

APPEAL	NABC+ ONE
Subject	Tempo - Unauthorized Information (UI)
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Life Master Pairs
Session	Second Final
Date	July 16, 2006

BD#	4
VUL	Both
DLR	West

Laurie Kranyak	
♠	A K J 2
♥	J T 9 6 3
♦	
♣	J 7 4 3

Haig Tchamitch		Summer 2006 Chicago, Illinois	Jo Morse	
♠	Q 3		♠	9 8 6 5
♥	A Q		♥	7 5 4
♦	K Q T 9 6 3		♦	8 7 5
♣	K Q 5		♣	A T 2

Linda McGarry	
♠	T 7 4
♥	K 8 2
♦	A J 4 2
♣	9 8 6

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

Final Contract	3♥ by North
Opening Lead	♦5
Table Result	N/S -100
Director Ruling	3♦ by W, doubled, E/W +670
Comm. Ruling	3♦ by W, doubled, E/W +670

(1) After a break in tempo

The Facts: There was a break in tempo (BIT) before South doubled 3♦ – all players agreed to it.

The Ruling: The Director ruled that South’s BIT suggested that a double was marginal. This in turn suggested that North bid with her hand. Passing with the North hand was considered a logical alternative (that would have been less successful). Therefore, a pass was imposed on North. The Director determined that nine tricks would be taken in 3♦ doubled; therefore the score was adjusted to 3♦ by West, doubled, E/W +670.

The Appeal: North addressed one issue in presenting her case: whether there was a logical alternative to bidding 3♥. She contended that she was too weak to pass and that she had an undisclosed five-card suit that she had not bid earlier. South’s 1NT bid showed 6-9 high card points (perhaps as many as 10). North reasoned that E/W likely have the balance of power on the hand. West’s power bidding, combined with North’s own weakness in high card points, convinced North that a 3♥ bid was not only good bridge judgment, but was legal (i.e. there was no logical alternative).

The Decision: The Committee decided that there was a logical alternative to bidding 3♥. There were several slight variations in the holdings of the other three hands which would have been consistent with the auction but would have led to contracts of both 3♦ and 3♥ failing.

The Committee reviewed several lines of play to determine the number of tricks E/W would have taken in 3♦ doubled. There were chances that ten tricks would be made, but the Committee deemed that they were not sufficiently likely or probable to adjust the score based on them. Accordingly, the Committee adjusted the score to 3♦, doubled making nine tricks, E/W +670.

The Committee further decided that this was a case of sufficient clarity that a player of North's expertise should know that the appeal had no merit. Therefore, an AWMW was issued.

The Committee: Jeffery Goldsmith (chairperson), Abby Heitner, Dr. E. Kales, John Lusky, Aaron Silverstein.

Commentary:

Goldsmith This was an easy one. AWMW was a slam-dunk. Giving North a procedural penalty (PP) is reasonable.

Polisner I personally agree with the appeals committee; however, I thought that the directors were supposed to poll peers on this type of issue to see if any players with the north cards did "seriously consider and some actually bid" 3♥ absent the BIT.

Rigal In situations like this even the most knowledgeable of players lose proportion. The committee had no problem in determining that removal of the double was not appropriate –the real issue was how close to a PP the removal was. I think they made the right decision not to award one. But when an offender brings a case of this sort, they should be aware that they automatically put themselves in jeopardy of the PP.

Smith Good job by the director and the committee. Routine and the AWMW is appropriate.

Wildavsky North's argument is a rationalization. South's range may be 6-10 initially, but her penalty double ought to mark her at the high end of that range. Likewise West's auction may be strong, but South heard the same auction and doubled anyway. At IMPs passing would be scary – at matchpoints it's clearly logical.

Ten tricks seem likely enough to me. I'd have adjusted both sides to 870, and also assessed a procedural penalty against N/S. 670 was probably a top or near top in any case.

The AWMW was richly deserved.

Wolff I think this a good ruling, even though North had a legitimate reason for not standing for her partner's double. It is merely a case of poor tempo taking precedence over logical bridge in deciding what is proper and IMO it should. Wouldn't what I said (with perhaps better wording) be a logical precedent upon which committees can hang their hat? Future judges can go on to say that "once a player is gifted with UI from his partner's improper tempo it would not be fair for him to take any advantage (however slight) of that information."