

APPEAL	Non-NABC+ Five
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Millard Nachtwey
Event	Bruce 0-5000 LM Pairs
Session	First Final
Date	Sunday, July 20, 2008

BD#	25
VUL	E/W
DLR	North

1,550 Masterpoints	
♠	K 7 4
♥	T 5 3
♦	J 7 4 2
♣	K 4 2

900 Masterpoints		Summer 2008 Las Vegas, NV	300 Masterpoints	
♠	T 8		♠	Q 3 2
♥	K Q J 9 7 4		♥	A 8 6
♦	K 8 6 5		♦	A Q 3
♣	6		♣	Q J T 8

2,900 Masterpoints	
♠	A J 9 6 5
♥	2
♦	T 9
♣	A 9 7 5 3

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

Final Contract	5♥ by East
Opening Lead	♠A
Table Result	Made 5, E/W + 650
Director Ruling	4♠ dbld S, down 2, N/S -300
Panel Ruling	5♥ E, making 5, E/W + 650

(1)	15-17.
(2)	Spades plus minor.
(3)	Transfer to hearts.
(4)	Some fumble with front of bidding box cards

The Facts: The director was called after the double by East and again after the hand was played. Before her double East fumbled with pass card and then put double card on the table.

The Ruling: West had a choice when he bid 5♥ including pass as a logical alternative (LA) to 5♥. The fumble suggests doubt about the double and therefore suggests action by West. In accordance with Laws 16A2, 73F1, 12C2 the result was adjusted to 4♠ doubled by South down two, N/S minus 300.

The Appeal: West said his side was vulnerable and he felt sure they could make 650 because of his partner's NT opening. He was looking at his hand and did not see the fumbling. East said she was searching for the double card and did fumble. This was her first tournament.

South, who had an excellent position to see East's bid box and what she was doing, said it was more than a fumble. East pulled the pass most of the way out, put it back and played the double. When asked about a break in tempo, she said only the time the fumbling took. North said there was what she would call a "pregnant pause" if the bid boxes were not in use. When asked again about the BIT South agreed with her partner.

The Decision: The play started ♠A, Spade to the King and a trump return.

There were four points to consider:

1. Was there UI? While East is inexperienced (300 MPs), she chose to play in a major event and had to be held to a higher standard. So, yes there was UI.
2. Were there logical alternatives to West's 5♥ call? Yes. Pass was chosen by every person consulted.
3. Was the 5♥ bid demonstrably suggested by the BIT/fumble? A good player believed a pass by East would be forcing and suggested 5♥. However, none of the four players consulted who were in West's peer group (800-1700MPs) thought there was any useful information to be gained by East's actions.

Based on this testimony, the panel ruled Law 16 was not broken and the table result of 5♥ by East making five, E/W plus 650 was reinstated.

The 4th point, the quality of North's defense, thus became moot.

The Panel: Charlie MacCracken (Reviewer), Bernie Gorkin and Tom Whitesides.

Commentary:

Rigal Since there was no agreement as to whether the slow double suggests removal, I suppose we have to live with the panel decision. To my mind E/W should be left with their 300; N/S who were given the opportunity to improve their result and spurned it by ridiculous defense, get left with the table result.

Smith I'm not sure what to say. I can't fathom how a fumble between the pass and the double card doesn't suggest pulling the double. Doesn't it strongly suggest that partner is not sure he wants to defend 4♠? I know with that fumble he doesn't have a small doubleton heart and something nice in spades. Doesn't that then make a pull to 5♥ more attractive? What were the polled players thinking?

Wildavsky The panel's decision puzzles me. It seems likely that a player who fumbles with the "Pass" card before doubling is unsure whether double is the best call. Is the fumble consistent with a holding that includes, say, ♠ KQJ? The panel's rules may preclude them from exercising bridge judgment directly, but they have the option of continuing to consult with players until they get an answer that makes sense. I would adjust the E/W score to plus 300 and leave N/S with minus 650, a score they earned through their egregiously poor defense.

Wolff First, N/S has earned minus 650 because of their awful defense. E/W should be ruled back to plus 300 in 4♠ doubled which could have been worse if N/S had defended 5♥ anywhere near properly. Ethics need to be taught by our teachers and also promoted vigorously in the local clubs.