

1993 Fall NABC Appeals Casebook



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 NABC Appeals Chairman's Note:

This manual contains appeals that were heard during the Seattle, Washington NABC. The rulings made by these Committees are **not** intended to serve as examples for other Committees. The main purpose is to make it easier for our NABC Committee Members to see what decisions are being made by other Committees and what reasoning processes are being used to make these decisions. This introspection should assist all of us in achieving a certain level of uniformity in how we approach these problems.

This manual can serve as a valuable aid to Directors, potential Committee members, and all studious bridge players to help them understand how some very difficult issues are dealt with. The expert commentary that accompanies most of these rulings will assist all of us in determining which decisions are viewed as clear errors. The commentary points out that even the expert community is not in total agreement as to whether a decision was right or wrong. The commentary does provide a great deal of insight into the methods we should follow in our attempts to continue improving the process.

I feel the overall quality of these rulings has undergone a noticeable improvement since we started publishing the decisions three years ago. Committee chairmen do a lot of extra work to help make us aware of the testimony they hear in Committee and the reasoning that was used to reach the final decision. Sometimes they serve on three or four cases per night after two arduous sessions of bridge. This makes their efforts to document these facts even more remarkable. I'm sure they will try to assist us in further improvements

A special thank you must be extended to John Blubaugh. Without his expertise and devotion, this record would not exist in this form. He has spent countless hours in making these cases readable and finding the facts to fill in missing pieces both during and after the tournament. The editorial improvements in this compilation have taken much faster than we hoped. We now have a product to offer the general bridge population that we can be proud of. It is our sincere hope that others will find this a valuable educational aid.

Alan Le Bendig
Co-Chairman, NABC Appeals Committee

Special thanks to our expert commentators:

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Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Life Master Pairs	Case:	1
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 12-14 HCP
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	S	♠	Q84		
		♥	6432		
Vul	E/W	♦	J9742		
		♣	K		
W				E	
♠	AKJ3			♠	952
♥	Q9			♥	K10875
♦	Q5			♦	K108
♣	87532			♣	A10
		S			
		♠	1076		
		♥	AJ		
		♦	A63		
		♣	QJ964		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♥ by E	Made 3	E/W +140	

Facts

North/South claimed that West hesitated before passing over 1NT. This was confirmed by a kibitzer.

Committee Ruling

South opened a 12-14 HCP 1NT. West looked at the convention card and, according to North/South and a kibitzer, "hitched or hesitated." East/West contended that they always look at the opponent's convention card after a one notrump opening. They maintained there was no abnormal break in tempo. After the auction continued 2♣ - Pass - 2♦ - Pass - Pass, East balanced with 2♥. The Director was called when South discovered that East had bid on a five-card suit.

Further inquiry determined that in the E/W methods, a Double of a strong 1NT opening showed a four-card major suit and a longer minor suit. A Double of a weak 1NT showed an "equal or better hand."

The Committee had two issues. First, was there unauthorized information? Second, if so, were there alternative losing actions the player's peers would seriously consider?

The Committee elected to consider the second issue first and determined by a four to one vote that no player in the Life Master Pairs final would consider passing. The result, 2♥ by East, making three, E/W +140, was allowed to stand.

The Committee Chairman believed that two errors were made in this case. First, a Committee should NEVER consider whether there was use of unauthorized information until it had determined whether there was such information. Second, the Chairman felt that Pass was as alternative that players in this event would have seriously considered.

Committee Members

Chair	Henry Bethe
Member	Jan Cohen
Member	Doug Heron
Member	Mary Jane Farrell
Member	George Steiner

Commentary

Allison: I believe that procedure should be followed...that is, a Committee must first go through the exercise of making a finding (whether of hesitation, misinformation, misbehavior, or any other violation). Then it may proceed to the rest of its responsibilities.

Colker: I agree with Henry Bethe about the Committee's errors. We'll never stop unethical behavior if we fail to CONSISTENTLY enforce punishment on players who take questionable action when there has been unauthorized information. The fact that even one Committee member felt that East players would consider a pass is prima facie evidence that the 2♥ bid is questionable.

Goldman: An excellent ruling. I have long lobbied for the weak No Trump being "Alertable." This type of problem is exactly what the Alert would be intended to correct. I consider East/West completely innocent. North/South is a little clouded.

Kaplan: This collection of rulings seems to be an improvement. For sure, Pass in this example, is a logical alternative. "No player in the final would consider..." is both an insult to American bridge and an example of the sort of sweeping statement by which one Committee member may intimidate others. I don't think it matters which issue the Committee takes up first.

LeBendig: If the Committee does not feel there was unauthorized information, the logical alternative question becomes moot. Clearly the Chairman was right as to the order in which things must be determined. Was it decided that there had been unauthorized information? I feel the Committee may have been too quick in deciding that no one in this event would seriously consider passing. I would be more prone to agree if this had been a Flight B event. I would think that many players would end up making the bid, but certainly not without trepidation.

Rosenberg: This is an unfortunate type of case. Under current practices, West did nothing untoward, yet information was given. The same kind of situation can arise after an Alert. If you ask, you imply a desire to bid. The only solution, except where screens are used, seems to be make it mandatory to inquire after every Alert, and for No Trump ranges to be announced automatically when bid. I agree this does not seem entirely satisfactory. On the hand in question, East might have been affected by partner's actions. I would allow East to bid at Love All for sure. Here, I would still let East bid, unless I had reason to believe this particular East had taken advantage of the situation.

Sutherland: These were excellent decisions overall. West showed his values by his hitch, since he did not Double with his equal hand. East had a logical alternative, Pass.

Treadwell: I agree with the Committee ruling. Even though Pass might be an alternative which some players might consider, I do not think it is a logical alternative for a player in this event.

Wolff: The Committee decisions have improved a full step from Washington D.C. I agree with the Committee Chairman on both of his points. It must first be determined whether there was a hesitation (I prefer a separate fact finding Committee, but it may not be practical). To not so determine may cause a Committee member to hedge his position, trying to cater to either contingency. For a Committee to make a statement like "No player in a Life Master Pairs final would consider passing" defies my imagination. Such a statement shows a narrow, biased view of an approach to the game and has no place in our bridge appeals process. Simple solution: If there was improper information, then no 2♥ bid is allowed, otherwise anything goes.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	2
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer		N	♠ A10752 ♥ K2 ♦ QJ83 ♣ Q8	
Vul		Both		
W			E	
♠ K ♥ A853 ♦ 105 ♣ KJ10742	♠ Q983 ♥ QJ109 ♦ 74 ♣ A63			
		S		
		♠ J64 ♥ 764 ♦ AK962 ♣ 95		

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

Facts

North/South suggested that West's call after East's hesitation was far from clear. They requested that their score be adjusted to plus 110, the likely result in a contract of 3♦. West agreed that East had taken considerable time to Pass but felt that at matchpoints he should compete at the three level. East said that had 3♦ been passed around he would have acted, either with 4♣ or Double, which would be value-showing, not penalty, North said that a four-level contract might well have been Doubled on such a slower auction.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the 3♥ bid was clearly not allowable after East's hesitation. The bid was therefore cancelled by a unanimous vote. The Committee discussed at length possible outcomes of a Pass by West, which included scores for North/South ranging from minus 140 to plus 200. Goldman urged percentage weighting of potential outcomes to determine an equitable result. Eventually, by unanimous vote, North/South were awarded Average Plus, but more than the matchpoints for plus 110 (This turned out to be the score for plus 100).

The Committee then determined by a four to one vote (Palmer dissenting) to penalize East/West for the infraction of taking advantage of unauthorized information. By a three to two vote (Bethe and Goldman dissenting) the penalty was made one-eighth of a board, or 6.375 matchpoints. The dissenters felt that a quarter board penalty would have been more appropriate.

Committee Members

Chair	Henry Bethe
Member	Beth Palmer
Member	Michael Huston
Member	David Treadwell
Member	Bobby Goldman

Commentary

Colker: I agree with Henry and Bobby that East/West's penalty should have been one-quarter (not one-eighth) board -- on top of the Average Plus (North/South) / Average Minus (East/West) adjustment.

LeBendig: This was difficult issue as far as a score adjustment. I think Bobby's suggestion would work in some cases where there were less possibilities as to the outcome. I like what they finally settled on (I assume East/West was the reverse of North/South). As to the procedural penalty, we must do more of this. When we feel an action was blatantly based on unauthorized information (as this case appears to have been), let's not try to deal with shades of how blatant. If the word gets out (and it will) that Committees are routinely assessing one-quarter board procedural penalties for actions of this nature. I am quite confident that actions of this nature will stop.

Rosenberg: The Committee's ruling should have been N/S +110. I see no reason why East should not have defended 3♦, and I would ignore his contentions. More difficult is deciding on a procedural penalty. I believe there should be no such animal at IMPs, but at other forms of scoring, where a split ruling can be administered I am torn. While I feel they are impure, I would approve of procedural penalties if they act as an effective deterrent. I would only assign a penalty if a) the infraction was blatant and flagrant, and b) the player committing the infraction was not unaware of transgressing the ethical code.

Sutherlin This is a good decision. It is important for players to be aware of procedural penalties. Further, it was good for the readers of this decision to know that the two dissenters wanted stiffer penalties.

Wolff: Good ruling.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight A Pairs	Case:	3
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	W	♠	Q86	
		♥	AJ32	
Vul	None	♦	K108	
		♣	1082	
W				E
♠	J432	♠	AK5	
♥	105	♥	K64	
♦	AQ765	♦	J942	
♣	65	♣	J93	
		S		
		♠	1097	
		♥	Q987	
		♦	2	
		♣	AKQ74	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♥ by N	Made 3	N/S +140	

Facts

East/West felt that the Double should not be pulled. South had good defensive prospects. 3♦X would go down one trick.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt the decision to pull the Double was made considerably easier by the hesitation. The result was changed to 3♦X by East, down one, N/S +100.

Commentary

Wolff: Good ruling with a warning to South of his ethical responsibilities.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	NABC Swiss Teams	Case:	4
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Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♠	Dbf
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbf
Pass	5♣	Pass	Pass
Dbf ¹	Pass	5♠	Pass
Pass	Dbf	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ 94	
Vul	N/S	♥ J54	
		♦ A2	
		♣ K109765	
W			
♠ Q108763	E		
♥ A32	♠ AKJ52		
♦ 84	♥ 976		
♣ J4	♦ KJ53		
			♣ 2
		S	
		♠ (void)	
		♥ KQ108	
		♦ Q10976	
		♣ AQ83	

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

Facts

East/West felt that the pull of the Double was clear-cut. The pre-emptor (West) could not have more than one defensive trick and the opening bidder had at most one trick. The spade void was clear.

Committee Ruling

East/West testified that Double showed exactly one trick and they could not make a Penalty Double if they had only one. East passed 5♣ to see what partner would do (5♠ freely would have been a slam try). East felt he had only one trick (the King & Jack of Diamonds were worthless), so he pulled the Double. The Double was not alerted. West was slow because he could not remember their agreement.

The Committee determined that a Pass by East was a logical alternative. The result was changed to 5♠X by North, making six, N/S +950.

Committee Members

Chair	Alan LeBendig
Member	Jan Shane
Member	Richard Popper

Commentary

Allison: East's action was outrageous! His pair should be punished beyond merely restoring the contract for North/South.

Goldman: The statements attributed to East/West make me feel very negative toward them. I'd try to find some way to express it. Perhaps a one matchpoint to a one-quarter board penalty for bringing a frivolous appeal, taking advantage of a hesitation, and unethical statements made to the Committee.

LeBendig: I chaired this Committee and we felt the East/West pair was not that experienced. As unbelievable as their story was, we actually felt they believed it. At the same time, it was impossible to accept given the circumstances. I do feel that the pull was blatant and we perhaps should have assessed a procedural penalty. We did give them a warning and further told them we found it very difficult to accept what they purported to be their system agreements.

Rosenberg: Whoever made the argument that 5♠ would have been a slam try should be thrown in jail. East passed 4♠. East should be censured for pulling the double.

Sutherlin: I believe there should have been a procedural penalty for the pull by East.

Wolff: Good ruling. East/West's blather about their system should be replaced with an East/West promise to either bid in tempo or expect worse next time.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Reisinger BAM Teams	Case:	5
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	S	♠ 753	
Vul	E/W	♥ KJ53	
		♦ J92	
		♣ J73	
W			
		♠ 96	E
		♥ A987	♠ AQJ1082
		♦ AKQ10765	♥ Q2
		♣ (void)	♦ 83
			♣ Q109
		S	
		♠ K4	
		♥ 1064	
		♦ 4	
		♣ AK86542	

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

Facts

North/South claimed West hesitated before bidding 2♥. East bid a “suicidal” 3NT as opposed to a more logical 3♣ or Pass

Committee Ruling

The Committee believed that there was no unauthorized information and therefore, the result, 3NT by East, made 4, E/W +630, was allowed to stand. Bob Bauer dissented. John Anderson reluctantly concurred as long as the tempo problems were recorded. The Committee wished the facts of the case to be made a matter of record for the East/West pair.

Committee Members

Chair	Henry Bethe
Member	Ralph Cohen
Member	Doug Heron
Member	Bob Bauer
Member	John Anderson

Commentary

LeBendig: I agree that there was no unauthorized information. But what was being recorded? The only tempo problem I see is that East stopped to think. I hope we don't get carried away and start suggesting that thought may constitute a crime. I personally see very little validity to this appeal and hope we don't tolerate such hearings because someone does not like their result.

Treadwell: I agree with the Committee's view that there was no unauthorized information and hence the table result stood. I am a bit concerned about our getting into a practice of automatically recording a pair when one member bids after the other hesitates. Hesitation, per se, is not illegal.

Wolff: Excellent ruling, especially the recording

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Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Reisinger BAM Teams	Case:	6
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Auction

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♣	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	W	♠ 82	
Vul	E/W	♥ Q1087	
		♦ K10	
		♣ K9854	
W			
		♠ AQJ105	E
		♥ J963	♠ 9743
		♦ A92	♥ AK54
		♣ Q	♦ J85
			♣ 62
		S	
		♠ K6	
		♥ 2	
		♦ Q7643	
		♣ AJ1073	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♣X by N	Down 1	E/W +100	

Facts

North/South claimed West hesitated before Passing over 4♣.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that Pass was a logical alternative for East after the hesitation. The Double was removed and the result was changed to 4♣ by North, down one, E/W +50.

Committee Members

Chair	Mike Aliotta
Member	Ralph Cohen
Member	Doug Heron
Member	Harvey Brody

Commentary

Goldman: I violently disagree. East has a routine Board-A-Match Double with the Ace & King of Hearts, a partner who opened the bidding vulnerable versus nonvulnerable, and opponents who didn't overcall. West does not have INDICATIVE VALUES. Indicative values is a type of hand that favors the action partner took. If West had three aces, it would have been indicative values. The actual hand was on a finesse, a coin flip. Therefore, the adjustment unjustly enriched North-South. High level competitive auctions must allow some leeway for thinking. A good hand for the use of the "Pause" principle.

Kaplan: I agree that Pass is a logical alternative, but West's hesitation does not suggest East's Double. Quite the contrary, it suggests club shortness, making Double less attractive.

Rosenberg: It is not enough just to say that Pass was a logical alternative for East. It must also be said that West's huddle suggested Doubling, or at least that the huddle partly induced the Double. Here, I would say the huddle suggested bidding 4♠, although it may well have been the cause of East's Double. East/West were lucky to defeat 4♣. I agree with the ruling but don't feel very strongly about it.

Treadwell: The East hand, with two quick tricks, screams Double as the logical call. I would penalize East/West if East did not Double. After all, this is Board-A-Match.

Wolff: Pass is a logical alternative, but it is obvious that West was thinking about Doubling. Still, you should remove the Double as properly done by the Committee.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Reisinger BAM Teams	Case:	7
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Major Weak Two
2: Alerted, Diamonds
3: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ 985	
Vul	Both	♥ J752	
		♦ (void)	
		♣ KQJ1097	
W			
♠	Q2		
♥	864		
♦	AKQJ1053		
♣	2		
		S	
		♠	AKJ763
		♥	Q
		♦	862
		♣	A83

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♠X by S	Made 7	N/S +1250	

Facts

East/West maintained that the Double of 5♦ was somewhat out of tempo.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the slow Double made it more attractive to bid and pass was a logical alternative. The result was changed to 5♦X by East, down one, N/S +200.

Committee Members

Chair	Henry Bethe
Member	David Treadwell
Member	Howard Chandross
Member	Hugh Ross

Commentary

Goldman: I agree with the decision. There is a distinction between case six and case seven. In this case, a player could have acted sooner (bid 5♠) but passed and got some table feel. In case six, the player acted at his turn. Moral: "Sandbagging" and "acting" after a hesitation require a more severe standard.

Kaplan: I agree that North/South should be +200, but I would not give East/West -200 after East's silly Double.

LeBendig: Was East taking a "double" shot? I do feel he earned -1250. I think North's pull of the Double borders on blatant.

Rosenberg: North cannot see how quickly and confidently his partner Doubles and then decide what to do. A good ruling.

Wolff: +500 is more reasonable for North/South (West would probably take a first round heart finesse). Pass is a logical alternative by North so +1250 must be removed. However, as an aside, East cannot stop playing bridge, which, in my opinion, he did by Doubling 5♣. Consequently, East/West should not be entitled to the full board (unless their teammates scored more than +1250) for reason of no full redress for self-inflicted damage.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight A Pairs	Case:	8
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Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	3♥	Dbl
3NT	4♠	Pass	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl ¹
Pass	5♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer		N	♠ 986432	
Vul		E/W	♥ 8	
			♦ 43	
			♣ 9432	
W				E
♠	AJ5			♠ (void)
♥	K952			♥ AQ7643
♦	AK85			♦ J1062
♣	86			♣ Q107
		S		
			♠ KQ107	
			♥ J10	
			♦ Q97	
			♣ AKJ5	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♠X by N	Down 3	E/W +500	

Facts

East/West claimed South made a slow Double of 5♥.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that North could have bid directly but passed the decision to his partner. South hesitated and doubled. North overruled South's decision. The result was changed to 5♥X, making five, E/W +850.

Committee Members

Chair	Martin Caley
Member	Phil Brady
Member	Peggy Sutherlin

Commentary

LeBendig: This is more blatant than the pull on Number Seven.

Rosenberg: Same case as Number Seven.

Wolff: Excellent ruling, but perhaps in addition, a procedural penalty against North for a flagrant foul.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Strataflight A Pairs	Case:	9
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	N	♠ 85		
Vul	N/S	♥ J76532		
		♦ J1087		
		♣ 3		
W				E
♠ 10643				♠ K9
♥ Q104				♥ A98
♦ 9				♦ K43
♣ AQ864				♣ KJ952
		S		
		♠ AQJ72		
		♥ K		
		♦ AQ652		
		♣ 107		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♣ by E	Made 3	E/W +110	

Facts

West hesitated before passing 2♠.

Committee Ruling

The Committee awarded an Average Plus to North/South and an Average Minus to East/West. The chairman did not document the Committee's reasoning.

Commentary

Allison: This Committee needed to assign a North/South score in the contract of 2♠. It cannot allow the 3♣ bid, so must proceed accordingly, +140 or +170 looks likely.

Colker: West's hesitation contributed unauthorized information. Therefore, East's 3♣ bid should have been cancelled (since pass is an obvious alternative) and the contract reverted to 2♠ by South, making four (+170 North-South, -170 East-West), as per Law 12C2.

Goldman: Too much for East/West. The score should have been 2♠, making three, N/S +140. East/West should also have been assessed a quarter board penalty for taking advantage of the hesitation.

Kaplan: I would award +140, -140, and impose a procedural penalty.

LeBendig: If the 3♣ bid was based on unauthorized information and is not allowed, then the Committee must strive to award a score adjustment based on a contract of 2♠. Law 12C2 states: "...for a non-offending side, the most favorable result that was likely...for an offending side, the most unfavorable result that was at all probable. The scores awarded to the two sides need not balance...." I feel that +140 and -170 would be appropriate here. Once again it feels like a procedural penalty of one-quarter of a board is in order.

Rosenberg: I don't like this type of ruling. I believe the Committee should always make a determination as to what "would" have happened without the infraction, with any doubt being resolved in favor of the non-offenders. Therefore, I would rule +170 for North-South in 2♠, since only a small slip by the defense could produce this result.

Treadwell: The nature of the opening 1NT bid and the meaning of the 2♠ call (natural, or showing two suits) are not given. No matter, East cannot be allowed to bid after partner hesitates and South, thus would play 2♠ which might not make. The Committee ruling of Average Plus to North/South seems appropriate.

Wolff: A flagrant foul against East would change the score to +140 for North/South and procedural penalty against East.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	10
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	W	♠	K94		
Vul	None	♥	83		
		♦	K743		
		♣	KQJ7		
W				E	
♠	AJ10875			♠	32
♥	J1075			♥	K642
♦	A			♦	Q2
♣	98			♣	A10654
		S			
		♠	Q6		
		♥	AQ9		
		♦	J109865		
		♣	32		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♠ by W	Down 1	N/S +50	

Facts

North/South claimed that West hesitated for a long time before passing 2NT. East/West maintained that it was a slight break in tempo.

Committee Ruling

East/West felt that 3♠ was automatic by East because of their system. Their 2♠ opening bid would show a six-card suit, twelve to fifteen HCP and a minimum of two and one half quick tricks. They played a very sound style of opening one bids. The Committee felt that Pass by East was indeed a logical alternative in light of East's defensive values. The result was changed to 2NT by South, making four, N/S +180.

Committee Members

Chair	Karen Allison
Member	Harvey Brody
Member	Kay Schulle
Member	Richard Popper
Member	Howard Weinstein

Commentary

Wolff: Good ruling.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Open BAM Teams	Case:	11
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ KQ8543	
Vul	Both	♥ (void)	
		♦ J9872	
		♣ 64	
W			
♠ 10			
♥ A986			
♦ K1063			
♣ J875			
		S	
		♠ 976	
		♥ KQ10542	
		♦ (void)	
		♣ KQ103	
			E
		♠ AJ2	
		♥ J73	
		♦ AQ54	
		♣ A92	

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

Facts

South led the ♥K and Declarer made nine tricks. The Director was called after play was complete, and North stated that East's Double was made out of tempo and West's pull of the Double was far from clear. West disagreed. South stated that she was oblivious, and a kibitzer stated that there was no significant break from normal tempo.

The Director ascertained from East that to Double 2♠ was not normal within their methods: it would normally promise four trumps. The Director had therefore decided that in his judgment there probably had been a break in tempo and rolled the contract back to 2♠X by North, and, decided that the contract would likely make three, N/S +870. East/West appealed.

Committee Ruling

The facts outlined above were agreed and West added the following: East/West, who are an established pair with world championship experience of more than ten years standing, adhere fairly closely to "the law of total tricks" in low-level competitive decisions, e.g., they do not defend at the two-level when the opponents have eight or more trumps.

Therefore, the pull of the Double was automatic in their methods. He agreed that the Double should promise four trumps and that Doubling with only three was not in accord with their agreements.

The Committee first addressed whether there had been a break in tempo, e.g., whether there had been unauthorized information available. Notwithstanding West's and the kibitzer's statements, the Committee decided that East's magical action and North's perception were sufficient evidence that there had been an out-of-tempo Double and that this provided information not available from the Double itself.

The Committee then addressed West's 2NT call and determined that pulling the Double was likely to be more successful given the unauthorized information and Pass was a logical alternative action.

Finally, the number of tricks that would be taken in 2♠X had to be determined. The Committee felt that a trump lead by East was automatic knowing that East/West had about twenty-four high-card points. After a trump lead, all lines of play led to eight tricks by North/South, although after any other lead Declarer is likely to make ten tricks. The score was adjusted to +670 for North-South.

Committee Members

Chair	Henry Bethe
Member	Karen Allison
Member	Howard Chandross
Member	Ron Gerard
Member	Richard Popper

Commentary

Colker: I disagree with the trick assessment. The Committee awarded the offenders (East/West) the maximum number of tricks on defense. This is wrong when the defense has alternative lines which are not obviously interior. If East/West can huddle over 2♠ before Doubling, then they can lead a non-trump. The benefit of the doubt goes to the non-offenders. NOT the offenders - even if they are world championship competitors!! The Director's ruling is a reasonable compromise. Otherwise, I would award East/West only three tricks (the worst result).

Goldman: A trump lead is far from automatic although analytically correct. The score should have been +870 for North/South.

Kaplan: "A trump lead.....automatic" is another absurd sweeping, prejudicial statement. I'd award +870.

LeBendig: I observed this entire Committee and was somewhat disappointed in the final outcome. This was a very close call as to whether there was unauthorized information. Once it was decided that there had been, the Committee did not buy the self-serving arguments of their adherence to "the laws of total tricks." They did feel that Pass was a logical alternative by West. The score adjustment that was awarded truly disappointed me. It was almost as if the Committee was bothered by their earlier decision to force them to defend. I cannot fathom how a trump lead could be ruled "automatic." Law 12C2 seems to call for +870 and -870 or -1270.

Sutherlin: OK, but Committees must not allow The Law of Total Tricks to be a convenient excuse for actions. Further, if a spade is not led Declarer could make +1270. I would have awarded at least +870, but could have been persuaded to give +1270.

Rosenberg: It is most importune when there is a disagreement about the facts. The Committee must decide who to believe. The kibitzer's opinions may be biased. The ruling was very tough on East/West, but was reasonable, except for the play analysis. Once 2♠X was determined to be the final contract, it was criminal to allow East to make the great lead of a trump (maybe dummy was void of trumps!) And to call it automatic is ridiculous. The ruling should have been +1270 to North/South.

Treadwell: An excellent ruling and explanation thereof.

Wolff: Important principles are involved here. A bifurcate hearing is called for. First, to determine whether improper information was conveyed. If not, the result stands. If yes, then there must be an adjustment. The Committee chairman should insist on another Committee or the Director to make this decision. If this is not done and the current Committee determines a close yes, human nature tends to have that carry over to the final adjudication. Way too much lawyering was permitted here: "It's automatic to pull when we don't have more than five trumps." "We follow the law of total tricks: ad nauseam. The worst comments were from the Committee. "It's automatic to lead a trump from AJx." Anyone who believes that is either self-deceptive, believes in a six foot bridge playing bunny, or is trying to impress his novice bridge playing spouse. If there is a violation then ten tricks (or at least nine because the bunny might switch to a trump) should be scored. No pussyfooting (or rabbit footing) but instead we must penalize unethical behavior or be prepared to live with it forever.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight A Pairs	Case:	12
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Slow Bid, Alerted NAMYATS
2: Alerted, Slam Try

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ 6	
Vul	None	♥ QJ95	
		♦ J85	
		♣ J9832	
W			
♠	AQ109873		
♥	10743		
♦	A		
♣	A		
		E	
		♠	K5
		♥	K62
		♦	10742
		♣	KQ104
		S	
		♠	J42
		♥	A8
		♦	KQ963
		♣	765

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

Facts

West studied for a long time before bidding 4♦.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that although they would have bid differently, the hesitation did not suggest bidding on. In fact, the hesitation may have suggested weakness. The result, 6♣ by East, making six, E/W +980, was allowed to stand.

Commentary

Kaplan: Might not East have bid 5♦ thinking the opening natural? Then he was reminded by West's Alert. If so, he cannot be allowed to correct to spades. But I'd be reluctant to give North/South an adjustment after they allowed the slam to make.

LeBendig: The 5♦ bid actually suggested controls in the round suits and asked about diamonds. I feel the appeal was reasonable but the decision was the correct one. The slow 4♦ bid only suggests that there is a flaw. It in no way suggests that bidding on is going to be successful. Had the Committee not allowed the slam to be bid, I would hope that North/South would not be forced to live with -980. I don't feel I could be convinced that the Ace of Hearts lead (I assume) was something egregious.

Rosenberg: I have no problem with this ruling, but how did 6♣ make?

Wolff: Good ruling and a borderline frivolous appeal since South must have led the Ace of Hearts to let the slam score.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Women's Life Master Pairs	Case:	13
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, 6-9 HCP, three ♠'s
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	W	♠	J10		
Vul	Both	♥	J8742		
		♦	9732		
		♣	73		
W				E	
♠	943			♠	AKQ85
♥	K96			♥	10
♦	KQ			♦	1085
♣	Q10954			♣	K862
		S			
		♠	762		
		♥	AQ53		
		♦	AJ64		
		♣	AJ		

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

Facts

East hesitated before bidding 2♠.

Committee Ruling

The Committee decided to change the result to 3♠ by East, making four, E/W +170. The Committee vote was four to one. David Treadwell dissented.

Committee Members

Chair	Gail Greenberg
Member	David Treadwell
Member	Darlene Hammond
Member	Susan Urbaniak
Member	Phil Brady

Commentary

Goldman: I agree with the dissent. East/West got to a poor contract (they were lucky to find spades 3-2 after the takeout double and only have one club loser). Redress should not exist for the non-offending side when the opponents reach a below par contract that makes. West should get a procedural penalty and I can accept whatever else the Committee does to East/West.

Rosenberg: This is a sad case. Why? Because West may well have "planned the auction" before bidding 2♦, and East had a legitimate dilemma. I guess this convention leads to this type of problem. I agree with the ruling.

Treadwell: West had one more high card point than her earlier bid had promised and the distribution and nature of the high card points she had made a second bid mandatory. Thereafter, the game try by East and the acceptance by West were simply bid judgements at work - judgements not related to the hesitation by East at her turn to rebid. This is why I dissented.

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight A Pairs	Case:	14
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo
2: Break in Tempo
3: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ Q97	
		♥ J82	
Vul	N/S	♦ AQ8	
		♣ AKQ5	
W			
		♠ J8	E
		♥ K54	♠ A432
		♦ J109732	♥ Q1076
		♣ 106	♦ K65
			♣ J8
		S	
		♠ K1065	
		♥ A93	
		♦ 4	
		♣ 97432	

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

Facts

South broke tempo three times in the auction.

Committee Ruling

The Committee changed the result to 3♦ by East, down one, N/S +50.

Commentary

Goldman: I am not completely comfortable with this ruling. What was North-South's notrump range?

LeBendig: I agree with +50 for North-South. I feel East earned his -910 and should not be deprived of that score. North also may have earned a procedural penalty for taking blatant advantage of the unauthorized information.

Wolff: +50 is fair for an adjustment to North/South for North's unethical 3NT bid. 3NT is a very possible expert action, but the study makes it culpable. However, East-West should stay with -910. West did not have to reopen (especially with South's study). More important why did East appoint himself King for a hand and make every decision? Since they were all wrong why penalize the field by allowing him to get a double (or maybe more) shot? And what about the play or the opening lead? They might have defeated 4♣X so again, why give them anything but what they earned?

Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Flight B Swiss Teams	Case:	15
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Precision
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ K2	
		♥ J954	
Vul	E/W	♦ AK	
		♣ K10852	
W			
♠ 743			
♥ 2			
♦ 107632			
♣ AQJ3		E	
		♠ AQJ1098	
		♥ KQ106	
		♦ (void)	
		♣ 764	
		S	
		♠ 65	
		♥ A873	
		♦ QJ9854	
		♣ 9	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♦ by N	Down 3	E/W +150	

Facts

East/West claimed that South hesitated for fifteen seconds before passing over 4♠. This was disputed by North/South.

Committee Ruling

North/South insisted that there had been no break in tempo and that North's Double was natural, particularly in view of overbidding by East/West on prior boards. The Committee ruled that the result should be changed to 4♠ by East, making four, E/W +620. North/South was assessed a two victory point penalty.

Commentary

Goldman: Excellent

Kaplan: It would be useful to know North/South's methods.

LeBendig: I don't often feel procedural penalties are appropriate in Flight B but this is an exception. How could South maintain he had no problem when he clearly had something to think about?

Rosenberg: If it were Flight A, I would ask why West didn't Double and beat 5♦ four tricks.

Sutherlin: Excellent, a good example of a Victory Point penalty.

Wolff: Excellent ruling including the Victory Point penalty. Were North/South playing Precision?

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Women's BAM Teams	Case: 16
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Lower two suits
2: Alerted as defense to one suit; corrected to "negative" at this vulnerability, suggests spade length

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	E	♠ K		
Vul	E/W	♥ 3		
		♦ A10752		
		♣ J76543		
W				E
♠ AJ74				♠ 1083
♥ AQ984				♥ KJ
♦ QJ				♦ K9863
♣ K2				♣ Q108
		S		
		♠ Q9652		
		♥ 107652		
		♦ 4		
		♣ A9		

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

Facts

The facts were agreed to as above. North/South questioned whether East's 3NT bid might have been influenced by West's second explanation of the Alert which did not correspond with the intended meaning of the Double. North/South suggested that the logical meaning of the 3♠ bid was a hand with extreme major suit length which might well indicate playing four of a major suit. East testified that the 3NT bid seemed correct on the hand.

Committee Ruling

The testimony clearly indicated that East had received unauthorized information. West thought that the Double was or could be "negative" while East had intended the bid as in the first explanation, suggesting defense to at least one of the suits.

The next issue was whether East's action might have been influenced by the unauthorized information. The Committee looked for logical losing alternatives which might be taken in the absence of the unauthorized information. West's bid in a vacuum should show at least ten cards in the majors, possibly eleven, and many continuations of the auction would lead to 4♥ being the final contract. 4♥ would be down one on most lines of play, losing a trick in each suit. The Committee ruled the contract changed to 4♥ by West, down one, N/S +100.

Committee Members

Chair	John Anderson
Member	David Treadwell
Member	Henry Bethe

Commentary

Goldman: A little heavy handed at this vulnerability. I have problems giving non-offenders the whole swing when the offenders may be a little out of line.

Wolff: Excellent ruling.

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Senior Stratified Pairs	Case: 17
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Auction

West	North	East	South
			Pass
2♣ ¹	2♠	Dbj ²	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, 11-15 HCP, 5+ ♣'s, no four card major
2: Alerted, then retracted after reaction by partner

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	S	♠	KQ954		
Vul	E/W	♥	Q6		
		♦	AJ94		
		♣	75		
W				E	
♠	1083			♠	AJ62
♥	A72			♥	J94
♦	7			♦	KQ65
♣	AKQ1063			♣	42
		S			
		♠	7		
		♥	K10853		
		♦	10832		
		♣	J98		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♠X by N	Down 4	E/W +800	

Facts

North/South contended that massive confusion resulted in West passing. Without the groan and head shake by East following the Alert, North/South felt that West would have bid.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 2♠X by North, down four, E/W +800, to stand. The Committee chairman did not document the Committee's reasoning.

Commentary

Allison: The Committee needs to be sent in whole to kindergarten! This was an egregious ruling. I'm sure my counterparts have commented more than adequately on why, but unless East suffers from Tourette's Syndrome, there is no excuse for a Committee to be allowed to continue as individuals after promulgating a ruling like this.

Colker: Opener alerts his partner's (ostensibly) Negative Double. Partner groans and shakes his head, clarifying to all that the Double was penalty, whereupon Opener rescinds his Alert and promptly passes - collecting +800. The case goes before a National Appeals Committee which allows the result to stand!!! Naah, who could believe such a story?!

Kaplan: I find this ruling not only hard to understand but hard to believe. The only sensible thing is the Committee's desire for anonymity.

LeBendig: It's comforting to know that there will be at least one ruling in this book with which everyone will agree. NOT! We will attempt to find out more as to how this happened. This would not be permitted in a 0-5 masterpoint game! Even at this level there should have been a strong chastising at the very least.

Rosenberg: You must be kidding! If the facts are as presented, East and West should both be thrown in jail. Players must learn to control their reactions when partner gives a wrong explanation. Sadly, many experts seem unable to do this. I would rule +130 for Eas/-West plus some procedural penalty and a censure. A shockingly bad ruling if the facts are not in dispute.

Sutherlin: I can't understand this decision. Obviously some facts are missing.

Treadwell: If West might have thought that partner's Double was negative, and the fact that there was an alert, cancelled only after partner's groan, suggests he might well have been confused. In that case, West might well have bid 3♣ as the most logical alternative. Even though this is from a senior stratified pairs game, they must be educated to play by the same rules as the rest of us.

Wolff: A bell ringer for ineptness. Since I am always assuming that this is a top level event, I would throw this fish back in.

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: NABC Swiss Teams	Case: 18
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Transfer to ♥

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer		S	♠ A64 ♥ AQ82 ♦ Q ♣ Q10953	
Vul		E/W		
W				E
♠ 852 ♥ J7 ♦ 975432 ♣ 82				♠ QJ3 ♥ K95 ♦ J1086 ♣ AKJ
		S	♠ K1097 ♥ 10643 ♦ AK ♣ 764	

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

Facts

West maintained that he would have noticed the misbid without the Alert procedure. West also argued that even if he must interpret East's hand as having five hearts, 3♦ was the only place he could have any offensive tricks.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that West's cards precluded a serious consideration of passing 2♥X. Committee member Harvey Brody pointed out that, behind screens, a player might work out that there had been a partnership misunderstanding and might time his auction like this one. The result, 3♦X by West, down one, N/S +200, was allowed to stand.

Committee Members

Chair	Karen Allison
Member	Harvey Brody
Member	Ed Lazarus
Member	Ralph Cohen

Commentary

Goldman: Good ruling.

Kaplan: I agree with the ruling because a player behind screens would work it out. If it were merely that "...a player might work out" (or might not), then the ruling is wrong.

LeBendig: This appears to be a difficult case until you come to one key point. If you were West and your partner explained your bid as weak with diamonds when he was asked about the meaning, would you ever pull 3♦? Yes, it might have been worked out behind screens. But some people would trust their partner to the point of passing two hearts if they were sure their partner knew what was going on. Aren't we always required to make that assumption?

Rosenberg: Imagine if East held Jxx AKQ9x Jx AQx. East does not alert 2♦, West passes 2♥X and East makes his contract. Can North/South call for a ruling? Of course not! If this West had heard his partner say, "2♦ is natural" he would have no reason to pull 2♥X. I might let West pull with a 3-1-6-3 shape. The ruling should have been +1100 for North/South. The argument about screens is fallacious. Behind screens, West would have a problem: here West had a lock. To use the "acreen argument" you must conclude that West had a lock behind screens. This is obviously untrue here.

Wolff: As the present cases are generally determined, the Committee made a good ruling. However, East/West did have a convention disruption, which occurs too frequently, hurts our game, and makes it a lottery. To give partnerships the incentive to stop this farce, I would like to see convention disruption penalties. Don't play conventions unless you remember them. This is not too much to ask. Could this be part of the rules for our highest level players?


Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Stratified Pairs	Case: 19
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ xx	
		♥ K10x	
Vul	N/S	♦ Kxx	
		♣ AKQ98	
W			
♠ Q10xx			
♥ xxx			
♦ x			
♣ Jxxxx		E	
		♠ Kxxx	
		♥ AQxx	
		♦ J10xxx	
		♣ (void)	
		S	
		♠ AJx	
		♥ Jxx	
		♦ AQxx	
		♣ 10xx	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠X by E	Down 3	N/S +500	

Facts

The East player thought this auction was from “The Twilight Zone.” When he moved to the next table, he asked if there had been a loud discussion of the hands from the previous round. The South player said no, but indicated something unusual had happened. East called the Director and the South player indicated that the South player from the next table had seen the North hand while getting the first board. East had thought South’s first Double was unusual, the bid of 2♣ was most unusual. South’s bid of 2NT should show eighteen to nineteen high card points, North’s bid 3NT was an underbid in this auction, it was impossible for North to Pass 4♠, and couldn’t understand how South could Double 4♠.

Committee Ruling

The Committee established that North, not South, had picked up the boards from the table. Therefore, the only hand he could have seen was his own. The Committee also discovered that North-South were a very inexperienced flight C pair.

The Committee instructed North/South that it is highly improper to go to the table where their boards are coming from. The Committee also suggested they read a bridge book or two regarding basic bidding theory, take out doubles, and responding to take out doubles.

The Committee allowed the result, 4♠X by East, down three, N/S +500, to stand.

Commentary

LeBendig: I think it is criminal that a top Flight A pair brought an obviously novice pair to a Committee on this hand. I might have been very upset at first but it must have become obvious what level player they were dealing with. And furthermore, I would not want anybody to see my bidding if I were West.

Treadwell: I agree with the Committee ruling and also with East’s comment that the bidding seemed out of the “Twilight Zone.” It is true North/South bid most peculiarly but East’s opening bid and subsequent 4♦ bid seem of the same class!

Wolff: In an elite event, North/South's bidding couldn't happen. If it did, something bad would be going on and it should be turned over to the Recorder.

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Open BAM Teams	Case: 20
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: No Alert, explained as preemptive
2: 0 or 3 keycards

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ 3	
Vul	Both	♥ AKQ109765	
		♦ KQJ	
		♣ 10	
W			
		♠ K7	E
		♥ J42	♠ AJ10542
		♦ 109653	♥ 3
		♣ J75	♦ 872
			♣ 862
		S	
		♠ Q986	
		♥ 8	
		♦ A4	
		♣ AKQ943	

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

Facts

East claimed he would have overcalled 2♠ against a strong jump shift. East/West also maintained that North bid the hand in the manner described to avoid being passed out by South.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 6♥ by North, making six, N/S +1430, to stand but imposed a quarter board penalty against North/South and awarded a quarter board to East/West. The Committee felt that had South not given misinformation as to the meaning of the 2♥ bid, North would have most likely bid 3♥ and then Key Card Blackwood in hearts. North most likely did not wish to be passed out in 3♥, and therefore changed his plan and chanced a Key Card in clubs auction.

East/West were permitted to gain from the procedural penalty because West was damaged when he claimed he would have overcalled 2♠ against a strong jump shift.

Committee Members

Chair	Gail Greenberg
Member	Jeff Meckstroth
Member	Mike Aliotta

Commentary

Allison: The ruling was ok, up to the point of allowing East/West to benefit by a penalty against North/South. This, I feel, was wrong.

Colker: Once South misexplains North's strong 2♥ jump shift response as weak, North may NOT change his planned rebid of 3♥ to avoid being passed out there. He must rebid as if South had correctly interpreted his bid as strong. Since South would presumably pass this heart rebid, the final contract should have been ruled back to 3♥ by North, making six (+230 North/South, -230 East/West). In addition, I would have penalized North/South an additional one-quarter board procedural penalty for North's use of the unauthorized information from South's misexplanation.

Goldman: I do not see how East/West were affected by the failure to bid 2♠. The auction would have continued the same way or perhaps 2♠, pass, pass, 4NT. If North had bid 3♥ over 3♣, it should negate the original weak jump shift hypothesis. However, North did take advantage of the misinformation by not bidding 3♥ and there is some chance South would have passed 3♥. The adjustment is within the ball park (but at the low end) depending on the North/South testimony.

Kaplan: The Committee awards were inconsistent. If East/West were damaged, there should have been a score adjustment. If not, East/West do not deserve a bonus. This is not a case for procedural penalty.

LeBendig: How did the failure to get in the 2♠ bid earn an adjustment for East/West? North took blatant advantage of the unauthorized information and earned a procedural penalty. Had he been behind a screen the auction may indeed have ended at 3♥. Based on that possibility, I feel an adjustment to +/-230 would be appropriate based on Law 12C2.

Rosenberg: North clearly used unauthorized information when he bid four notrump. He intended to set up Keycard in hearts but feared his partner would pass 3♥. North should be censured and a procedural penalty assigned. The ruling should be +260 in 3♥. Whether East might have bid or not is immaterial, since East/West are entitled to the result they would have achieved against an ethical pair who had this misunderstanding, i.e. -260.

Treadwell: A nice ruling in a peculiar case.

Wolff: East/West do not deserve anything other than -1430. What could they gain by coming in over 2♥? They don't have a save and they held it to six. Again, convention disruption, but other than that no harm. There are two points. First, we must protect the field against giving East/West a reward they don't deserve and second, we must protect the game by doing something about random, irreconcilable system forgets.

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Women's BAM Teams	Case: 21
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: No Alert, willing to sacrifice in 4♠

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	W	♠ A10854	
		♥ A92	
Vul	E/W	♦ KQ98	
		♣ J	
W			
♠ 2		♠ J6	
♥ Q106		♥ K753	
♦ 7542		♦ A103	
♣ Q6432		♣ AK107	
		S	
		♠ KQ973	
		♥ J84	
		♦ J6	
		♣ 985	

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

Facts

The 3♥ bid was not Alerted by North when the bid was made. The face down opening lead was made of ♣K at which time North announced that there had been a failure to Alert the 3♥ bid. North explained the bid as above, and the Director was called. East was taken away from the table and asked if she wanted to change her final call. She did not. Subsequently, West was taken away from the table and asked if she would have done anything differently in the auction had she been properly Alerted at the time 3♥ was bid. West stated that she would have Doubled 3♥. This all took place before the Dummy was faced.

North/South questioned whether West would have in reality Doubled 3♥ had she been properly alerted. West insisted that she would have Doubled if properly alerted hoping that a heart lead or shift would be correct from a defensive point of view.

Committee Ruling

The Committee decided to resolve this issue separately for North/South and East/West. The Committee ruled that North/South could not benefit from their failure to alert and explain their agreements at the time the bid was made. Therefore, the Committee changed the result to 4♠ by North, down one, E/W +50.

As for East/West, the Committee decided that it could not determine a probable result on the board had West been properly Alerted and subsequently Doubled the 3♥ bid. The Committee also felt West might have been more suspicious of the 3♥ bid based upon her holding in the major suits and partner's double. The Committee felt that West might have made an inquiry into the 3♥ bid at the time it was made. The Committee was unwilling to award East/West the score of +50. Instead, the Committee awarded an Average Plus to East-West, or six tenths of a board. The Committee's decision was unanimous.

Committee Members

Chair	Howard Chandross
Member	Ron Gerard
Member	Bart Bramley
Member	Robert Gookin
Member	Mary Hardy

Commentary

Allison: I disagree with respect to the ruling about East/West's score. It is not normal to expect West to 3♥, even if she suspects the bid is not natural. Doubling would invite her partner to bid in the auction, and that's not what she wants in this case.

Colker: West told the Director at the table BEFORE she saw the Dummy that she would have doubled the 3♥ bid, so I see no justification for not allowing the East/West result (+50) to stand. Why should West have been suspicious, and known to ask about South's 3♥ bid? Couldn't the hearts have been 7-3-3-0 or 6-4-3-0 around the table? In fact, East could have had FEWER than 3♥ if she had doubled with a better-than-1NT-overcall! I would love ruled -50 to North/South and +50 to East/West.

Goldman: With the information here and West's expressing before the lead or Dummy was faced that she was going to Double 3♥ (even into North's 4♥ bid), East/West must be given +50. Any attempt by West to quiz about the 3♥ bid would result in unauthorized information and could lead to penalties for East/West. I feel like the Committee knew something that is not apparent here.

Kaplan: The ruling is reasonable, but "...West might have made an inquiry" is not. Such an inquiry often puts ethical pressure on partner not to play hearts. The Alert procedure protects West against having to damage his side that way.

LeBendig: It seems unreasonable to expect West to suspect something is amiss. I feel that West made it clear what her action would have been without any certainty that it would be right (she had heard the 4♥ bid). I feel that she should get the benefit of the Double here since North/South caused the problem. On the other hand, it's hard to see how a heart switch from East could be wrong after West presumably discouraged clubs. That fact may lead me to make the same decision that the Committee did. I feel they did a good job on a tough case.

Rosenberg: A very tough case. West would have to convince me that there was good reason to think her partner would have understood that a Double of 3♥ was lead directional, and not a desire to compete in hearts. It was very wrong of the Committee to suggest that West might have inquired about the 3♥ bid. Since there was no Alert, inquiring might give partner unauthorized information. Anyway, the bidding was consistent with East having a strong balanced hand and South having a string of hearts.

Sutherlin: A very well written decision. This is an excellent case for a textbook. It guides less experienced members through the process of two separate scores.

Treadwell: Another excellent ruling in a difficult case.

Wolff: Good result of -50 North/South. But, why should West be disadvantaged by no alert? What about the ethical overtones of asking and then not Doubling? Not alerting is absurd and North should be reminded of his obligation.

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Open Pairs	Case: 22
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, two suit takeout

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	S	♠ J73	
Vul	None	♥ AK1098	
		♦ Q75	
		♣ 85	
W			
♠	K10986		
♥	432		
♦	J64		
♣	J3		
		S	
		♠	AQ2
		♥	J5
		♦	82
		♣	K97642

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♦X by E	Made 3	E/W +470	

Facts

The East player admitted he bid 3♦ because of West's Alert and misexplanation of his 1NT overcall.

Committee Ruling

East, a player with more than two thousand masterpoints, was reprimanded for his action. East/West were given an Average Minus and a three matchpoint procedural penalty. The result for North/South, 3♦X by East, making 3, N/S - 470, was allowed to stand because they misdefended so badly.

Commentary

Treadwell: These continued good rulings are habit-forming.

Wolff: The type of result any Committee chairman might hate. A major gaff by East/West but a good result obtained through poor, but not awful defense. I would award 3♠X by West, down two, E/W -300, and an Average to North/South (assuming N/S -470 is below average). A Solomon type decision.

Subject of Appeal: Unauthorized Information	Event: Mixed Pairs	Case: 23
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, 10-12 HCP, 4-4-4-1 distribution

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	E	♠ A10		
		♥ 432		
Vul	E/W	♦ AKQ72		
		♣ 1052		
W				E
♠ 6				♠ J984
♥ AQ76				♥ KJ108
♦ 1065				♦ J843
♣ J9763				♣ A
		S		
		♠ KQ7532		
		♥ 95		
		♦ 9		
		♣ KQ84		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♠ by S	Made 3	N/S +140	

Facts

East was the dealer and before she bid, South put the stop card on the table. The Director was summoned. The auction reverted to East. East opened 2♦ showing ten to twelve high card points and any 4-4-4-1 distribution. South bid 3♠. North/South contended that 3♠ was consistent with the previous stop card. East/West maintained that 3♠ in this auction showed a good hand and the Stop card constituted unauthorized information by South which could have influenced North's decision to Pass.

Committee Ruling

The Committee of one believed that some players would intend the 3♠ bid to show a good hand. This North/South pair had no agreement about the bid. The Committee changed the contract to 4♠ and required the play to be the same. The result was 4♠ by South, down one, E/W +50.

Commentary

Goldman: The Director should have given North/South adequate instructions so this problem could have been avoided. After that, any auctions with parameters should have been accepted.

Rosenberg: Poor South was probably trying to do the "right" thing when bidding 3♠. North, however, blatantly took advantage of the unauthorized information. The Committee failed to go far enough when changing the contract to 4♠. The North hand, facing a strong jump overcall, is worth a move to at least 5♠ in my opinion. The least North should do is bid 2♦, followed by 5♠. A ruling of -500 in 6♠X would not be unreasonable.

Wolff: North is guilty of a flagrant foul by not raising to 4♠. North/South deserve their -50 plus a one-half board procedural penalty for violating their ethical responsibility. East/West +50.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Event: Open Pairs	Case: 24
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Drury

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	S	♠	AJ543		
		♥	4		
Vul	E/W	♦	1052		
		♣	A843		
W				E	
♠	1086			♠	K97
♥	K96			♥	AQ72
♦	KJ743			♦	98
♣	K7			♣	J1092
		S			
		♠	Q2		
		♥	J10853		
		♦	AQ6		
		♣	Q65		

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

Facts

East-West felt they were not given the proper explanation of South's Drury bid. They claimed they would not have entered the auction if they had known the 2♣ bid could be made without a spade fit.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 2♦ by West, down two, N/S +200, to stand. North/South were instructed to give a better description of their Drury agreements.

Committee Members

Chair	Jim Becker
Member	Nell Cahn
Member	Howard Chandross
Member	Richard Popper
Member	Robert Gookin

Commentary

Kaplan: The Drury convention, as written, does not promise a fit.

LeBendig: Was the announcement of Drury on incomplete explanation? The current perception of Drury would suggest that it was, particularly in an NABC event. If more explanation was in order, then perhaps East/West should have received some sort of protection.

Rosenberg: This ruling seems inconsistent to me. If North/South need to give a better description then there was an infraction. Therefore, the only way East/West would not be entitled to redress is if West's bid is deemed to be flagrantly bad. Maybe it was, but I think West was a lot less likely to bid after a proper explanation had been given.

Wolff: Good ruling as there are many ways to play Drury.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	25
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, ♥'s & ♦'s

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	W	♠	10754		
		♥	AK62		
Vul	None	♦	3		
		♣	A532		
W				E	
♠	KJ83			♠	Q92
♥	Q85			♥	J1043
♦	7642			♦	K85
♣	K4			♣	J97
		S			
		♠	A6		
		♥	97		
		♦	AQJ109		
		♣	Q1086		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♥ by N	Made 3	N/S +140	

Facts

North/South felt that East/West knew there was an error in the explanation of 2♦ when the dummy hit and could have beaten 3♥. If South is forced to bid 3NT over 3♥, then North has a clear 4♣ call as partner must have forgotten and has clubs from his 3♣ call.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 3♥ by North, making three, N/S +140, to stand. The Committee chairman did not document the Committee's reasoning.

Committee Members

Chair	Howard Chandross
Member	Jeff Meckstroth
Member	Ralph Cohen
Member	Bart Bramley
Member	Marinesa Letizia

Commentary

Allison: I don't see how South can be allowed to pass 3♥ (which would be forcing in any system) nor for the pair to be allowed to escape in 4♣. South clearly tried to save his side from a disaster by profiting from what he learned by the Alert. If there were screens at the table, South could never pass 3♥ and he should not be allowed to pass it in this case.

Goldman: This is a frivolous appeal and deserves a severe penalty.

Kaplan: On this auction, South must be required to bid over 3♥. (3♠? What does North do now?) I guess I'd give Average Plus/Average Minus.

LeBendig: Another tough case. Should 3♥ be forcing by a passed hand? That seems difficult to believe. If the Committee feels that it should be forcing, a final contract seems difficult to determine. If I could be convinced that 3♥ was forcing at that point or that there was an option of bidding (more likely) without the unauthorized information, then I would probably feel that Average Plus/Average Minus was the appropriate adjustment.

Rosenberg: The famous names on this Committee should be ashamed. First and foremost, if 2♦ is natural then 3♥ is forcing, so 3♥ cannot be the final North/South contract. Secondly, why is it "clear that partner must have forgotten and has clubs for his 3♣ call? Why can't South be making a further description with 1-4-5-3? And when South follows with 3NT, maybe his spades are stiff king! If North bid 4♣ over 3NT, maybe it means partner reacted to the Alert, or bid a fast 3♣ and looked uncomfortable over 3♥. No, I would make North declare 4♥ and, unless the lead was affected by the misinformation, rule -50 to North/South, +50 to East/West. Given the opening bid style of East/West, there is no chance that East would have Doubled 4♥.

Wolff: 3♥ is technically forcing (even by a passed hand) so South should be required to bid again. Difficult to predict but I would award an Average to East/West (their defense was poor in 3♥) and an Average Minus to North/South (they did make 3♥, otherwise a more severe penalty).


Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Stratflight A Pairs	Case:	26
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	N	♠ 62		
		♥ K10864		
Vul	N/S	♦ 5		
		♣ KQ1094		
W				E
♠ 9				♠ AK8754
♥ QJ9				♥ 732
♦ AJ732				♦ K964
♣ 8752				♣ (void)
		S		
		♠ QJ103		
		♥ A5		
		♦ Q108		
		♣ AJ63		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♣X by N	Made 4	N/S +870	

Facts

North meant his 2♦ bid to be a transfer of two hearts. South thought the bid was natural showing diamonds.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 3♣X by North, making four, N/S +870, to stand. The Committee chairman did not document the Committee's reasoning.

Commentary

LeBendig: We cannot review this decision without knowing what the North/South agreement was or whether there really was an agreement. Furthermore, did North announce the failure to Alert prior to the opening lead? If he felt that their agreement was as he had bid, and failed to make that disclosure prior to the opening lead, I feel he is subject to an automatic procedural penalty. The same penalty should apply if the defending side mistakenly discloses misinformation prior to the end of the hand. Such a disclosure would have allowed a Director at least a chance of straightening things out.

Treadwell: The key in this case is: What is the North/South agreement regarding the 2♦ call after a double? If the agreement was that it is natural, then the misinformation conveyed by the bidder who forgets partnership agreements does not provide a basis for redress of any damage to the other side, any more than misinformation conveyed by a psychic bid does. If, on the other hand, the North/South agreement was that 2♦ was a transfer, then a procedural penalty to North/South would be in order, although the table result, in this case, would still stand.

Wolff: Under the current methods, +870 should stand, but look how convention disruption changes the judgement for West. So unfair, but it won't correct itself. "There are none so blind as those that will not see" or somesuch.....


Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Reisinger BAM Teams	Case:	27
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Auction

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	W	♠	K84		
		♥	A103		
Vul	E/W	♦	Q1064		
		♣	K64		
W				E	
♠	A7			♠	1093
♥	J9742			♥	KQ65
♦	KJ52			♦	987
♣	J7			♣	1085
		S			
		♠	QJ652		
		♥	8		
		♦	A3		
		♣	AQ932		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by S	Made 6	N/S +480	

Facts

When asked, North described South's hand as having six clubs and five spades. North/South had agreed this sequence showed six clubs and five spades when 2NT was bid by an unpassed hand. South failed to tell East/West that this was not a firm agreement when North was a passed hand. The play went a heart to the ace, a spade to the ace, and a shift to a low diamond.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that West was not damaged by the misinformation. The defense was egregious. If South was six-five, the diamond could not go away. The result, 4♠ by South, making six, N/S +480, was allowed to stand. South was instructed to inform his opponents properly in the future.

Committee Members

Chair	Mike Aliotta
Member	William Loubenheimer
Member	Ralph Cohen
Member	Michael Huston
Member	Harvey Brody

Commentary

Goldman: This is frivolous. General information should not carry a guarantee to be precise on pattern. Particularly in responses to questions about an unalerted bid.

LeBendig: Once again, I feel South earned a procedural penalty for not disclosing the misinformation prior to the opening lead. I also feel this borders on a frivolous appeal. East/West at least deserve a warning to that effect.

Rosenberg: If South was an experienced player, I would assign a small procedural penalty to North/South.

Wolff: Good ruling. I'm disappointed at East/West's protest. Borders on the frivolous.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Flight B Pairs	Case:	28
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Ogust, describe hand
2: Bad Hand, Good Suit

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer		N	♠ AK10753 ♥ 107 ♦ J1052 ♣ 7	
Vul		None		
W				E
♠ Q42 ♥ J82 ♦ Q643 ♣ Q62				♠ 86 ♥ A9643 ♦ A98 ♣ K95
		S		
			♠ J9 ♥ KQ5 ♦ K7 ♣ AJ10843	

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

Facts

East/West felt that North could not change his mind about the evaluation of his hand and bid game. North claimed that he planned to discourage a slam by bidding the Ogust 2♦ showing a bad hand and then correcting to 4♠.

Committee Ruling

The Committee agreed with North's plan and the result, 4♠ by North, making five, N/S +450, was allowed to stand.

Commentary

Kaplan: I'd rule as the Committee did, although I don't really believe North's explanation. Probably he forgot Ogust.

Wolff: Good ruling if there was no tempo violation. Again, I'd prefer North to keep quiet. "Better to be quiet and thought a fool than open mouth and remove all doubt."

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	29
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Competitive

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	N	♠ 43	
		♥ 1065	
Vul	Both	♦ KQ73	
		♣ AJ82	
W			
		♠ AJ	E
		♥ 9832	♠ Q1075
		♦ J962	♥ A7
		♣ 964	♦ 84
			♣ KQ1075
		S	
		♠ K9862	
		♥ KQJ4	
		♦ A105	
		♣ 3	

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

Facts

East/West thought they were misinformed about the Double. East felt there was some chance to make the hand if the shape was known. North had prefaced his explanation with "I expect two or three clubs."

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that 2♣ was going down at least one trick. The result, 2♣X by East, down one, N/S +200, was allowed to stand. North/South were cautioned to explain their agreements completely.

Committee Members

Chair	John Anderson
Member	Marinesa Letizia
Member	Hugh Ross
Member	Doug Heron
Member	David Treadwell

Commentary

Rosenberg: If the defense went in such a way that 3♣ might have made, I would give Declarer his contract. However, this is unlikely.

Wolff: Good ruling.


Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	30
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	S	♠	KQ	
		♥	Q86	
Vul	E/W	♦	QJ92	
		♣	A742	
W				E
♠	J1083	♠	A7652	
♥	1053	♥	K97	
♦	A1076	♦	83	
♣	Q10	♣	965	
		S		
		♠	94	
		♥	AJ42	
		♦	K54	
		♣	KJ83	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by S	Made 3	N/S +400	♠3

Facts

West inquired about the 1♠ bid and was told it was natural. West led a small spade and the suit blocked. West claimed he would have led the Jack of Spades if he had been given the correct information that 1♠ was forcing and did not show four spades.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that South had an obligation to Alert the opponents that 1♠ was fourth-suit forcing when West inquired. The Committee could not agree on a likely result so the result was changed to Average Plus for East/West and Average Minus for North/South.

Committee Members

Chair	Mike Aliotta
Member	Rick Price
Member	Martin Caley
Member	Jim Linhart
Member	Phil Brady

Commentary

Allison: The Committee should assign a score. It is not appropriate to assign protected scores in a case where a likely result can be determined.

Goldman: There should be a procedural penalty for North/South. The North/South score should have been -50 or Average Minus, whichever was lower.

LeBendig: Once again, North/South have earned a procedural penalty because North did not disclose the misinformation prior to the opening lead. This would have saved the necessity for a Committee. As to the appropriate score adjustment, this might be an appropriate case for a weighted average as Bobby suggested in Number Two.

Rosenberg: The Committee should decide on the most likely result with any doubt being resolved in favor of non-offenders. Personally, I would vote for -150 to North/South in three notrump, with declarer finessing clubs at trick twelve, +150 to East/West.

Treadwell: Another good ruling.

Wolff: I disagree. It's too farfetched to consider West would have led the Jack rather than the three. Remembering we are representing the other East/West's in that field. I would award -400 to East/West and +400 to North/South with a one matchpoint penalty for not alerting (as a reminder).

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Event:	Open BAM Teams	Case:	31
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: No Alert, Drury

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	E	♠	97	
		♥	K876	
Vul	None	♦	K1083	
		♣	A54	
W				E
♠	AQ853	♠	642	
♥	J1095	♥	A43	
♦	Q54	♦	AJ762	
♣	K	♣	Q6	
		S		
		♠	KJ10	
		♥	Q2	
		♦	9	
		♣	J1098732	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♠ by W	Made 4	E/W +170	

Facts

East announced before the opening lead that there had been a failure to alert his 2♣ bid (Drury). 2♥ would have been a help suit game try if West had recognized the Drury bid.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that the failure to alert (misunderstanding about when Drury was on) caused misinformation, but no clear damage to North/South. The result, 3♠ by West, making four, E/W +170, was allowed to stand. East/West were given a quarter board procedural penalty for the failure to alert. Committee member Howard Weinstein dissented.

Committee Members

Chair	John Anderson
Member	Howard Weinstein
Member	Mary Jane Farell
Member	Phil Brady
Member	Hugh Ross

Commentary

Goldman: I am not inclined to give penalties for second or third tier conventional issues unless it is a sufficient partnership.

LeBendig: I'm a little uncomfortable with the procedural penalty, but I'm not sure I'm correct, Mr. Wolff.

Rosenberg: There should be no procedural penalty for a failure to alert. Otherwise, I agree with the ruling.

Treadwell: I agree with the bridge ruling but I also agree with the dissenter about the procedural penalty. Are we getting to the point where a procedural penalty is automatic when a pair fails to alert, even though there clearly was no damage?

Wolff: Good ruling. Especially the procedural penalty for the failure to alert.


Subject of Appeal:	Hesitation	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	32
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	E	♠	K652	
		♥	Q94	
Vul	None	♦	J109	
		♣	943	
W				E
♠	A107	♠	J8	
♥	K102	♥	AJ6	
♦	K53	♦	A762	
♣	QJ72	♣	A1085	
		S		
		♠	Q943	
		♥	8753	
		♦	Q84	
		♣	K6	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by W	Made 3	E/W +400	

Facts

South hesitated during the play of the hand when he had to decide to pitch from xxx of hearts or Qxx of diamonds. West felt this hesitation led to his misplaying of the hand.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt that at the juncture in the play of the hand described above, if South's play was automatic and he hesitated then he might have known the hesitation could have been to his advantage. Since the Committee did not feel the discard decision was automatic, the Committee felt that Declarer was on his own. The result, 3NT by West, making three, E/W +400, was allowed to stand.

Committee Members

Chair	Karen Allison
Member	Henry Bethe
Member	Howard Weinstein
Member	Eric Rodwell
Member	Hugh Ross

Commentary

LeBendig: A good ruling in this case. See my notes at the beginning of this manual. We are definitely establishing good guidelines in this area without going overboard.

Treadwell: One tries to take advantage of hesitations in the play at one's own risk. Redress is allowed only if there was no bridge reason for the hesitation; i.e., as the Committee says only if the correct play was automatic.

Wolff: Good ruling. I've never heard this type of specific complaint before. I assume a study, but no histrionics.

Subject of Appeal:	Psychic Action	Event:	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case:	33
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Alerted, Relay to clubs
3: Forced (Lebensohl)
4: To Play
5: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board		N	
Dealer	E	♠ AK9632	
Vul	None	♥ A97	
		♦ A75	
		♣ 6	
W			
♠	105		
♥	Q6		
♦	93		
♣	AKQ10975		
		E	
		♠	74
		♥	K10432
		♦	K842
		♣	J2
		S	
		♠	QJ8
		♥	J85
		♦	QJ106
		♣	843

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♠ by N	Made 4	N/S +170	

Facts

North/South thought the "Rule of Coincidence" might apply to this auction.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt all of the actions after the 1NT opening bid were reasonable. The score, 3♠ by North, making four, N/S +170, was allowed to stand.

Committee Members

Chair	John Anderson
Member	Hugh Ross
Member	Doug Heron
Member	William Loubenheimer
Member	Marinesa Letizia

Commentary

Kaplan: This appeal looks frivolous to me.

LeBendig: West pulls off a successful operation without even a hint of collusion on his partner's part and North/South want an adjustment in the Blue Ribbon Pairs? I would have felt they deserved an adjustment, albeit a negative one, for wasting a Committee's time.

Treadwell: A psyche works and Blue Ribbon opponents are upset enough to seek redress. I would like to know their names!

Wolff: Good ruling. A case of normal playing luck. On another day, +140 would be the limit of the hand.


Subject of Appeal:	Disputed Score	Event:	Life Master Open Pairs	Case:	34
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Auction

West	North	East	South

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	S	♠	K6		
		♥	QJ		
Vul	None	♦	AJ1097		
		♣	J1098		
W				E	
♠	108542			♠	QJ
♥	1087643			♥	A5
♦	6			♦	KQ432
♣	Q			♣	K754
		S			
		♠	A973		
		♥	K92		
		♦	85		
		♣	A632		

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

Facts

The play reached the following three-card end position with South on lead and the defense had taken five tricks.

♠ 5 ♥ 10 ♦ 6 ♣ —	♠ — ♥ — ♦ A J ♣ 10 ♠ — ♥ — ♦ 8 5 ♣ 3	♠ — ♥ — ♦ K Q ♣ 7
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South led his club, West sluffed the ♦6 and North won the trick with the ♣10. North led the ♦A. West apparently put the ♠5 on the table then the ♥10. North/South then said, "Down two" and West said, "No, down one." They reviewed the tricks and West said, "No. I had the last two tricks with the trump and the good spade." North/South claimed that West had discarded the spade on the ♦A. Further questioning determined that West had never claimed or indicated possession of the last two tricks until the score was disputed. It was also found that North had turned the ♦A and led the ♦J before the last trump was exposed.

Committee Ruling

The Committee decided that nothing in Declarer's play or statements prior to the score resolution indicated an intent to claim and the ♠5 had been placed in a played position before the last trump was shown. In addition, West never made any indication that the last two tricks were Declarer's until after play was over. The Committee unanimously

determined that it could not protect Declarer from careless play or failure to follow proper procedure and ruled that the ♠5 had been played at trick twelve resulting in 2♥X by West, down two, N/S +300.

Committee Members

Chair	Henry Bethe
Member	Phil Brady
Member	Carlyn Steiner
Member	Jan Cohen
Member	Mary Hardy

Commentary

LeBendig: A tough case but a good ruling given the facts. Excellent write-up of what went into decision making.

Wolff: Good ruling. A sad solution, but a good ruling.

Subject of Appeal: Psychic Action	Event: Blue Ribbon Pairs	Case: 35
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Transfer to hearts

Hand Record

Board		N			
Dealer	S	♠	K10765		
Vul	None	♥	K865		
		♦	105		
		♣	94		
W				E	
♠	J4			♠	AQ93
♥	J10932			♥	AQ4
♦	J8			♦	K632
♣	AJ76			♣	Q8
		S			
		♠	82		
		♥	7		
		♦	AQ974		
		♣	K10532		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥ by E	Down 2	N/S +100	

Facts

East/West considered North's 1♠ bid to be psychic and they felt that South fielded the psyche when he failed to Double 1NT.

Committee Ruling

The Committee allowed the result, 4♥ by East, down two, N/S +100, to stand. The Committee chairman did not document the Committee's reasoning.

Committee Members

Chair	James Becker
Member	Howard Chandross
Member	Nell Cahn
Member	Doug Heron
Member	Robert Gookin

Commentary

Allison: It seems to me that South may have fielded the psyche. The Committee, if it feels otherwise, should present its reasoning.

Goldman: South's pass to 1NT is strange and within the bounds of the Law of Coincidence. More information is needed to reach an opinion on what to do about it. A recorded memo would be the minimum action.

Kaplan: This appeal seems to be frivolous.

LeBendig: If you choose to Double 1NT, what happens if the opponents run to 2♥? Do you sit if partner Doubles? Would 2NT clearly be unusual if you had Doubled 1NT? It certainly will be unusual if they run to 2♥. If you Double and partner runs to 2♥, you probably won't like your result. I actually feel my best chance for a good result start with a Pass at this point of the auction. There is certainly enough doubt in my mind that it would be difficult to convince me a psyche had been fielded.

Rosenberg: South indeed fielded his partner's psyche. As I understand the Rule of Coincidence, some action should have been taken against North/South. I believe they should not have benefited as the rules stand. Whether I agree with this rule is another matter.

Treadwell: Another psyche works and Blue Ribbon opponents want redress! These people should have been playing in the early days of Contract Bridge when a dozen psychs a session was about par and nobody complained.

Wolff: Good ruling, but the psyche should be recorded. In an isolated case there is nothing culpable about South not Doubling. It is only when there is either a pattern of many psyches or, worse, partner doing the right thing time after time. There is a good case for recording psyches, or at least letting players think we do care. Many objected to the recording of psyches, calling it "big brotherism" at its worst. But, in the Recorder's room several tournaments after psyches are no longer recorded, we have very few complaints about psyches being "picked up" by partner as opposed to the opposite a few years ago.

Subject of Appeal: Test Case - Hesitation **Event:** 1994 Houston Regional – Super Flight KO

Auction

West	North	East	South

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer		♠ 8		
Vul		♥ Axx		
		♦ J9xxxxx		
		♣ Qx		
W			E	
♠ Q9xxx			♠ xx	
♥ xxx			♥ J10xx	
♦ Q10x			♦ AK	
♣ J9			♣ K108xx	
		S		
		♠ AKJ107		
		♥ KQx		
		♦ x		
		♣ Axxx		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by S	Down 1	E/W +100	♠

Facts

After a 10-12 HCP 1NT opening bid to East, South reached a contract of 3NT with a spade lead by West. Seven and one-half very slow tricks later, the position became:

♠ —	♠ —	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —	♥ 10
♦ J 9 x	♦ Q x	♦ A K
♣ Q x	♣ —	♣ K 10 x
♠ —	♠ —	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —	♥ —
♦ Q 10 x	♦ x	♦ —
♣ J 9	♣ A x x x	♣ —

East, after significant study, released the ♠10. Declarer, thinking the ♣K had been blanked, laid down the ♣A and went down one. The Declarer reacted angrily, but courteously when East followed with a small club on the ace.

East agreed that the discard was very slow and out of tempo. It was further agreed that Declarer would have made the hand by exiting a diamond if East's play had been made in normal tempo.

The Declarer testified to his general play plan. The "long huddle" led to his conclusion that the ♣K had been blanked. East testified that he had tanked although his play was not much slower than the rest of the play. He stated that he had been surprised at the run of the spade suit, had refocused his picture of the hand, could see the end play coming, and thought about whether the play of a diamond honor could mislead declarer before deciding on the "routine" club discard. East further explained that the ♣A was an unsound play because the only hand he should consider blanking the king was ♠ xxx ♥ Jx ♦ AK ♣ KTxxx, which would give him thirteen high card points (the ♥J had been played) for his 10-12

1NT (within Precision Club System). It was generally accepted that the East player is a highly ethical player and a very slow one.

The Declarer rebutted with the suggestion that the appropriate ethical thing to do was for East to announce, "Sorry, no problem," after the ♣10 discard. Declarer also felt that it was East's responsibility to discard in tempo when he had no problem. If this had been done, East would have been thrown in with a diamond as a matter of course.

Committee Ruling

The Committee changed the result to 3NT by South, making three, N/S +600. The Committee explained its ruling was not meant to suggest in any way that East had behaved unethically. The Committee applied Law 73D1: Inadvertent Variations – "...variations of tempo, manner, or the like may violate the Properties when the player could know, at the time of his action, that the variation could work to his benefit. If a player could not know this, then any inference drawn by the Declarer is done at his own risk."

Editor's Note: This Committee occurred at the 1994 Houston Regional Tournament. We have included it for your comments. The National Appeals Committee has taken the strong stand that a defender must discard in tempo when he has no problem. Seattle NABC case number 32 is another example. The test case that started this trend at the 1992 Spring NABC in Pasadena is reprinted next for your convenience.

Committee Members

Chair	Barry Hagedorn
Member	Mike Aliotta
Member	Hugh Hillaker

Subject of Appeal:	Test Case - Hesitation	Event:	1992 Spring NABC Vanderbilt Teams
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Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board		N		
Dealer	S	♠	K9875	
		♥	985	
Vul	None	♦	97	
		♣	J73	
W				E
♠	QJ4			♠
♥	1074			♥
♦	103			♦
♣	A9642			♣
		S		
		♠	A102	
		♥	KQJ3	
		♦	AQJ2	
		♣	Q10	
				♠
				♥
				♦
				♣

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2NT by S	Down 1	E/W +50	♣4

Facts

West led his fourth best club to the ♣K and allowed South to win the club return. The ♥K was won by the Ace and East returned his last club. West took his club tricks as South discarded two diamonds and the ♠10. East discarded a spade and a diamond. West then returned a heart and South cashed three heart tricks. On the final heart, West was down to the ♠Q4 and the ♦103. West took a considerable period of time, rearranged his hand and discarded the ♦10.

Declarer now played the ♠A and a spade to the King to discover the complete count on the hand. He now led a diamond from dummy and played the Ace, playing West for the doubleton ♦K10 of diamonds originally. North went down one trick.

Committee Ruling

The Committee felt two sections of Law 73 applied to this situation.

D1 states: "Inadvertent Variations -- variations of tempo, manner, or the like may violate the Properties when the player could know, at a time of his action, that the variation could work to his benefit. If a player could not know this, then any inference drawn by the declarer is done at his own risk."

F2 states: "Player Injured by Illegal Deception -- if the Director determines that an innocent player has drawn a false inference from a deceptive remark, tempo, or the like, of an opponent who could have known, at the time of the action, that the deception could work to his benefit, the Director shall award an adjusted score."

The Committee felt that West could have known he might be misleading Declarer. The Committee felt that South would have taken the diamond finesse 95% of the time and played for the drop the other 5% of the time if the tempo had been normal. They voted to give North/South +120 ninety-five times and -50 five times. These scores would then be IMPed against the results at the other table to determine the IMP score of the hand.

The Committee then issued a procedural penalty against East/West, eliminating the -50 five times and scoring the board -120 for East/West. This penalty was issued because the Committee perceived that West had violated Law 73D.