

APPEAL	NABC+ EIGHT
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI)
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	NABC+ Fast Open Pairs
Session	Second Qualifying
Date	July 24, 2008

BD#	<b>5</b>
VUL	<b>N/S</b>
DLR	<b>North</b>

<b>Frank Leonard</b>	
♠	K 9 4
♥	A 9 6
♦	9 8
♣	A Q 8 4 2

<b>Robert Todd</b>		<b>Summer 2008 Las Vegas, NV</b>	<b>Jenni Carmichael</b>	
♠	J 6 3 2		♠	A T 7 5
♥	J 5		♥	T 7 3
♦	K J T 6 4		♦	Q 3
♣	K 9		♣	J T 5 3

<b>Phebe Packer</b>	
♠	Q 8
♥	K Q 8 4 2
♦	A 7 5 2
♣	7 6

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

Final Contract	<b>3♥ by North</b>
Opening Lead	<b>♦Q</b>
Table Result	<b>Making 3, N/S +140</b>
Director Ruling	<b>4♥ N, down 1, N/S -100</b>
Committee Ruling	<b>3♥ N, making 3, N/S +140</b>

(1)	12-14 points.
(2)	Announced as transfer to hearts.
(3)	Not Alerted by agreement asks for more information.
(4)	Not Alerted by agreement shows 13/14 and not 4 hearts.

**The Facts:** The director was called after the opening lead. It was determined that the opening bidder showed three hearts by accepting the transfer over the double.

**The Ruling:** There was UI available for South. Bidding 4♥ was a logical alternative to passing which was demonstrably suggested by the failure to Alert as partner may have forgotten the agreement and was turning down the invitation. Therefore, in accordance with Laws 16 and 12C2, the table result was adjusted to 4♥ by North, down one, N/S minus 100.

**The Appeal:** The screening director stated that: At the end of the auction, South informed his opponents that there had been a failure to Alert. South's 2NT was an artificial game try. North's 3♥ showed a maximum with three trump – but not three good ones. South had not Alerted the 3♥ bid for fear of giving North UI. (*Editor's Note: South is required to Alert North's conventional response even though North did not Alert South's call. While Alerting may provide UI to North and may restrict North's options, such is the fallout from an initial failure to Alert. If the opponents are damaged by this UI then the TD will adjust the score.*)

N/S stated that North's 2♥ bid over the double showed at least three trump; so, South's game try was made in that context. With the defense likely to get off to a good start by leading diamonds, with East in a position to over-ruff and the high card count borderline for game; South judged that North would need four trump for game to have a good play. Thus, she believed the pass was clear-cut.

E/W said since South had tried for game and North had by agreement shown a maximum, they thought it was logical for South to continue to game. Her failure to do so could have been influenced by the absence of an Alert by North, which suggested that North intended to show a minimum with his 3♥ bid.

The committee discovered that N/S have been partners for a long time. They changed agreements recently, however, and North is less comfortable with the system than South is.

**The Decision:** UI was present, and it suggested passing. The committee focused on the question of whether bidding 4♥ was a logical alternative to passing 3♥.

South's bridge logic was compelling. It is difficult to construct a North hand consistent with the authorized information that will produce a good play for game. Note that opener holds a maximum with three trump. None of his 13 HCP were in jacks and his only queen was in a strong five-card suit headed by the ace. He held a top honor in trump, a ruffing value and no wastage in diamonds. With the jack of clubs instead of a small one or the king instead of the queen, many players would open with a strong 1NT. In addition, the hand lay extremely favorably for declarer. The club finesse was onside, the ♠A was positioned to give declarer an extra entry to hand, trumps split 3-2, diamonds were 5-2 rather than 6-1, and a diamond over-ruff would be in the hand with the long trump. With all that ten tricks still requires careful play.

The committee determined that bidding 4♥ was not a logical alternative and restored the table result of 3♥ by South making three, N/S plus 140 and E/W minus 140.

**The Committee:** Doug Doub (Chair), Dick Budd and Jim Thurtell.

### **Commentary:**

**Goldsmith** Uh, no. South's reasoning is all well and good, but if she didn't want to play game vs. a maximum, she could have passed 2♥ for all the same reasons she gave. The director's ruling is pretty clear cut. I'm a bit curious---what did North think 3♥ was? It looks as if he was on the same wavelength and the only mishap was the failure to Alert.

- Polisner** In a NABC+ event, it should be deemed normal for North's free bid of 2♥ to show at least three hearts and, therefore, 2NT to be forcing. The lack of Alerts should not have provided any information which affected South's decision. Excellent work by the committee.
- Rigal** While the reasoning that the committee produced is logical enough, are they entitled to impose such top-class reasoning on a pair who cannot remember their system (or make ten tricks in 3♥)? I think not. I'd give both pairs the director adjusted result. (And if game was always going to be bad except facing a transfer-break why bid 2NT at all?)
- Smith** This decision troubles me greatly. I just can't accept that 4♥ is not a logical alternative, a standard that is pretty darned low ("a call that a substantial minority of the player's peers would seriously consider, and some of whom would actually select").
- Wildavsky** Another difficult case. I'd have liked to know whether North thought he was showing a minimum or a maximum, and if the latter why he didn't Alert 2NT. South's reasoning is cogent, but that doesn't mean that some of her peers might not have blasted 4♥. Both the director and appeals committee rulings seem reasonable to me.
- Wolff** This committee did everything right.