

APPEAL	Non NABC+ Twelve
Subject	Misinformation (MI)
DIC	Chris Patrias
Event	0-5000 Spingold
Session	Semifinal – 2 nd Quarter
Date	July 21, 2006

BD#	16
VUL	E/W
DLR	West

3,800 Masterpoints	
♠	Q 5
♥	7 4 2
♦	J 6
♣	K 9 7 6 4 2

3,200 Masterpoints	
♠	A 9 8 4 2
♥	K
♦	A K T 7 4 3
♣	J

Summer 2006 Chicago, Illinois	
3,500 Masterpoints	
♠	J T 3
♥	A T 9 5 3
♦	Q 5
♣	A T 8

2,100 Masterpoints	
♠	K 7 6
♥	Q J 8 6
♦	9 8 2
♣	Q 5 3

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

Final Contract	5♣ doubled by North
Opening Lead	♦2
Table Result	5♣ dbled by N, -4, E/W +800
Director Ruling	5♣ dbled by N, -4, E/W +800
Panel Ruling	5♣ dbled by N, -4, E/W +800

(1)	Precision 1♦ – less than 16 high card points (HCP)
(2)	Alerted and explained as “May have zero HCP.”
(3)	Alerted and explained as denying 3 or more hearts and denies a balanced hand.

The Facts: South assumed that 1♥ was artificial. South did not ask whether East showed hearts or not.

The Ruling: Since South’s assumption that the 1♥ bid was artificial was his own misunderstanding, in accordance with law 21A, there was no misinformation; therefore, no adjustment.

The Appeal: When the tray came to the South/West side of the table, West pointed to 1♥ to Alert it and wrote “may be 0 HCP.” South assumed that this meant it was artificial, not showing hearts, and doubled to show his heart suit. South did not remember being told before the start of the match that 1♦ – pass – 1♥ or 1♠ by the opponents showed 0+ HCP and 4+ suit length; or that the exact same auction had occurred three boards earlier and the 1♥ bidder had four-card suit. Further, after the tray had been passed back to the North/East side, South motioned to West and asked orally “How many hearts?” pointing at the screen – intending to ask how many hearts the 1♥ bid had shown. South, thinking West was asking about his 1♠ bid wrote “denies 3H+ and shows an unbalanced hand.” This confirmed South’s belief that 1♥ was artificial. North had a full set of system notes to look at that were provided by E/W at the beginning of the match that showed 1♦-pass-1♥ or 1♠ showed at least a four card suit, so assumed the double was takeout. Based on his ♠ Q 5, assuming partner had spades to double 1♥, he bid 5♣ to make E/W guess at the five-level. He didn’t expect to get doubled and didn’t know if 5♣ would make or would push E/W to an unmakeable contract. He was not concerned about pushing them to a vulnerable game.

E/W said they had told the opponents their methods and that N/S had seen the same auction, with a 4-card heart suit, on a recent board (13). They felt South should have known the meaning of 1♥. Further, if doubling or passing was to be based on whether 1♥ was artificial or natural, South should have asked. Lastly, since no one said or suggested 1♥ was artificial, South should have assumed natural not artificial.

The Decision: Five players were asked how they would interpret “May have 0 HCP” in this auction. Four said they believed it showed 4+ hearts. The fifth player wasn’t sure but said 100% she would ask if considering bidding. The panel felt that South had not asked and made an assumption on his own not based on any MI from the opponents. Therefore, in accordance with law 21A, South was not entitled to any consideration for his misunderstanding having received no MI. As such the table director’s decision was upheld. The table result of 5♣ doubled by North down four, E/W +800 stands.

Knowing that:

- The 1♥ call had been explained.
- South had never inquired whether 1♥ was natural or artificial.
- E/W had explained their system before the match and provided notes, which correctly communicated this sequence.

N/S should have known that this appeal had no chance to succeed. Therefore an Appeal Without Merit Warning (AWMW) was issued to N/S.

The Panel: Peter Marcus (Reviewer), Patty Holmes and Candy Kushner.

Players Consulted: Five of South’s peers.

Commentary:

Goldsmith I'd rule result stands, but not give an AWMW, because West didn't explain completely. Players always ought to include two data when explaining a call: artificial or natural, and forcing or non-forcing. When the failure to do this causes confusion, the explainer is at least partially at fault. Had West written, "Nat, F1, 0+ HCP," there would have been no case. Still, I think South's assumed explanation was not appropriate and most of the error was his.

Polisner Easy case including the AWMW.

Rigal As someone whose sympathies always go towards the non-offenders in these cases, I'm convinced the ruling was perfect here, down to the AWMW. There are special circumstances (advance explanations, the reoccurrence of a previous sequence etc.) which render the bidding side blameless.

Smith Why is it so difficult for players behind screens to just look at a convention card? I agree that this player caused his own injury due to his own misunderstanding. I also agree with the AWMW.

Wildavsky Good work all around.

Wolff Even when there is no convention disruption (CD), sometimes it just feels like it. What about South's oral question and the confusion over the answer? Sure E/W are entitled to respond with 0 high card points, but to allow these kind of aberrations do complicate life for novices. I really do not have a proper feel for what is right to be done, except to expect a higher degree of disclosure and patience in the weaker games because otherwise many of their opponents will shrivel and die to the intimidation.