

APPEAL	Non-NABC+ Eight
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Su Doe
Event	Stratified BCD Pairs
Session	Second Session
Date	March 21, 2009

BD#	<b>31</b>
VUL	<b>N/S</b>
DLR	<b>South</b>

<b>79 Masterpoints</b>	
♠	K 8 7 6
♥	A Q 8
♦	A 8 4
♣	Q 3 2

<b>1,023 Masterpoints</b>		<b>Spring 2009 Houston, TX</b>	<b>1,924 Masterpoints</b>	
♠	3		♠	Q J T
♥	K T 7 6 3		♥	4 2
♦	K J T 9 3		♦	Q 7 5 2
♣	9 8		♣	A 6 5 4

<b>385 Masterpoints</b>	
♠	A 9 5 4 2
♥	J 9 5
♦	6
♣	K J T 7

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Final Contract	<b>4♠ by North</b>
Opening Lead	<b>♥2</b>
Table Result	<b>Made 5, N/S +650</b>
Director Ruling	<b>3♠ N made 5, N/S +200</b>
Panel Ruling	<b>3♠ N made 5, N/S +200</b>

(1)	Transfer to spades.
(2)	Slow.

**The Facts:** The director was called after the break in tempo (BIT) and again after the play was concluded. There was agreement on the BIT. Later, tried to explain why she had a problem. South

**The Ruling:** The director determined that pass and 4♠ were both logical alternatives and that 4♠ was demonstrably suggested by the BIT. Therefore, per Laws 16B1 and 12C1(e) the result was adjusted to 3♠ by North making five, N/S plus 200 for both sides.

**The Appeal:** N/S appealed the director's decision. All four players attended the review; however, no new facts or arguments were presented.

Ten peers of North were polled. Eight passed 3♠ and the two that bid said they would pass if there was a BIT. Five peers were asked what the BIT meant? Two thought the BIT showed only 5 spades. Two said it showed indecision between 3NT and 4♠. One thought partner had made the wrong bid (maybe hearts) and couldn't figure out how to recover.

**The Decision:** In light of the polling, the panel determined that this North clearly thought the BIT suggested extra strength (i.e. demonstrably suggested bidding on). Therefore, the director's decision to adjust the result, for both sides, to 3♠ by North making five, N/S plus 200.

The appeal was determined to have merit.

**The Panel:** Tom Marsh (Reviewer), Mike Flader, Bill Michael and Gary Zeiger.

**Commentary:**

**Polisner**      What does a slow 3♠ bid suggest to a player with 79 masterpoints? How do you actually find peers? How many days and years did it take for North to accumulate all those masterpoints? It seems reasonable to assume that South was also thinking of passing 2♠ and stretched to bid 3♠. It seems obvious to me that the results of the poll reflect the total randomness of getting opinions from players at this level. I would have left the table result as the decision on the basis that the BIT did not suggest bidding game with the North hand which on a very good day would make 12 tricks.

**Rigal**          A ridiculous ruling and decision. Slow 3♠ call implies an unsuitable hand for the action but whatever it is North can't work out what that might be and so no damage (and maybe with four trumps has an accept whatever it is).

**Smith**         Why does a slow 3♠ demonstrably suggest bidding 4♠? Why can't partner just as easily have a hand where he was considering passing 2♠? Or bidding only 2NT instead of 3NT if he had only five spades? The fact that the two who bid said they would pass if partner hesitated makes me wonder about what questions they were asked and if those questions were relevant. They most definitely should not have been asked what they would do if partner hesitated before he bid 3♠. But maybe I am just looking for a reason to be skeptical of the poll result since I disagree with it so strongly.

**Wildavsky** I agree that the appeal had merit – it's not clear to me what the BIT suggests. Kudos to the panel for asking exactly that in their second poll.

**Wolff** Why in the world would a slow 3♠ raise show more than a fast or in tempo one? He may be thinking of passing, bidding 2NT or even jumping to game.

After all he only has 385 masterpoints which possibly all were awarded because he was on the winning team of one match in the category 5 portion of the bracketed KO. While many of the decision makers were probably influenced by North only having 15 HCPs he did have four trumps (my guess is that the 4th trump is worth about 3+ HCPs in the play and the fit turned out to be as good as it gets (ace opposite the singleton Qxx opposite KJ10x and even the jack, nine opposite AQ8 with both the KT onside, although not necessary) Trumps didn't even break but this 24 HCP game still made an overtrick.

No really good experienced bridge warrior would be the least surprised, but how can directors begin to realize the above and act on it?

Unfortunately I do not see an improvement about to happen unless the ACBL beefs up its expertise we are relegated to more and more decisions like this one.