

1993 Spring NABC Appeals Casebook



American Contract
Bridge League

2020 Editor's Note:

The 1993-1995 NABC Appeals Committee Decisions casebooks, compiled by John Blubaugh, have not been published electronically previously. The documents in question only existed in hard copy form. The ACBL would like to thank Denise Raggo for transcribing the text of the originals into an electronic format, without which this document would not be possible.

ACBL Headquarters
May, 2020

1993 Editor's Note:

I want to thank all of the members of the National Appeals Committee for their cooperation and encouragement in creating this report.

Special gratitude is due Alan Le Bendig, John Anderson, and David Treadwell for their comments on specific Committees. This will surely help us toward our goals of more uniform rulings at the playing table and in Committee.

If you have suggestions for a change in the format we have used, additions or deletions you would like to see in the data presented, please let us know at the organizational meeting at the next NABC.

John Blubaugh
Editor – Tournament Appeals Committee Decisions

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Stratified Mixed Pairs	Case:	1
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	W	♠ KQ873	
		♥ K98	
Vul	E/W	♦ K3	
		♣ Q106	
W			
		♠ A10	E
		♥ AQJ42	♠ 9542
		♦ AJ4	♥ 105
		♣ K54	♦ 10975
			♣ AJ9
		S	
		♠ J6	
		♥ 763	
		♦ Q862	
		♣ 8732	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♠X by N	Down 2	E/W +300	

Facts

North/South claimed that West broke tempo twice. They did not believe East could have doubled without the information conveyed by the hesitation.

Committee Ruling

The Committee discovered that the Director was not called until the round was completed and the players had moved and started play on the subsequent round. The Committee was unable to determine the facts of the case and awarded +300 to East-West and average or the equivalent percentage of their game to N/S.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	NABC Open Pairs	Case:	2
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Auction

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1♦	Dbl	1♠
Pass	2♠	Dbl	Pass
3♣	3♠	Pass ¹	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	S	♠ J984		
		♥ J9853		
Vul	E/W	♦ AK97		
		♣ (void)		
W				E
♠ 10732				♠ Q
♥ 104				♥ AK2
♦ 3				♦ QJ852
♣ J87632				♣ AKQ9
		S		
		♠ AK65		
		♥ Q76		
		♦ 1064		
		♣ 1054		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♣X by W	Made 5	E/W +750	

Facts

All of the players agreed that East broke tempo with the Pass over 3♠. N/S felt that Pass was a logical alternative to bidding 4♣.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that pass was not a logical alternative to 4♣ and ruled that the result stood, 5♣X by W, making five, E/W +750.

Commentary

John Anderson: The main point is that East continued to bid his own hand with the 5♣ call.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	NABC Open Pairs	Case:	3
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Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	Pass
4♦ ¹	Pass	4♠ ²	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Splinter
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ 3	
Vul	N/S	♥ AQ952	
		♦ J5432	
		♣ 42	
W			
		♠ AK874	E
		♥ 8763	♠ J10964
		♦ K	♥ KJ
		♣ A53	♦ AQ86
			♣ Q10
		S	
		♠ Q2	
		♥ 104	
		♦ 1097	
		♣ KJ9876	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
6♠ by E	Made 6	E/W +980	

Facts

The players all agreed on the break in tempo. West felt he had a clear choice to make a second slam try. N/S believed Pass was a logical alternative.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that Pass was a logical alternative for West and changed the result to 4♠ by East, making six, E/W +480.

Commentary

John Anderson: East had no reason to break tempo and West had no reason to bid anymore (having chosen to splinter). The five level is not "safe".

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	NABC Open Pairs	Case:	4
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ 75	
Vul	None	♥ 85	
		♦ A8	
		♣ AKQ9762	
W			
		♠ AKQ642	E
		♥ Q	♠ 1083
		♦ J1043	♥ J7632
		♣ 83	♦ K75
			♣ 105
		S	
		♠ J9	
		♥ AK1094	
		♦ Q962	
		♣ J4	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠X by W	Down 2	N/S +300	

Facts

All players agreed that North broke tempo when he passed over 4♠. There was no skip-bid warning. South believed his action was normal because of his two quick tricks in hearts.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that South's action was normal, and Pass was not a logical alternative. They allowed the result, 4♠X by W, down 2, N/S +300, to stand.

Commentary

John Anderson: The reopening Double illegally allows North to solve South's "problem" by bidding on or converting for penalty.

Alan Le Bendig: I have some concern about this ruling. Could Pass be a logical alternative? Is this consistent with other rulings that prohibited a player from taking the winning alternative?

David Treadwell: I tend to agree with the Committee but it is a very close decision. One would have to hear the testimony and make a judgement based on the facts of the case and an appraisal of the player's ability.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	National Open Pairs	Case:	5
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Four Card Drury
2: Bad Hand
3: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ Q4	
Vul	Both	♥ 10876	
		♦ AKQ3	
		♣ K65	
W			
		♠ J1065	E
		♥ AK92	♠ AK7
		♦ 8	♥ J543
		♣ J874	♦ J974
			♣ 92
		S	
		♠ 9832	
		♥ Q	
		♦ 10652	
		♣ AQ103	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♥X by W	Down 1	N/S +200	

Facts

East/West claimed that North broke tempo with his pass. This was disputed by North/South.

Committee Ruling

The Committee determined that there had been a break in temp. This break in tempo made balancing easier for South. The Committee felt that Pass was a logical alternative and the Double was removed. The result was changed to 2♥ by West, down one, N/S +100.

Commentary

John Anderson: The action taken was not even close to reality vulnerable. Pass stands out. I believe N/S should have been given a reprimand or a procedural penalty as well.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Women's Pairs	Case:	6
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Pre-emptive
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	S	♠ A86432	
		♥ KQ109	
Vul	E/W	♦ KQ8	
		♣ (void)	
W			
		♠ 109	E
		♥ AJ7542	♠ K75
		♦ 102	♥ 6
		♣ Q54	♦ 97643
			♣ AJ87
		S	
		♠ QJ	
		♥ 83	
		♦ AJ5	
		♣ K109632	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by N	Made 4	N/S +430	

Facts

East/West felt that South's 3♣ bid was an unusual action after North's break in tempo. There was disagreement about the use of the "Stop" card and the length of the hesitation.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the usual action by South in this situation would be Double or 3♣. The Committee decided that breaks in tempo do not require players to take unexpected actions (Pass in this case). The result, 3NT by North, making four, N/S +430, was allowed to stand.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Senior Pairs	Case:	7
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Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♣	1♠
Dbl ¹	3♠	4♣	4♠
Dbl ²	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Negative Double
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	East	♠ 10743	
		♥ 96	
Vul	Both	♦ QJ862	
		♣ K6	
W			
		♠ 6	E
		♥ J10754	♠ 2
		♦ AK94	♥ AK2
		♣ 1098	♦ 53
			♣ AQJ5432
		S	
		♠ AKQJ985	
		♥ Q83	
		♦ 107	
		♣ 7	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♣ by E	Made 5	E/W +600	

Facts

The players all agreed that a break in tempo had occurred. East claimed his bid was clear and he was not swayed by his partner's hesitation. East also claimed he was only getting an unfavorable ruling because of the fame of the North player.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that it may have been true that East was not influenced by his partner's break in tempo. However, holding a doubleton diamond, the ♥AK, and the ♣A, certainly indicated strong defensive possibilities. The Committee reasoned that the break in tempo may have suggested 5♣ or Pass and East is not allowed to choose the winning alternative. The result was changed to 4♠X by South, down two, E/W +500.

East was rebuked for his comment to the Director and was informed of the procedure for filing a complaint against a Director.

Commentary

John Anderson: If the 5♣ bid was clear, why wasn't it bid on the second round? East could have received worse than a rebuke.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	North American Open Swiss	Case:	8
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Demands Redouble
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ 964	
Vul	None	♥ A4	
		♦ AJ1094	
		♣ KQ2	
W			
		♠ KQJ105	E
		♥ 1093	♠ A7
		♦ Q86	♥ KQJ75
		♣ 106	♦ 73
			♣ AJ83
		S	
		♠ 832	
		♥ 862	
		♦ K52	
		♣ 9754	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥ by E	Made 4	E/W +420	

Facts

West asked several questions before doubling 2♦, which was explained as showing a good diamond suit. All parties agreed to the break in tempo. The Director was summoned before the start of play and he ordered play to continue.

Committee Ruling

The Committee determined that there was a break in tempo. They also determined that E/W had no clear understanding about the Double of 2♦. The Committee felt that the tempo indicated to East that bidding would be the winning action. The Committee also felt that East had a clear 2♥ bid immediately over 2♦.

The Committee also decided that North, a player of international fame, made a dreadful defensive error in allowing the contract to make. The Committee debated this issue at length but the rules seemed to be clear. The Director ordered play to continue and an attempt was made to get a result on the board. N/S were obligated to play bridge and could not be allowed to profit from their misdefense. The N/S damage was not a consequence of the irregularity but was subsequent to the irregularity. If 4♥ had been cold, their bad result would have been a consequence of the irregularity.

The Committee changed the result for E/W to 2♦X by North, down one, E/W +100. The Committee also ruled that the N/S result should be 4♥ by East, making four, E/W +420, for allowing the contract to make.

Commentary

John Anderson: I believe that this ruling should be true for any player in any national event. The ruling was not dependent on the quality of the player involved.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	North American Open Swiss	Case:	9
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, General Takeout
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ (void)	
		♥ KQ8754	
Vul	N/S	♦ K93	
		♣ AQ43	
W			
		♠ AJ63	E
		♥ J1063	♠ Q1074
		♦ A106	♥ A92
		♣ 85	♦ QJ5
			♣ K72
		S	
		♠ K9852	
		♥ (void)	
		♦ 8742	
		♣ J1096	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♣X by N	Made 5	N/S +910	

Facts

2♣ was alerted as a general takeout. North meant his bid to show a single suited hand and he intended to bid 2♥ over his partner's forced 2♦ bid. North admitted his break in tempo and said he probably didn't appear to be happy. South claimed he was never going to sit for 3♣X. It was obvious that his partner did not hold spades.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that there was misinformation because of the Alert, an improper break in tempo, and a violation of the properties because of North's body language. The Committee felt that passing 3♣ was a logical alternative.

The Committee changed the result to 3♣X by South, down four, E/W +1100. The Committee also found the appeal was substantially without merit and penalized N/S two victory points.

Commentary

John Anderson: Great ruling

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Side Game	Case:	10
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Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Dbl	2♦
2♠	3♦	3♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl ¹	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	E	♠	K65	
		♥	K108	
Vul	E/W	♦	J108732	
		♣	9	
W				E
♠	9872	♠	AQ1043	
♥	63	♥	J9754	
♦	A4	♦	K	
♣	AQ872	♣	43	
		S		
		♠	J	
		♥	AQ2	
		♦	Q965	
		♣	KJ1065	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♦ by N	Down 2	E/W +100	

Facts

The players all agreed on the break in tempo. South claimed they played Competitive Doubles and this Double indicated a desire to compete.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the Double was Alertable if it was competitive. They also believed the break in tempo made bidding more attractive than passing. The Committee decided passing was a logical alternative to bidding 4♦ and the result was changed to 3♠X by West, making four, E/W +930.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight A Senior Pairs	Case:	11
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Skip Bid Warning given
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	W	♠ (void)	
		♥ AQJ753	
Vul	None	♦ 86	
		♣ A10764	
W			
♠	AJ10543		E
♥	942		♠ KQ87
♦	Q43		♥ 6
♣	2		♦ KJ72
			♣ QJ83
		S	
		♠ 962	
		♥ K108	
		♦ A1095	
		♣ K95	

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

Facts

The break in tempo was disputed by North/South.

Committee Ruling

The Committee found no break in tempo. The Committee felt that Pass was not a logical alternative even if there had been a hesitation. The result, 5♥ by North, made five, N/S +450, was allowed to stand.

Commentary

John Anderson: It is clear North should bid. However, 5♣ should have been the call.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight B Swiss Teams	Case:	12
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Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♦	Dbl	Rdbl	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass ¹	Pass
Dbl	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ K874	
Vul	None	♥ AQ5	
		♦ 865	
		♣ AJ7	
W			
♠ (void)		♠ AQ32	
♥ K732		♥ J984	
♦ AKQ104		♦ 932	
♣ Q954		♣ K8	
		S	
		♠ J10965	
		♥ 106	
		♦ J7	
		♣ 10632	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 4	E/W +430	

Facts

North/South alleged the Pass was made out of tempo. This was disputed by East/West.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 3NT by East, making four, E/W +430, to stand. The Committee found the appeal to be substantially without merit and ordered a one victory point penalty against N/S. E/W did not receive this victory point.

Commentary

John Anderson: I believe the Pass after Redouble is forcing and suggests penalty.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight A Swiss Teams	Case:	13
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Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♥
Dbl	Rdbl	Pass	Pass
2♠	Dbl	Pass ¹	Pass
Rdbl	Pass	2NT	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	E	♠ A109642		
Vul	None	♥ A3		
		♦ A743		
		♣ 6		
W				E
♠ Q8653				♠ KJ
♥ (void)				♥ K9842
♦ K1062				♦ J9
♣ AQ74			♣ J1052	
		S		
		♠ (void)		
		♥ QJ10765		
		♦ Q85		
		♣ K983		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2NTX by E	Made 4	E/W +590	

Facts

All of the players agreed that the break in tempo was just a couple of seconds. They also agreed that a loud Double had been made of 2♠. East believed he had a normal call considering the auction.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that such a short hesitation given the potential for a huge swing board did not convey any information. The result, 2NTX by East, making four, E/W +590, was allowed to stand.

Commentary

John Anderson: Why didn't North receive a rebuke for the "loud" Double?

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Victory Point Swiss Teams	Case:	14
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Auction

West	North	East	South
			4♦ ¹
Pass	4♣	Dbl	5♦
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Transfer to Spades

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	S	♠ 10642	
		♥ AK9653	
Vul	Both	♦ 4	
		♣ AJ	
W			
♠ J93			
♥ J82			
♦ AJ5			
♣ 10964			
		S	
		♠ 75	
		♥ (void)	
		♦ KQ1098762	
		♣ K32	
			E
			♠ AKQ8
			♥ Q1074
			♦ 3
			♣ Q875

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♦X by S	Made 5	N/S +750	

Facts

When North Alerted the 4♦ bid, South immediately said: "The bid is not alertable; it just shows diamonds." The Director was called and North stated that he thought the bid showed a solid spade suit with eight plus tricks and asked him to bid spades. The Director ordered North to ignore the unauthorized information given by his partner and to proceed with the auction.

In the ensuing auction, South felt he was allowed to bid 5♦ and infer that North was not bidding his own spade suit because of the "booming" Double of 4♣. North-South felt that they should have been awarded their result, +750, because of East's Double and the subsequent misdefense of 5♦.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt there was misinformation given and that the Alert procedure had been violated. The Committee also felt that North had taken advantage of his partner's violation of the Alert procedure and did not bid his hand ignoring South's statement. If he had, the Committee felt he was destined to get to a 6♣ contract.

The Committee ruled that the board should be thrown out of play and N/S were penalized three IMPs for the misinformation. The Committee elected to take no further action against N/S because they perceived them to be an inexperienced team.

Commentary

John Anderson: The N/S players involved in this appeal were playing on a very experienced team. In fact, this ruling kept the N/S team from winning the event. It is always bad to assume inexperience by any players in a Flight A event.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Charity Pairs	Case:	15
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Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT ¹	Pass	3♣	Dbl
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Forcing ♠ Raise

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	N	♠		
Vul	E/W	♥		
		♦		
		♣		
W				E
♠	A10			♠
♥	1053			♥
♦	KJ6			♦
♣	A10965			♣
		S		
		♠		
		♥		
		♦		
		♣		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by W	Made 4	E/W +630	

Facts

West's 2NT bid was alerted as a forcing spade raise. East's 3♣ bid was not alerted. West said he had to bid something and chose to bid 3NT.

Committee Ruling

The Committee determined that West had received the unauthorized information that East had a singleton club. The result was changed to Average Plus for North/South and Average Minus for East/West.

Editor's Note: The complete hand record for this case was not included in the Committee Chairman's write-up. However, we decided to include the case because West's is the only relevant hand.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	NABC Women's Pairs	Case:	16
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Transfer to Spades

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	W	♠	Q96	
		♥	102	
Vul	None	♦	J96543	
		♣	73	
W				E
♠	AJ85	♠	K43	
♥	J9875	♥	Q3	
♦	(void)	♦	K82	
♣	9852	♣	KJ1064	
		S		
		♠	1072	
		♥	AK64	
		♦	AQ107	
		♣	AQ	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♦ by N	Made 3	N/S +110	

Facts

The 2♥ bid was alerted as a transfer to spades.

Committee Ruling

The Committee determined that a violation of the Alert procedures had occurred when East alerted the 2♥ bid as a transfer to spades. This was not the partnership agreement. Due to the confusion and misinformation given, the Committee was unable to determine a likely end result. The Committee changed the score to Average Plus for North/South and Average Minus for East/West.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	NABC Women's Pairs	Case:	17
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Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
Pass	2♦ ¹	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	6♦ ²	Pass	7♣
Dbl	7♦	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Strong Club Raise
2: Inquired, South stated that she did not know meaning

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer		E	♠ K1072		
Vul		N/S	♥ QJ7		
			♦ AKQ753		
			♣ (void)		
W				E	
♠	854			♠	QJ96
♥	963			♥	K102
♦	J86			♦	1042
♣	AJ93			♣	K52
		S			
			♠ A3		
			♥ A854		
			♦ 9		
			♣ Q108764		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
7♦X by N	Made 7	N/S +1630	♣

Facts

The 2♦ bid was alerted as a strong club raise. When asked about the 6♦ bid, South informed East/West that she didn't know what the bid meant.

Committee Ruling

The Committee determined that misinformation had been given East/West by the alert of 2♦. The Committee decided South had bid throughout the auction as though North had made a strong club raise. The Committee felt that the 6♦ bid took advantage of the unauthorized information from the Alert. The Committee had no sympathy for the double of 7♣ by West. They felt the club lead was the main cause of damage. A trump lead would seem to be routine since every other suit is tied up. The result was changed to average for East/West and average minus for North/South. A procedural penalty of 2.8 matchpoints was assessed against the North/South pair.

Commentary

John Anderson: Would the ruling have been the same in an open event?

Alan Le Bendig: The Committee failed to ask why the double of 7♣ was made. I feel it was an error to "dislike" the bid without inquiring why it was made.

David Treadwell: I was an observer at this case. I believe the Committee did an excellent job of handling this rather difficult case and rendered a completely appropriate decision. As a matter of interest, the South player, a top US woman expert, did her best to do the right thing when she knew they were probably headed for a disaster. The North player, a foreigner, apparently did not understand her responsibilities with respect to the Alert procedure.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	NABC Open Pairs	Case:	18
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Negative Double
2: No Alert, Intended as a Maximal Double

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ 1042	
		♥ KJ64	
Vul	Both	♦ Q7	
		♣ 10732	
W			
		♠ QJ65	E
		♥ Q75	♠ A873
		♦ A65	♥ (void)
		♣ QJ6	♦ K9842
			♣ A984
		S	
		♠ K9	
		♥ A109832	
		♦ J103	
		♣ K5	

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

Facts

The second double was intended as a maximal double and was not alerted.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that 4♠ should have been beaten. The Committee did have a problem with the 4♠ bid. The result, 4♠ by East, making 4, E/W +620, was allowed to stand. East/West were given a one matchpoint procedural penalty.

Commentary

John Anderson: The second double was silly. A cuebid of 4♥ is more logical.

David Treadwell: I slightly question the imposition of a procedural penalty for the very minor technicality of failing to alert a maximal double in a somewhat convoluted auction. I might be inclined to penalize a top expert pair in this situation but not a so-so player.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Bracketed Knockout Teams	Case:	19
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Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
Dbl	3♣ ¹	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Explained as a Limit Raise

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ 87	
Vul	Both	♥ 6	
		♦ J932	
		♣ A97652	
W			
♠	AKQ		E
♥	AQ108		♠ 9654
♦	K1075		♥ K9843
♣	103		♦ 864
			♣ 8
		S	
		♠ J1032	
		♥ J72	
		♦ AQ	
		♣ KQJ4	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♣ by S	Made 3	N/S +110	

Facts

The 3♣ bid was explained as a limit raise. East/West felt that the explanation "limit raise" did not describe the North hand and felt that South should bid 3NT opposite a limit raise.

Committee Ruling

The Committee did not feel it could force South to bid three notrump holding the J72 of hearts. The Committee also felt that East-West was not damaged by the explanation. The result of 3♣ by South, making three, N/S +110, was allowed to stand.

Commentary

John Anderson: Which bracket was this? This was certainly not a limit raise. This bid pressured East/West out of the auction and four hearts is cold. North/South should have been given a warning at the very least. I believe the correct ruling would have been average plus for East/West and average minus for North/South.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	NABC Mixed Pairs	Case:	20
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Explained as Natural

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ QJ	
		♥ Q1054	
Vul	None	♦ 95	
		♣ AKJ72	
W			
		♠ K75	E
		♥ J982	♠ A9862
		♦ K6	♥ 76
		♣ 10864	♦ QJ843
			♣ 5
		S	
		♠ 1043	
		♥ AK3	
		♦ A1072	
		♣ Q93	

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

Facts

The 1NT bid was explained as natural. East was never asked to explain his rationale for the 2♠ bid. East felt that the shape of his hand was so unusual that he would never have sat for 1NTX.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the explanation of "natural" may have influenced East to bid over 1NTX. The result was changed to 1NTX by East, down four, N/S +800.

Commentary

David Treadwell: I have no quarrel with the Committee decision. But, since when is 1NT by a passed hand between two bidding opponents natural?

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	NABC Mixed Pairs	Case:	21
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Auction

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	3♠ ¹
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Intended as splinter, no Alert

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	N	♠	AJ2	
		♥	Q109762	
Vul	Both	♦	Q3	
		♣	AQ	
W				E
♠	KQ853	♠	10964	
♥	5	♥	84	
♦	AK652	♦	104	
♣	62	♣	J7543	
		S		
		♠	7	
		♥	AKJ3	
		♦	J987	
		♣	K1098	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
6♥ by N	Made 6	N/S +1430	

Facts

The 3♠ bid was intended as a splinter bid. The bid was not alerted and North stated he did not know what 3♠ meant. The Director was not summoned until the play was completed.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the Director should have been called at the time of the infraction. The Director might have been able to help produce a normal result. The Committee allowed the result, 6♥ by North, making six, N/S +1430, to stand.

Commentary

David Treadwell: I agree with the Committee ruling (almost). Why wasn't a small procedural penalty given? This is a very simple auction and North should have been prepared for a bid of this sort. Compare this ruling with that from Case 18.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Flight B Pairs	Case:	22
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Auction

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	4♥ ¹	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♥	Dbl
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Texas Transfer

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer		W	♠ J52		
Vul		Both	♥ 65		
			♦ Q98643		
			♣ K9		
W				E	
♠	A93			♠	87
♥	KQ43			♥	AJ109872
♦	KJ7			♦	(void)
♣	A85		♣	Q763	
		S			
			♠ KQ1064		
			♥ (void)		
			♦ A1052		
			♣ J1042		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
6♥ by E	Made 6	E/W +1430	

Facts

The 4♥ bid was alerted as a Texas Transfer to spades. North/South were alerted before the opening lead that the 4♥ bid was not a Texas Transfer. East/West felt they were in a contract that could be set for a top board by their opponents. East/West did not believe they should be punished because North-South misplayed the hand.

Committee Ruling

The Committee did not feel that North/South were damaged by the misinformation. The result, 6♥ by East, making six, E/W +1430, was allowed to stand.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Flight A Pairs	Case:	23
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ A8743	
		♥ 109	
Vul	Both	♦ AK9	
		♣ 1092	
W			
		♠ Q109	E
		♥ J862	♠ K
		♦ 762	♥ K73
		♣ 743	♦ QJ5
			♣ AKQ865
		S	
		♠ J652	
		♥ AQ54	
		♦ 10843	
		♣ J	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♣X by E	Down 2	N/S +500	

Facts

The 3♠ bid was Alerted. However, no questions were asked about the Alert.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that East/West were given misinformation that could have affected the bidding. The result was changed to 3♠ by North, making three, N/S +140. North/South were also assessed a two matchpoint procedural penalty for giving the misinformation.

Commentary

John Anderson: We must determine a standard for explanations of pre-emptive raises, mixed raises, and limit raises including the number of trumps shown, dummy points, and side defense. "Protecting himself" can lead to improper information being given to partner.

Alan Le Bendig: After 3♠ was alerted, East, a very experienced player, made no effort to ask any questions or check the opponent's convention card. Had he asked, North would have said the bid was pre-emptive. This did not change the danger of doubling back in. Instead of the division of strength being eleven opposite eight it could just as easily have been sixteen opposite three producing the same result. I feel it is an important concept that a player who makes no effort to protect himself should not receive protection from a Committee. The bridge of the matter strongly suggests that East should keep his result.

David Treadwell: This is the one case where I think the Committee made an absurd ruling. The Alert of a technically non-alertable call is not an infraction per se. The only time it might be penalized would be if there was reason to believe the player did it deliberately to annoy an opponent or did it to such excess that it slowed down the game. Even then, I would not penalize unless the player had been cautioned by the Director about this.

The difficulty in this began with the ruling of the Director. If an opponent chooses to make an assumption about the meaning of an Alert, he is always on his own. I discussed this with Sol Weinstein and he appeared to agree completely with this view. The Director should have allowed the table result to stand and let the extremely expert opponents take it to Committee if they dared take a chance on getting a substantial procedural penalty imposed on them for presenting a case totally lacking in merit.

The case is most unfortunate because news of the decision apparently spread rather widely. I was told about it from two unsolicited sources as an example of the lousy decisions reached by Appeals Committees.


Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	NABC Women's Swiss Teams	Case:	24
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	N	♠	Q10965	
		♥	K10852	
Vul	Both	♦	10	
		♣	Q7	
W				E
♠	KJ82	♠	A7	
♥	93	♥	QJ764	
♦	AJ972	♦	K8	
♣	J10	♣	A943	
		S		
		♠	43	
		♥	A	
		♦	Q6543	
		♣	K8652	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by W	Down 2	N/S +200	♠10

Facts

North led the ♠10 and West attempted to check their convention card. North/South were foreign players and they were using the WBF card which has many more lead situations than the ACBL card. Several of the early examples made it appear that North/South played the ten to show zero or two higher honors. West asked South if it was indeed zero or two higher and South responded affirmatively. The ace of spades was played and this followed by the diamond king and a diamond finesse. South hoped to take four diamond tricks, three spade tricks, a club trick, and gain one other trick. When the spade finesse failed on a later return, South was down two. The Director adjusted the score to down one based on the misinformation. West maintained that she might have made the hand by ducking the spade lead to the jack if she had gotten the correct information.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the hand was indeed makeable. However, Laws 12C2 states, "When the Director awards an assigned adjusted score in place of a result actually obtained at the table after an irregularity, the score is, for the non-offending side the most favorable result that was likely had the irregularity not occurred, or, for the offending side, the most unfavorable result that was at all probable. The scores awarded to the two sides need not balance..." The most favorable result that was likely has been interpreted as occurring about one-third of the time. The Committee did not feel the required series of plays met that criteria (it appears that a club honor must be led at trick two). For the offending side, the most unfavorable result that was at all probable has been interpreted as occurring about one-sixth of the time. The Committee felt this was much closer but still did not quite get there. Had the Committee felt that it was probable, North/South would have been -600 with East/West -100. Both sides would have then IMPed their score against the result achieved at the other table, creating an unbalanced victory point score. In this case, the Committee assigned both sides the same result, +100 for North/South.

Commentary

Alan Le Bendig: We should emphasize the importance of all participants using the ACBL convention card. I have since discovered that this pair had been told earlier in the week to use an appropriate card. Had West gone far enough on the card, she would have discovered that the ten lead could have contained the queen. South was confused about which partner she was playing with.

Subject of Appeal:	Unauthorized Information	Event:	NABC Open Pairs	Case:	25
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Numerous questions before bidding

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	S	♠	Q765	
		♥	J109876	
Vul	E/W	♦	52	
		♣	5	
W				E
♠	AJ10	♠	43	
♥	32	♥	K4	
♦	Q10764	♦	AKJ983	
♣	K64	♣	J108	
		S		
		♠	K982	
		♥	AQ5	
		♦	(void)	
		♣	AQ9732	

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

Facts

North asked for a review and then asked numerous questions before bidding 4♥.

Committee Ruling

The Committee discovered that the North player admitted to improper questions. They also felt that 4♥ could not be construed as a cue-bid (South was looking at the ace of hearts) of a void or singleton. This would have given East/West nine or ten hearts. The result, 4♥ by North, making four, N/S +420, was allowed to stand. The Committee also ruled that the questions were highly improper. North/South were penalized five matchpoints on a twenty-five top or twenty per cent of one board as a disciplinary action.

Commentary

John Anderson: Excellent decision.

Subject of Appeal:	Improper Procedure	Event:	NABC Women's Pairs	Case:	26
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Auction

West	North	East	South
			Pass
4♥	Dbl	5♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl ¹	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Tapped previous Dbl card

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	S	♠ AK72	
Vul	N/S	♥ (void)	
		♦ AJ982	
		♣ A965	
W			
♠ QJ		E	
♥ AKQ8643		♠ 1053	
♦ 75		♥ J752	
♣ K7		♦ K6	
		♣ QJ84	
		S	
		♠ 9864	
		♥ 109	
		♦ Q1043	
		♣ 1032	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♥X by W	Down 2	N/S +300	

Facts

Eas/-West claimed that the North player fiddled with her bidding box and then tapped the table. The double card was not played. East/West did not play pass cards but picked up their bidding cards. East/West did not believe the contract was doubled.

Committee Ruling

The Committee found that the players were divided about what happened. It appeared to the Committee that North did Double by tapping the Double card that was already on the table. North wrote the Double on her score card. The cards also indicated that North would have Doubled. The result, 5♥X by West, down two, N/S +300, was allowed to stand.

Commentary

David Treadwell: This case was reported to me as an example of a bad ruling. I dug into it a bit and I agree wholeheartedly with the ruling. It is true North/South violated procedure in a minor way and they could have been given a slight procedural penalty. This should depend on the expertise of the player. The Committee chose to admonish the player rather than assess a match point penalty. I have no quarrel with this.


Subject of Appeal:	Improper Designation	Event:	NABC Open Pairs	Case:	27
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Auction

West	North	East	South

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	S	♠	1082	
		♥	73	
Vul	Both	♦	QJ93	
		♣	9873	
W				E
♠	KQ5	♠	J643	
♥	92	♥	AKQJ5	
♦	K	♦	1072	
♣	KQJ6542	♣	10	
		S		
		♠	A97	
		♥	10864	
		♦	A8654	
		♣	A	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♣X by W	Down 1	N/S +200	

Facts

Several tricks into the play, Declarer (West) called for "the heart" from dummy's QJ5. The 5 was played, South followed with the 8 and declarer then said he meant to play a high heart.

Committee Ruling

The Committee decided to allow the play of the Queen of Hearts based on Law 46. The Committee felt there was incontrovertible evidence that a high heart was intended. The result was changed to 4♣X by West, making four, E/W +710.


Subject of Appeal:	Disputed Claim	Event:	Bracketed Knockout Teams	Case:	28
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Auction

West	North	East	South

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	W	♠	10	
		♥	10	
Vul	E/W	♦	-	
		♣	-	
W				E
♠	-	♠	J9	
♥	65	♥	-	
♦	-	♦	-	
♣	-	♣	-	
		S		
		♠	-	
		♥	A	
		♦	5	
		♣	-	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by E	Down 1	N/S +100	

Facts

At trick 12, South led the Ace of Hearts and East claimed simultaneously. After the round, North/South claimed that East had placed the Jack of Spades on the table. East said he was claiming and the Jack of Spades fell out of his hands on the way to the table.

Committee Ruling

The Committee referred to the Scope of the Laws. They felt that The Laws were primarily designed as a redress for damage not as a punishment for irregularities. The result was changed to 4♠ by East, making four, E/W +620.

Commentary

Alan Le Bendig: One of the goals of the Laws is to restore equity. This seems to be a clear case of a pair attempting to get something for nothing. Hopefully, in the future, the Directors will agree with the general Committee opinion that this should be frowned upon. Had the Director ruled against North/South and they had elected to appeal, I would hope the Committee would have judged the Appeal to be without merit.

David Treadwell: I believe North/South should be nominated for the UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACT OF THE YEAR AWARD. They would easily win it. How could the Director have ruled in favor of North/South?