

FINAL COMMENTS

Wildavsky Appeals Committees (ACs) heard 10 cases in St. Louis, a welcome decline from the 18 in San Francisco. The decline was due only in part to the difference in table counts. The AC ruled as the tournament director (TD) did in three cases (2, 3, and 4) and in my judgment significantly improved on the TD's ruling in three cases (8, 9, and 10.) I found four cases (1, 5, 6, and 7) too close to call.

TD panels heard four cases, down from 15 in San Francisco. On case 1 their ruling was identical to the TD's, on case 2 they ruled substantially as the TD did, and, in cases 3 and 4, I judged they significantly improved the TD's ruling.

I was delighted to see that neither the ACs nor the panels clearly worsened a TD's ruling. AC and panel rulings have been improving steadily since their respective nadirs in the fall of 2006 and spring of 2007. While I was in Detroit I was concerned that the AC might have decided case NABC+ One incorrectly, but after much subsequent discussion and analysis I concluded that their decision was reasonable.

According to my figures, over the past seven years ACs have improved TD rulings in an average of 18% of cases, panels in an average of 10%. I look forward to improvements in both percentages. As we saw in Detroit, I'm also hoping for fewer appeals per table, due to the better TD rulings and more consistent AC and panel decisions we've seen over the past few years.

As usual I thought several cases deserved an appeal without merit warning (AWMW) that was not assessed. I've noted before that these are judgments of the appeal, not the appellants, and ought to be assessed any time the AC or panel members can't say to themselves, "This appeal had substantial merit."

Data and trend analysis for appeals dating back to 2001 can be found on my web site at:
<http://tameware.com/adam/bridge/laws>.

I've recently tried to add relevant data such as table counts, to use better metrics, and to improve the overall presentation. I welcome suggestions for further improvement.