between the minors. That means a club lead is likely, so I'd award reciprocal 140s. It is reasonable to judge a club lead only at all probable, and therefore award E/W +110 and N/S -140.

Kooijman: This is a somewhat curious case. I would not have thought that experts more than peers pass with the North hand. Did the TD show the right hand? It is somewhat worrying. In Europe the appeal would have gone to the reviewer, who might have decided that the demanded procedure had been followed, which leads to upholding the TD decision with possibly the N/S deposit forfeited. Curious indeed. Compliments to the panel.

Marques: Disappointing, that the director polled experts to analyze the actions of a player with 1000 MPs (assuming the MP level reflects the ability of the player at the table). The panel managed to establish that pass is not a LA. This case gets very nice after that, because the auction that the Panel decided to be suggested among the "not pass" ones is the one leading to a worse result for the offenders. Good recovery from an "unforced error" by the director.

Wildavsky: I do not buy the Reviewer's poll results. He needed to tell us how many players he polled. Ten might be sufficient to find that a call is not a logical alternative. Three would not be. As I see things, if some experts would pass then it's overwhelmingly likely that some less accomplished players would also pass.

Woolsey: The BIT suggests North not pass, but that is already suggested by South's double of 2♠. As the poll showed, while it might not be clear what North should do, passing is not one of the candidates. Good ruling by the panel.