

APPEAL	Non NABC+ Ten
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI)
DIC	Nancy Watkins
Event	Stratified Side Swiss Teams
Session	Evening (Only)
Date	Thursday, July 22, 2008

BD#	33
VUL	None
DLR	North

4,700 Masterpoints	
♠	T 9 8
♥	7 6 2
♦	K 6 2
♣	J 5 4 2

2,023 Masterpoints		Summer 2008 Las Vegas, NV	571 Masterpoints	
♠	K J 5		♠	A Q 7 3
♥	Q J 9 4 3		♥	A K 8 5
♦	Q 3		♦	9 8 7
♣	A 8 6		♣	K 9

3,060 Masterpoints	
♠	6 4 2
♥	T
♦	A J T 5 4
♣	Q T 7 3

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1NT¹	Pass
2♦²	Pass	3♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♥	Pass³	Pass	Pass

Final Contract	6♥ by East
Opening Lead	♦A
Table Result	Down 1, E/W -50
Director Ruling	6♥ E, Made 6, E/W +980
Panel Ruling	6♥ E, Made 6, E/W +980

(1)	15-17 HCP.
(2)	Transfer to hearts.
(3)	4NT was RKC – North asked the meaning of 5♦ before passing.

The Facts: After 6♥ bid, North asked what the 5♦ response indicated. On opening lead, South led ♦A and another diamond.

The Ruling: 16A Unauthorized information applies. After a player makes available to his partner extraneous information that may suggest a play (questioning 5♦ bid to suggest ♦ lead) and an opponent who had a logical alternative has chosen an action that could have been suggested by the information, director may assign an adjusted score. The director determined that the question demonstrably suggested a diamond holding, that North had no bridge reason to ask the question and that South had leads that were logical alternatives to the lead of the ♦A. Therefore, the result was changed to 6♥ by East making 6, E/W plus 980.

The Appeal: N/S thought that leading the ace on this power auction was correct.

The Decision: Several players were polled. A few led the ♦A but most led a club. The question about the 5♦ bid was deemed unauthorized information (UI) and could have suggested diamond interest. Thus, Laws 16A1, 12C2 and 73C led the panel to uphold the director's adjustment of 6♥ by East making six, E/W plus 980. Since several players polled led the ♦A, no appeal without merit warning (AWMW) was issued.

The Panel: Nancy Boyd (Reviewer). Bernie Gorkin and Gary Zeiger.

Players consulted: Several of N/S's peers.

Commentary:

Rigal I'm seriously concerned by this case notwithstanding the result. We MUST have consistency on AWMWs and there is clearly no understanding from the panels on this point. North – let's use a polite word – conveyed unauthorized information to his partner by what was either a very, very, poorly timed question or a deliberate attempt to influence him. N/S then appealed its use of UI and found they were mistaken as to whether there was a logical alternative; hence the UI leads to an adjusted score. Case closed; adverse ruling, AWMW and in my opinion a procedural penalty. Just because 'a few' people agreed is extra reason for the punishments; only a few not even half...it wasn't close!

Smith Players need to learn that these kinds of questions are very dangerous and can only lead to worse scores being assigned if partner gets it right. It doesn't matter if the motivation for the question was honorable, and it doesn't matter that some would choose to lead the diamond ace without UI being available. According to the law a diamond lead cannot be allowed if it is successful. This pair should have been given an AWMW, and maybe even a penalty for flagrantly taking advantage of UI. This was an experienced pair, after all.

Wildavsky We should focus our attention on the losing alternative. Per the quote in my comments on case four, would a club lead have been obviously foolish, an egregious error, absurd? No, a club would be right quite often. Looking at it this way it's easy to see that the case has no merit. Did N/S really think they should be allowed to ask an unnecessary question about a bid and then profit through the lead of that suit? They're lucky to remain anonymous. This appeal had no merit – see my comments on Non-NABC+ case twenty.

Wolff Good ruling for the right reason. Any hint of any action during the auction of directing partner's lead, other than by legally done in the bidding, should not be allowed.

