

# 2015 Fall NABC Appeals Casebook



# Foreward

The appeal hearings and commentary descriptions are now compiled and edited by the American Contract Bridge League. They are published on the ACBL web page. This internet publication is intended to be a tool to help improve the abilities of Tournament Directors and to communicate decisions and the process to arrive at those decisions to the membership at large.

A total of seventeen (17) cases were heard.

Fourteen (14) cases were from unrestricted (by masterpoints) North American Bridge Championship Events. The names of the players involved are included.

Three (3) cases were from all other events. The names of the players involved are included when the event from which the appeal came was a Flight A/X event or was the top bracket of a bracketed knockout event. When the names of the players are not used, the player's masterpoint total is included.

The cases are first presented without commentary. After the official panel of commentators has had an opportunity to provide their commentary and any corrections to the cases, the commentary is added, corrections made and the internet publication is finalized.

Everyone involved in this process is due praise for their efforts. Special thanks to the NABC Appeals Committee and the Tournament Directors serving on the Review Panels and commentators. Without their considerable contribution of time and effort, this publication would not exist.

ACBL Headquarters  
Horn Lake, MS

## Abbreviations used in this casebook:

AI	Authorized Information
AWMW	Appeal Without Merit Warning
BIT	Break in Tempo
CoC	Conditions of Contest
LA	Logical Alternative
MI	Misinformation
NOS	Non-offending Side
OS	Offending Side
PP	Procedural Penalty
TD	Tournament Director
UI	Unauthorized Information

## **Expert Panel**

**Jeff Goldsmith** is an American bridge player originally from Schenectady, NY, currently residing in California. He graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Caltech and works as a software engineer, focusing on computer graphics and animation and internet programming, all with a heavy mathematical perspective. He created computer animation for JPL for several years including the movie about Voyager's encountering Neptune. He ice dances and plays many other games, particularly German board games. Goldsmith is an ACBL Platinum Life Master and serves on the ACBL Competitions & Conventions Committee.

**Rui Marques** grew up in Portugal. He is Chemical Engineer, with a M.Sc. in Applied Mathematics and a Ph.D. in Chemometrics. Married to Connie Goldberg, he currently splits his time between Philadelphia (U.S.A.) and Cascais (Portugal). Having started as a Tournament Director in 1989, he directed his first international championship in 1992. He has been the Assistant Chief TD for the WBF since 2011, Chief TD for the EBL since 2015, Sports Personality of the Year in Portugal in 2016. He also is a Lecturer and Group Leader in the EBL International Tournament Directors Courses. He joined the ACBL Tournament Director staff in 2017.

**Jeanne van den Meiracker** became a Director in 1988 because her club in Amsterdam with more than 200 members needed more Directors and she loved the job immediately. She took the International Tournament Directors course in Amsterdam in 1993, along with seventy-six other TDs from all over Europe, including Rui Marques. They both passed the exams, and she started working in the EBL as a TD. In 1996 she started directing for the WBF and was promoted to Chief Tournament Director in 2004. She also served on the WBF Laws commission from 2004 to 2010. In 2012, she and her husband Huub Bertens moved to the United States, and she joined the ACBL Tournament Director staff.

**Adam Wildavsky** was born in Ohio and grew up in Berkeley and Oakland, CA and London, England. A graduate of MIT, he is a retired software engineer and now spends winters in Keystone, CO and much of the rest of the year in New York City. Mr. Wildavsky has won numerous national championships including the Blue Ribbon Pairs twice, the Reisinger BAM Teams once, and the USBF Team Trials twice. He won a bronze medal in the 2003 Bermuda Bowl in Monaco. Mr. Wildavsky is vice-chair of the National Laws Commission, a member of the WBF Laws Committee, and a former chairman of the National Appeals Committee. His interest in the laws is informed by his study of Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand.

**Kit Woolsey** is a world-class bridge and backgammon player, analyst, and writer, born in Washington, DC. He graduated from Oberlin College and earned a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a three-time World Champion and holds more than a dozen NABC titles. His most recent major victory was winning the Cavendish Invitational Pairs in 2011. He was elected to the ACBL Hall of Fame in 2005 and lives in Kensington, CA. He has been one of the panelists on *The Bridge World* Master Solvers Club since 1984. He also serves on the ACBL Competitions & Convention Committee and the Bridge Integrity Task Force.



<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N1
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<b>Event</b>	Nail LM Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Ken Van Cleve
<b>Date</b>	11/27/2015	<b>Session</b>	Second Qualifying

**Auction**

West	North	East	South
	2♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♦ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	2♠ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	3♣ <sup>4</sup>
Pass	4♣ <sup>5</sup>	Pass	4♥ <sup>6</sup>
Pass	5♦ <sup>6</sup>	Pass	6♣ <sup>7</sup>
Pass	7♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1: Strong
2: Game Forcing
3: Natural
4: Natural, good suit
5: Club Support
6: Cuebid
7: Break in Tempo

**Hand Record**

<b>Board</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>N</b>	Steve Caplan
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>N</b>	♠ AKQ932	
		♥ 5	
<b>Vul</b>	<b>E/W</b>	♦ A	
		♣ K10754	
<b>W</b>	Leo Bell		
♠	J875		
♥	K97432		
♦	K54		
♣	(void)	<b>E</b>	Jan Jansma
		♠	64
		♥	QJ
		♦	Q98732
		♣	Q82
		<b>S</b>	Gary Bernstein
		♠	10
		♥	A1086
		♦	J106
		♣	AJ963

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
7♣ by N	Made 7	N/S +1440	♥ J

**Facts Determined at the Table**

East called for the Director at the end of the auction. East stated that the 6♣ bid was made in an irregular tempo. When asked for a time frame, East initially refused to state exactly how long the bid had taken; but eventually said he guessed it took 10 seconds. West said that it was 6-7 seconds. Both North and South denied there had been a hesitation, noting that the 2♣ opening bid took longer than the 6♣ bid.

**Director Ruling**

Based on the information made available by the players, the Director determined there had been a 6-7 second hesitation; it was, however, determined not to be a break-in-tempo (BIT) given earlier bids and the level of the auction. Accordingly, the table result was allowed to stand, 7♣ by North, making seven, N/S +1440.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>7♣ by N, Made 7, N/S +1440</b>
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**The Appeal**

East/West appealed the ruling. West attended the hearing. West stated that the hesitation prior to the 6♣ bid stood out starkly from the rest of the auction not because it was so slow, maybe 5-6 seconds, but because the rest of the auction was so fast. There was not the slightest pause before any of the other bids.

## Committee Findings

With the new rules requiring the Appeals Committee (AC) to start from the Director's ruling rather than from scratch, there would need to be clear evidence that there was a BIT in order to overturn the ruling in this case.

South's hand suggests he had no problem. With North's hand, it seems reasonably normal to bid 7♣. In slam auctions, it is pretty normal to pause for a few seconds before making a call that can be passed. All in all, the AC did not see compelling evidence to overturn the ruling. Because there appears to have been some change in tempo, this appeal was found to have substantial merit. The Director's ruling was upheld, 7♣ by N, Made 7, N/S +1440.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>7♣ by N, Made 7, N/S +1440</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Jeff Goldsmith
<b>Member</b>	Scott Stearns
<b>Member</b>	Mike Passell
<b>Member</b>	Fred King
<b>Member</b>	John Lusky

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I'd roll it back to 6♣, because North's failure to bid 7♣ on his fourth turn implies that not bidding it on his fifth turn is a LA for him. I know I chaired this one. I didn't agree then, and I don't now. Arguing that they could reach 7NT seems pretty dubious; you are going to identify the ♠J?

I'm also skeptical about the claim that 3♣ promised a good suit. What's an immediate 3♣ over 2♣?

**Marques:** The table TD decided that 6-7 seconds was not enough to be considered a BIT in that auction (even if the bids before were much quicker). There is no hard rule about what constitutes a BIT, and any judgment must take into account the auction (level and complexity), previous tempo, players involved, etc. In this specific case, I tend to agree with the TD. The AC did very well to start from the TD's judgment on the facts. The appellants did not bring any new facts, and consequently, the AC did not see any reason to overturn the ruling. Players should be made aware of the standards required for an appeal to have a chance of overturning a ruling. Here, I agree that we may argue about whether South broke tempo. However, once the TD assesses the opposite, and that assessment is reasonable, the case is finished.

**Meiracker:** Whether or not a bid is in tempo is hard to establish. The TD decided that there was no BIT, so result stands.

But most of the time when a player calls the TD for a hesitation (at the end of the auction), there is a hesitation. The time the other bids took doesn't really matter. Why didn't North ask for aces? I would poll players and if pass is a LA, I would adjust to 6♣.

**Wildavsky:** Looks reasonable, but the TD and AC could have told us more. Did 4♥ promise first-round control? Why did North bid 5♦ rather than asking for aces or jumping to 7♣? If he hoped to reach 7NT, how did he think he might get there?

**Woolsey:** How the Committee can say that South's hand suggests he has no problem is beyond me. North has opened 2♣, and his 5♦ cue-bid is a grand slam try since it commits the partnership to 6♣. South has an incredible two aces. I know if I held the South hand the last thing I would do is sign off in 6♣. I would think the choice is between bidding the grand and making a counter-try. Clearly South felt differently, which is fine. But it certainly isn't a trivial 6♣ call.

The Director wasn't at the table, but he was as close as possible and from talking to the players he made the judgment that there was no BIT. Looking at the South hand and considering that the Director was called after the auction was over, I would bet there was a considerable BIT. However, I'm not in position to override the Director's judgment on this issue.

Incidentally, I do not believe that the earlier tempo of the auction should have anything to do with the determination of whether or not the 6♣ call was in tempo. The earlier calls might or might not have been difficult decisions, and the time spent on these calls is not related to the final decision.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b> Misinformation	<b>Case:</b> N2
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<b>Event</b> Nail LM Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b> Ken Van Cleve
<b>Date</b> 11/28/2015	<b>Session</b> Second Final


### Auction

West	North	East	South
2NT <sup>1</sup>	3♣ <sup>2</sup>	Dbl <sup>3</sup>	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 20-21 HCP
2: No Alert
3: Negative

### Hand Record

<b>Board</b> 4	<b>N</b> Stephen McConnell	
<b>Dealer</b> W	♠ A10832 ♥ J96532 ♦ 2 ♣ 9	
<b>Vul</b> Both		
<b>W</b> Andrea Manno		<b>E</b> Massimiliano Di Franco
♠ J754 ♥ A7 ♦ AKQJ5 ♣ KQ		♠ KQ ♥ KQ108 ♦ 8763 ♣ J63
	<b>S</b> Robert Giragosian	
	♠ 96 ♥ 4 ♦ 1094 ♣ A1087542	

<b>Final Contract</b> 3NT by W	<b>Result of Play</b> Made 5	<b>Score</b> E/W +660	<b>Opening Lead</b> ♥ 5
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### Facts Determined at the Table

East/West summoned the Director at the end of the hand. There had been no Alert of North's 3♣ bid, so they had both assumed it was natural. They stated if they had known it was for the majors, they would have doubled any contract in which North/South eventually settled, earning a better result by defending.

South stated that he did not Alert because they did not have an artificial agreement for 3♣ over 2NT. North stated that he thought either South would read what he meant by the bid or he could run to 3♥ if he was doubled. The N/S agreement for defending 1NT has 2♣ showing the majors.

### Director Ruling

South could tell from his own hand that 3♣ was not natural but was under no obligation to disclose this. There was no evidence that North bid assuming an agreement was in place. As there was no evidence of a partnership agreement that required disclosure, no Alert was required. Per Law 40, there was no misinformation, and no adjustment to the table result was required.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>3NT by W, Made 5, E/W +660</b>
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### The Appeal

E/W appealed the ruling and both pairs attended the hearing. E/W believed that N/S had to have some sort of agreement.

## Committee Findings

As there was no evidence of a partnership agreement, there was no evidence of misinformation. The Committee confirmed the Director's ruling. The Committee did not issue an Appeal without Merit Warning.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>3NT by W, Made 5, E/W +660</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Dick Budd
<b>Member</b>	Joel Wooldridge
<b>Member</b>	Don Kern
<b>Member</b>	Jan Jansma
<b>Member</b>	Fred King

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** Sounds right. The only question is the AWMW. Since the appeal was about a matter of fact, and I do not see that it was proven, no AWMW.

BTW, had North needed to act later while in the presence of UI from the failure to alert, his choices would likely be constrained, even if when he bid he knew he was taking a shot that partner would guess what 3♣ meant, because it's impossible to prove that.

**Marques:** Once the TD is satisfied with his investigation regarding N/S's (non)agreement, the decision is easy (and a good one). E/W were lucky to escape an AWMW.

**Meiracker:** No agreement, no MI, no adjustment.

**Wildavsky:** I see no infraction, so no possibility to adjust the score. Why was this appeal found to have merit?

**Woolsey:** Seems pretty clear. Most pairs, even established partnerships, don't have much discussion about what they play vs. a strong 2NT opening. There is no reason to think that this pair had some special agreement.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Played Card	<b>Case:</b>	N3
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<b>Event</b>	Mitchell Open BAM	<b>Event DIC</b>	Candace Kuschner
<b>Date</b>	11/30/2016	<b>Session</b>	Second Final

### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Spades

### Hand Record

Board	1	N	Vanessa Reess	
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>N</b>	♠ K		
		♥ AQJ8		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>None</b>	♦ 42		
		♣ QJ10942		
<b>W</b>	Peter Rank			<b>E</b> Wafik Abdou
♠	J76542			♠ Q8
♥	742			♥ 653
♦	106			♦ AQ9853
♣	K6			♣ A8
		<b>S</b> Joanna Zochowska		
		♠ A1093		
		♥ K109		
		♦ KJ7		
		♣ 753		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by S			♦ 10

### Facts Determined at the Table

The play had gone ♦10 to the Jack, with East encouraging. South led a low club, with West rising with the King. He returned his last diamond, East winning the Ace. East now led another diamond, Declarer winning with the King. Declarer led a low spade to the King, and then called for a card from Dummy. East played the ♣A, and the Director was called at this point.

East/West alleged that Declarer had called for a club from Dummy, while South said she had called for a heart and Dummy had played the ♥8. East said that he had not seen a card played, but he might have missed it.

### Director Ruling

The Director ruled that, given that a heart was presumably moved into place, clearly a heart was called, and therefore the ♣A was a major penalty card. When Declarer ran the hearts, East was forced to play the Ace on the last round, and Dummy's club suit was now good. Therefore, the contract made five, N/S +460.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>3NT by S, Made 5, N/S +460</b>
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### The Appeal

East appealed the Director ruling and appeared before the Committee. He stated that at trick six, both he and his partner believed they heard Declarer call for a club, and he played his Ace, although he had not seen the card played by Dummy. East stated that his partner confirmed that Dummy had not played a card prior to his play of the ♣A, and it was not until after his play that South called for a heart and the ♥8 was advanced to the played position. He had told this to the table Director after the round concluded. The table Director stated they had investigated with N/S after the round, and they stated that the heart had been played immediately after South called for it.



## Committee Findings

While this case appears to be a classic “he said/she said” circumstance on the surface, there are two points that stand out. The first point is that when South called for a card from Dummy (and South has a thick accent), East did not, by his own admission, look to see which card Dummy played. Had he done this and seen the ♥8 put in the played position, he could have called the Director and explained that he had heard a call for a club. Regardless of the outcome, he would not have played his ♣A, creating a penalty situation. If Dummy played no card, again he could have called the Director and would not have lost his Ace as a penalty card.

Since the Committee was not at the table, they had no way of knowing what card was called by the Declarer. But the second point, bridge logic, says that Declarer was in the process of cashing out her winners for down 1. It would be illogical to call for a club at this point. Because of this, the Committee found no reason to overturn the Director’s ruling, 3NT by South, making 5, N/S +460.

The Committee also judged that the appeal was without merit, and therefore issued an Appeal without Merit Warning to East. While the Committee had sympathy for East, no new facts or bridge logic was presented as part of his appeal, and the case was more bridge law than anything else. When you go to a Director and say, “this is point 1 and this is point 2, how do you rule?”, you cannot then simply say that you want to appeal because you do not like the ruling.

To appeal with merit, there must be some question about the bridge logic or some new fact about the case worthy of consideration. You should not go to an appeal Committee and say, “this is the same point 1 and the same point 2, and I want you to come up with a different ruling because I do not like the one the Director gave.”

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>3NT by S, Made 5, N/S +460</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Aaron Silverstein
<b>Member</b>	Scott Stearns
<b>Member</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Ed Lazarus
<b>Member</b>	Rui Marques

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I agree. If Declarer was going to play a club, she would have played it from her hand on the previous trick. That she unblocked the ♠K is strong evidence that she was cashing out.

The last claim, that one cannot appeal just because one thinks the ruling was incorrect, is false. Of course you can appeal even without new arguments or facts when the Director made an illegal or illogical ruling. What is true is that if you do it, and your appeal is not upheld, you will likely get an AWMW.

**Marques:** “What did South say?” This is the crux of the case. In this type of case, the TD at the table is often the best judge because he can gather what was said very shortly after the incident, the body language, the table feel. The final decision will be built on intangibles, on the perception of facts, and it’s always a judgment call. This perception is different and less accurate if the facts are reported and gathered later, in an AC. I usually say that “facts change continuously,” meaning that the perception of facts by the intervenients changes continuously. When players go through events retrospectively, they often remember and believe things differently.

The AC raised an additional point that supports the TD’s decision (what Declarer was in the process of doing). East should know better than playing before seeing the card played by dummy (especially when South has a thick accent). He should also know that the appeal had no chance. Good AWMW.

**Meiracker:** Correct ruling.

**Wildavsky:** Seems harsh but correct.

**Woolsey:** Clear. If there is the slightest doubt about the card called, the defender should wait until dummy actually pulls the card off the table before playing. By not doing so, the defender puts himself in jeopardy of having misunderstood what was called.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N4
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/01/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Qualifying


### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: No explanation
2: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

Board	2	N	Linda Smith
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>E</b>	♠ 7	
		♥ J97	
<b>Vul</b>	<b>N/S</b>	♦ AK954	
		♣ 8754	
W	Russell Samuel		
♠	AQJ42		
♥	10		
♦	1062		
♣	Q932		
		S	Ron Smith
		♠	108
		♥	AQ8642
		♦	Q3
		♣	AK6
		E	Kyoko Shimamura
		♠	K9653
		♥	K53
		♦	J87
		♣	J10

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠X by W	Down 3	N/S +500	♦ K

### Facts Determined at the Table

At the conclusion of the auction, E/W summoned the Director concerning South's break in tempo. The Director instructed play to continue and to call again if East/West felt that they had been damaged. At the conclusion of play, E/W summoned the Director again as they felt that North did not have the values for her 4♥ bid. They felt the hesitation influenced her decision to bid. North explained that her Double was intended as part of a sequence to show a limit raise in hearts

### Director Ruling

Per Law 16B, a player may not choose from between logical alternatives one that could demonstrably have been suggested by extraneous information provided by their partner. The BIT suggested doubt about defending 3♠ therefore bidding 4♥ was a suggested alternative. The Director changed the result to 3♠ by West, down 2, N/S +100.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>3♠ by W, Down 2, N/S +100</b>
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### The Appeal

North/South appealed the ruling and attended the hearing. In screening, the Director polled a player from a regional team event with the North hand and the auction. The player bid 4♥, but though that pass might be more successful. Based upon this, the Director considered changing the ruling, but decided the information gained from the player was ambivalent enough that the Committee should make the final decision.

In the hearing, North explained that, at her first call, a 2♠ bid would have shown a limit raise with 4+ card support. She had made a negative double, intending to support hearts at her next turn in order to show a three-card limit raise. It is standard practice, when holding invitational values and support but cannot show it, to bid game rather than taking a

weaker action. North did not consider pass to be a logical alternative to bidding 4♥. The N/S opening bid style is moderately aggressive.

## Committee Findings

The judgment of the Committee was that the North hand – with a singleton spade, invitational values and undisclosed heart support – presented a clear 4♥ bid. They believed that few, if any, players of North's caliber and experience would seriously consider passing 3♣. Thus, pass was not a logical alternative to bidding and the table result of 4♠X by West, down 3, N/S +500 was restored.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>4♠X by W, Down 3, N/S +500</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Douglas Doub
<b>Member</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Ed Lazarus
<b>Member</b>	Hendrik Sharples
<b>Member</b>	Mark Bartusek

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** Why didn't the Director take a poll? Bidding 4♥ seems like the normal action, but we ought to have a poll to see if any pass. The only pollee seriously considered passing, so this might be a close decision.

**Marques:** Looks like there was no polling by the TD before delivering the ruling. I was wondering if it was because the board was played towards the end of the session, so I checked ACBL Live (it still shows the result as being 3♣ by West, down 2, by the way). This board was played on the 7th round of the first session of the day, so this seems like a missed opportunity. During the screening process, only one player was consulted, which is also clearly insufficient for a UI case. The case boils down to "was Pass a LA to bidding 4♥?" I believe that the specific North at the table would always bid 4♥ independently of the UI. However, establishing Pass as a LA has nothing to do with the specific North's choice at the table. What matters is if a significant proportion of players of the same class considers it, and some might select it. As there was no proper polling, I started a small private poll, and from what I gathered it seems that "pass" was indeed a LA. Did the AC get convinced by N/S's persuasive arguments? I think that the original decision at the table was the good one.

**Meiracker:** Without polling players in the first place, I cannot give my opinion of this case.

**Wildavsky:** The TD ruling seems troubling as a matter of procedure. The decision does not say why passing 3♣ was considered logical. Usually, a TD would take a poll in a manner involving bridge judgment, but he mentions none. The screening Director's poll of only a single player is likewise unsatisfying.

I prefer the AC's ruling to the TDs. Even if Pass was a LA, the TD needed to show that it was in order to adjust the score.

**Woolsey:** I totally agree with the Committee. Once North chooses to start with a negative double, passing out 3♣ is not a LA with that hand. If the Director had done his homework properly and asked several players the right polling question, I'm confident the proper ruling would have been clear.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N5
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/01/2015	<b>Session</b>	Second Qualifying


### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 11-16 HCP
2: Explained as Diamonds

### Hand Record

Board	4	N	Bill Staats		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>W</b>	♠ Q54			
		♥ 865			
<b>Vul</b>	<b>Both</b>	♦ QJ3			
		♣ AQ93			
W	Mark Dahl			E	Lloyd Arvedon
♠	A10873			♠	J92
♥	A2			♥	K1074
♦	854			♦	1096
♣	K76			♣	J54
		S	Bill Heid		
		♠	K6		
		♥	QJ93		
		♦	AK72		
		♣	1082		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by S	Made 3	N/S +600	♠ 7

### Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was summoned at the end of the auction. 2NT had been explained as showing a diamond suit. The actual partnership agreement over a balancing 1NT was natural and invitational. North/South do not use transfers at the 2 level over a balancing 1NT. Over an opening 1NT, the N/S agreement was that 2NT showed diamonds, and 3♦ accepts a game try. East/West stated that they would have made the same calls if the Alert and mistaken explanation had not been made, but they believed that the Unauthorized Information from the Alert might have influenced North to bid 3NT.

### Director Ruling

Due to time constraints at the end of the evening session, the Director was unable to conduct a player poll regarding the auction and North's hand. After discussion amongst the Directors, it was decided that although North had UI from the Alert, there was no logical alternative to North bidding 3NT, regardless of whatever meaning could be ascribed to 3♦. Therefore, the table result of 3NT by South, making 3, N/S +600, was confirmed.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>3NT by S, Made 3, N/S +600</b>
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### The Appeal

E/W appealed the ruling and attended the Committee hearing. They argued that the UI suggests bidding 3NT, as the explanation told North that they might be playing in a 3-3 diamond fit. Without the UI, it was possible that South had a weak hand with a five card or longer diamond suit and was pulling to a safer contract. Pass would be a logical alternative in such a case, and here would produce a less successful result.

## Committee Findings

The Committee acknowledged that there was UI due to the Alert and explanation, and the UI does demonstrably suggest bidding 3NT over 3♦ since there may not be a diamond fit. Pass was the only other alternative to 3NT.

However, the Committee judged that 3♦ could not possibly be a correction of the part score strain with a minimum balancing no trump and long diamonds. Since North held a spade honor, diamond support and was very no trump oriented, Pass was not a logical alternative to 3NT. Therefore, the Committee upheld the Director ruling, 3NT by South, making 3, N/S +600.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>3NT by S, Made 3, N/S +600</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Richard Popper
<b>Scribe</b>	Greg Herman
<b>Member</b>	Joel Wooldridge
<b>Member</b>	Patty Tucker
<b>Member</b>	Don Kern

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** While there may be time constraints for the TD's ruling, there should be plenty of time to get a poll done before the appeal.

I agree with the ruling. When a bid is completely unexpected, judging that it was made due to a misunderstanding seems normal, even with UI that confirms the misunderstanding. This is the second time we've ruled that an "impossible" continuation over a natural 2NT made it clear that 2NT was misinterpreted. But what will happen when 2NT is not alerted, partner bids three of a minor, and it goes all pass? Even if that happened once in a while (I haven't ever seen it happen), it will still be much more probable that there was a misunderstanding, but there ought not be a 100% catch rate, so we have a mild rules problem here. Maybe the solution is that 1NT-2NT ought never be Alertable. Most of the time, the opponents don't need to ask, so if we allow these "catches," then even folks who always ask ought to be warned that asking about 2NT can possibly cost them some rights. Usually, it'll be safe for the opponents to wait until 3m is passed to ask. Note that then, if 2NT is alerted when it was bid as natural and the 1NT bidder bid three of a minor, then they will be forced to play there, because the UI came about due to a regulations violation by the offending side, and we must hold players to the very highest standard when that happens.

No mention was made of an AWMW, despite the fact that no new arguments were made by the appealing side. I would not award one, of course, because I think this decision is not obvious, but elsewhere, write-ups have used this standard to claim that an AWMW is appropriate. I think that standard is neither necessary nor sufficient. You just can't appeal a case where the ruling is obviously correct and not expect an AWMW.

**Marques:** Good ruling by the TD and AC. The UI is replicated by the available AI at the table, so there is no basis for any adjustment. As there was no polling by the table TD, the appeal must be deemed to have merit.

**Meiracker:** This is like N4, without a poll you cannot make a decision as a TD. It seems that pass is LA.

**Wildavsky:** Fair enough. I hate to see a pair possibly gain through the alert procedure, but here it seems that the result would almost certainly have been the same whether or not alerts were given.

**Woolsey:** I disagree with the Committee that 3♦ can't be a correction of the part score with a minimum balanced notrump and long diamonds. Why couldn't it be? South could certainly have something like king-sixth of diamonds, a single spade stopper, and be offering North a choice between 3♦ and 3NT. That is a perfectly logical interpretation and must be the assumed interpretation when North has the UI that South thinks 2NT is a transfer.

In spite of this, if it were only my decision, I would let the score stand. North happens to have a very clear 3NT call opposite what South's auction has shown, with QJx of diamonds and help in spades. With the North hand, I don't think passing is a LA. If North didn't have such perfect cards passing would be a LA, and I would not permit the 3NT call.

A proper poll would have resolved this issue. The North hand should be given as a bidding problem, with the 2NT call as a natural raise part of the conditions. No mention of the possibility that it could be a transfer. If there were some passers, then pass would be a LA and the score should be adjusted.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information/Misinformation	<b>Case:</b>	N6
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/01/2015	<b>Session</b>	Second Qualifying


### Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♣ <sup>1</sup>	2♥	3♣
3♠	Pass <sup>2</sup>	Pass	Dbl <sup>3</sup>
Pass	4♥	Dbl	4NT
Dbl	5♦	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Diamonds, no alert
2: Break in Tempo
3: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

Board	17	N	Irene Baroni		
Dealer	N	♠ 54	KJ10		
Vul	None	♦ KQ76532	♣ 6		
W	Allan Falk			E	John Lusky
♠ A109876	♠ KQJ3				
♥ 62	♥ 943				
♦ 8	♦ J9				
♣ A732	♣ K1095	S	Andrea Manno		
		♠ 2			
		♥ AQ875			
		♦ A104			
		♣ QJ84			

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♦X by N	Made 6	N/S +650	♠ K

### Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was summoned after each break in tempo, at the end of the auction when North explained that 2♣ should have been Alerted and then at the end of play. South stated that 2♣ by an unpassed hand would show diamonds but was uncertain if that was the partnership agreement for a passed hand. That was why he did not Alert the bid and raised clubs at his next turn to call. Both North and South agreed that South's Double was systemically not for penalty. East/West felt they "had no chance to get this right."

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

As the ruling came in the last rounds of the session, the Director had limited time for polling. He polled four players regarding the North hand and the auction through South's Double. All four bid 4♥ over the Double, with none considering pass. Two of the players were given the next three bids and both bid 5♦.

### Director Ruling

Based upon the player poll, the Director ruled that North did not choose, from amongst logical alternatives, one demonstrably suggested by the Unauthorized Information (Law 16B). Therefore, the table result was confirmed

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>5♦X by N, Made 6, N/S +650</b>
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## The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and East, North and South attended the hearing. East argued that with the misinformation about the hand, he and his partner had no chance to make sensible decisions in the auction. With correct information, he would not have doubled the final contract, and likely would have competed in spades over the 4♥ bid.

North/South provided their system notes which confirmed that 2♣ did show diamonds, as well as confirming that South's Double was systemically for takeout. They did not believe that South's slight hesitation before doubling was out of tempo in passout seat.

## Committee Findings

Both UI and MI were present at multiple times throughout the auction, and resulted in a complex case. Due to the hand occurring at the end of the evening session, the Director did not have time to poll as extensively as would have been preferred, particularly concerning the South hand following North's hesitation over 3♣. The Committee deliberated at length about South's action at this point in the auction, concerning the UI from the BIT.

The Committee judged that Pass, Double and 4♣ were all possible actions by South, and that Double was demonstrably suggested by the UI. While the Committee considered pass as an alternative, they all viewed 4♣ as the more likely call. After a lengthy deliberation, they ruled Pass to not be a logical alternative for a player of South's caliber.

The Committee then considered the auction following a 4♣ bid and concluded that the auction would have proceeded similarly to the auction examined by the Director in his poll, with there being no LA to North bidding 4♥. At this point, considerations to the MI implications from the 2♣ call enter the analysis. The N/S system notes confirmed the systemic agreement that 2♣ showed a diamond holding by North, thus MI did exist. The committee judged that, with the correct information, East would not double over 4♥, and that South would likely pass. West would then likely bid 4♠, which North would double.

Based upon the standards defined in Law 12C1e ("at all probable" and "likely"), the Committee judged that West would take nine tricks in 4♠X, and that result was assigned. The Committee believed, based upon South's Double and 4NT bid, that South was aware of the possibility that North might have diamonds, but did not disclose this during the auction. The Committee discussed whether a procedural penalty would be appropriate but decided to not assess one.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>4♠X by W, Down 1, N/S +100</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Richard Popper
<b>Scribe</b>	Greg Herman
<b>Member</b>	Don Kern
<b>Member</b>	Joel Wooldridge
<b>Member</b>	Patty Tucker

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** Wow, the Director didn't even start on the case; this is why we need to have appeals. Admittedly, this is a difficult one with several possible infractions, and the infractions interact. If I were the TD, I would have sent it directly to Committee. In such cases, is there someone whom the TD can ask which polls ought he taken, then arrange to have them done before the hearing?

Let's start with North's choice over 3♣. I think it's completely obvious to bid something. Partner has shown strength and at least five hearts, and you have at least limit raise values and a fit. I'm pretty sure North was afraid of a catastrophe if she bid 4♦ or 4♥, so she passed. But she did it slowly. I'm sure passing is not a LA and is suggested over 4♥, which seems normal, by the UI.

Next, consider South's action after the slow pass. I suspect that passing is a LA to doubling 3♣. I have taken a poll. 4♣ was a huge consensus action. No one doubled. A few seriously considered passing, and one passed. I'm going to treat passing as a LA, though I think it's borderline, so the score adjustment is E/W +140. I think the normal action is to bid 4♣, but I'm pretty sure South realized that the reason partner was thinking over 3♣ was that she had diamonds, not clubs, and she didn't know what to do about it. So, South did what would work best in each case: Double. It's OK to cater to a possible misunderstanding, but it's not once you have used UI to diagnose it. Doubling was clearly an infraction, as it was chosen over 4♣, which is surely less likely to be successful than Double. That seems harsh, but N/S would never have had a chance at such a bad score without abuse of UI by North. Moreover, this means I don't have to figure out the worst result at all probable and best result likely had North bid 4♦ or 4♥.

I'm convinced that each of North and South took advantage of UI, South actively failed to disclose an agreement that he was (eventually) pretty sure was in place, and then he took action based on it. That's three serious infractions with no attempt even to do the normal thing. I think that deserves a full board PP and a suggestion that a C&E hearing might be in order.

I doubt I would have come to such a firm conclusion within the time frame of an AC hearing, so in practice, they might well get a much smaller penalty or none at all, despite fully deserving one.

**Marques:** A very complex case, and with little time to decide the TD could not go as deep as needed in his analysis of the case. Also, it's not clear if E/W complained to the TD about the MI issues also, or if this issue was raised only inside the Committee. With time on their side, the AC made a good analysis, and the final decision is a good one (for 2015 standards)

**Meiracker:** This is a complicated case with UI and MI, but the TD had limited time to poll. The AC made a thoughtful decision.

**Wildavsky:** The TD seems to have ignored the issue of MI. The AC corrected an injustice.

**Woolsey:** I don't think the hesitations make a difference. Neither North nor South is ever going to sell out to 3♠. Other than showing a desire to do something, the huddles don't suggest any particular action.

The MI issue is another matter. East has all the reason in the world to believe he has a couple of defensive tricks with his K109x of clubs, given that North bid clubs and South raised. East would never have doubled anything if he had known the meaning of the 2♣ call, or even if that were a possible meaning. Given that, it does appear that E/W would likely have competed to 4♠.

In addition, North does have the UI that South has not interpreted his 2♣ call correctly. Without that information North would think that South had a heart-club 2-suiter, not a hand with a diamond fit. I agree that North likely would have doubled 4♠, so I concur with the Committee's adjudication.



<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N7
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/01/2015	<b>Session</b>	Second Qualifying


### Auction

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1NT <sup>1</sup>	Pass	2♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
3♣ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	4NT <sup>4</sup>	Pass
5♥ <sup>5</sup>	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♠ <sup>6</sup>	Pass
7♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Transfer to spades
3: Super accept, with clubs
4: Keycard Blackwood
5: Two Keys, denies ♠Q
6: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

Board	23	N	Ira Herman		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>S</b>	♠ 6	♥ Q9542		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>Both</b>	♦ KQ6	♣ J1062		
<b>W</b>	Joann Glasson			<b>E</b>	Bob Glasson
♠	KJ102			♠	AQ875
♥	K7			♥	AJ10
♦	105			♦	AJ84
♣	AKQ75			♣	3
		<b>S</b>	G. Margie Gwozdzinsky		
		♠	943		
		♥	863		
		♦	9732		
		♣	984		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
7♠ by E	Made 7	E/W +2210	♠ 3

### Facts Determined at the Table

North/South called the Director when West bid 7♠. There had been a marked hesitation by East, agreed to by all, prior to his 6♠ bid. N/S believed the hesitation constituted unauthorized information suggesting West bid the grand slam.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The Director polled five players with the West hand and the auction. All viewed 6♣ as exploring for a grand slam in No Trump, and when East bid 6♠ denying interest, they resigned themselves to bidding the grand in spades.

### Director Ruling

As the player poll showed there was no logical alternative to bidding 7♠, Law 16 was not violated, and the table result was confirmed.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>7♠ by E, Made 7, E/W +2210</b>
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### The Appeal

N/S appealed the ruling, and North attended the hearing. He stated that while he would have had no problem with a direct jump to 7♠ over 5NT, he felt that, following the hesitation, West should not raise over 6♠.

## Committee Findings

The Committee judged that 6♣ was clearly the correct bid at matchpoints, as there were many hands that East could hold that would make 7NT a laydown (J10 of clubs, for example), and not looking for 7NT in this form of game would be poor strategy. Given that West could easily have bid 7♠ directly over 5NT, not bidding it after 6♣ was ruled to not be a logical alternative. Therefore, the Committee confirmed the Director ruling regarding the table result.

The Committee discussed the merit of the appeal. As there were some issues with the paperwork, and North had not been warned by the screening Director that the appeal might not have merit, the Committee did not assign an Appeal without Merit Warning.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>7♠ by E, Made 7, E/W +2210</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Thomas Carmichael
<b>Scribe</b>	Hendrik Sharples
<b>Member</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Ed Lazarus
<b>Member</b>	Scott Stearns

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** From West's perspective, they have five spades, four or five clubs, AK, A. The thirteenth trick might have to be a heart ruff, which fails if East is 5-2-4-2, 5-1-5-2, or 5-2-5-1. It seems to me that East would have bid 6♦ asking for the ♦K with any of those shapes, so I think West can be pretty confident about a grand. OK, I'll buy the ruling.

Another way to look at it is that East has the absolute minimum he can have for his previous bidding with the worst number of clubs (so why the slow 6♣?) and yet the grand was excellent.

The reasoning that West didn't bid the grand on the previous round so not bidding it might be a LA for this round doesn't apply, I think, when one is answering questions (unless one can bid 7NT, of course). Partner might have enough information to bid more than we know we can. But overruling hesitation Blackwood needs a rock-solid case. Here, West can pretty much count 13 tricks, which is just barely good enough.

While I'd normally give an AWMW for North's reason for appealing, I'm OK with not giving one in cases where the unsuccessful action was ruled not to be a LA. It is not uncommon for that type of ruling to be wrong, so asking for one to be reviewed is reasonable.

**Marques:** The TD did a good job, by the book, covering all bases. Should the screening Director have been more proactive in informing the appellants about the relative merit of the appeal that was being filed? Once again, players should be educated regarding the appeal process: The AC starts with the TD decision. If there is no error in procedure (like lack of polling, for example, or wrong questions asked during the poll), no new facts, no error interpreting the poll results, and if the TD's decision is reasonable, there will be no change in the decision and the appeal could be considered without merit. Players need to be aware of this when they file an appeal.

**Meiracker:** The TD did his job properly by asking enough players and asking them the right questions. N/S should be aware that this could be an AWMW.

**Wildavsky:** I see no merit to the appeal. Screening Directors rarely warn appellants regarding the possibility of an AWMW. That is not the screener's function – the screener wants to be seen as impartial. A pair acknowledges the possibility of an AWMW when they sign the appeal form, and their appeal should be heard only if they have signed the form.

**Woolsey:** Of course, West has a trivial grand bid with that hand once East confirms all the aces. Also, West is quite correct to first show the king of clubs in case 7NT is in the picture. The N/S pair should have known better than to even call the Director back once they saw the West hand.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Misinformation	<b>Case:</b>	N8
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/02/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Semifinal


### Auction

West	North	East	South
		1NT	Db1 <sup>1</sup>
2♦ <sup>2</sup>	2♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Explained 4 Major/5 minor
2: Transfer to Hearts

### Hand Record

Board	22	N	Jacek Pszczola		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>E</b>	♠	KJ8743		
		♥	(void)		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>E/W</b>	♦	J10762		
		♣	53		
<b>W</b>	Chris Willenken			<b>E</b>	Alison Wilson
♠	AQ5			♠	1096
♥	J10853			♥	AK976
♦	Q9			♦	A85
♣	1062			♣	A4
		<b>S</b>	Jared Lilienstein		
		♠	2		
		♥	Q42		
		♦	K43		
		♣	KQJ987		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥ by E	Down 2	N/S +200	♣ K

### Facts Determined at the Table

East/West summoned the Director after play of the hand was over. North had explained South's Double as showing a four card major and a five card minor. The actual partnership agreement was a one suited hand. As North/South were defenders, South could not correct the misinformation until after play had finished. When asked if there would have been any change in the bidding if the proper explanation had been given, all at the table agreed that the auction would have been the same. West stated that East would have taken a different line of play with the correct information. East made no statement regarding how she would have played the hand.

The play had gone ♣K to the Ace, followed by the Ace and King of hearts. Declarer now led a low diamond, won by South with the King. He first cashed the ♥Q and the ♣Q then led the ♣J, which was ruffed by Declarer. She now led the ♠10 through to North's Jack. North returned a diamond, which East won with the Ace, overtaking the Queen, so she could repeat the Spade finesse. East had played all the low hearts in Dummy under the Ace, King & Queen.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The Director polled several players concerning the play of the hand. While all agreed the incorrect explanation provided misinformation, they faulted Declarer's poor management of the trump suit as being the real culprit for the result achieved on the hand. If she had unblocked a high heart in Dummy under either the King or Queen, she would have been able to win the ♦Q, come to her hand with the ♥9, and then cash the ♦A to pitch a spade in Dummy before taking the finesse. This line would result in no worse than down one, regardless of the distribution of the spade suit.

## Director Ruling

While there was misinformation on the hand, the player poll showed that the damage was the result of Declarer's decisions in the play of the hand rather than a result of the misinformation. As East's play of the trump suit in Dummy was deemed the cause of the damage, and that was not related to the irregularity, per Law 12C1b, no adjustment was necessary. The table result of 4♥ by East, down 2, N/S +200 stands.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>4♥ by E, Down 2, N/S +200</b>
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## The Appeal

E/W appealed the ruling and West and North attended the Committee. West argued that with proper information, there were many lines by which East could have certainly come to at least nine tricks. With the MI, she felt the double finesse in Spades to be the percentage play, as South should have four spades and the honors would likely be split.

## Committee Findings

The Committee agreed that MI was given. However, the play by Declarer was so poor that it severed the link between the MI and the result. When you have a ten-card trump suit, split five-five between Dummy and Declarer's hand, you should be able most times to maintain communication between the two hands. This is what Declarer failed to do and what caused the result. This had no connection to the misinformation during the auction.

The Committee also judged that the appeal lacked merit because this was the original ruling and no additional information or bridge logic was introduced as part of the appeal. Therefore, E/W was assigned an Appeal without Merit Warning.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>4♥ by E, Down 2, N/S +200</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Richard Popper
<b>Scribe</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Meyer Kotkin
<b>Member</b>	Greg Herman
<b>Member</b>	Scott Stearns

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I agree completely. The MI might have been confusing, but North's bid should at least have cast enough doubt on the explanation that Declarer should reconsider her assumptions. For what it's worth, if I were playing Woolsey (the explained, but not agreed, method,) I'd likely (ab)use it with South's hand anyway.

The AWMW is appropriate.

**Marques:** I'm always skeptical when "West states what East would do." Would anything change in East's mind about playing the hand, with the correct information? Likely not. As the TD and the pollees pointed out, the culprit for the bad result was simply bad trump management by Declarer. Good AWMW in my opinion.

**Meiracker:** I was the TD in this case and have nothing to add.

**Wildavsky:** This appeal had merit. Yes, Declarer's play was poor, but she'd have been more likely to go right had she been correctly informed. A different AC might easily have applied Law 12C1b and adjusted the N/S score while leaving the E/W score unchanged.

**Woolsey:** Clearly the MI had nothing to do with Declarer's botching the play. In fact, the double spade finesse is terrible. Correct after getting the news in hearts is to lead a diamond towards the queen. When the king is inside a spade can be later discarded from dummy, and a single spade finesse would be for the contract. Good ruling.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N9
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/02/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Semifinal


### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 14-16 HCP
2: Transfer to hearts
3: Lead directive
4: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

Board	25	N	Louk Verhees, Jr		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>N</b>	♠ 82	♥ AQ2		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>E/W</b>	♦ Q3	♣ AQ10954		
<b>W</b>	Tarek Sadek			<b>E</b>	Ahmed Hussein
♠	Q973			♠	AK1064
♥	74			♥	103
♦	AK1094			♦	876
♣	76			♣	KJ2
		<b>S</b>	John McAllister		
		♠	J5		
		♥	KJ9865		
		♦	J52		
		♣	83		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥X by N	Down 2	E/W +300	♦ 8

### Facts Determined at the Table

North/South summoned the Director at the end of the auction. East broke tempo over North's 4♥ bid, approximately seven seconds or so. West stated that East was a sound bidder and should have around 10 HCP for his 2♠ bid. As West held 9 HCP, the auction gave sufficient authorized information that made his Double the only logical alternative considering the vulnerability on the deal.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Six players were polled with the West hand and the auction. Two bid 4♠, while the rest passed over 4♥. This confirmed pass as a logical alternative.

### Director Ruling

West had unauthorized information from East's BIT, which suggested that action would be more successful than passing. The player poll established pass as a logical alternative, barring the UI. Therefore, per Laws 12 & 16, the Director adjusted the result to 4♥ by North, down 2, E/W +100.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	4♥ by N, Down 2, E/W +100
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## The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and they alone attended the Committee. West's Double of 2♦ was lead directing; it could have been made on as little as ♦KQ109xx. East is a sound bidder, and West expected him to have a good five card suit (not six, as he would have acted over 1NT), at least 10 HCP, and inferentially, some kind of diamond tolerance.

South's 3♥ bid was competitive, which within the context of the auction meant that he did not expect to make game. West expected 3♠ to make when he bid it, and his diamonds would not only be a good lead for East, but also two fast tricks on defense against hearts, which his partner could not expect. The knowledge that South did not expect to make the contract, combined with the defensive strength of West's diamond holding and the expected strength of East's hand, made it clear to West that he must double 4♥ to protect his plus score in 3♠ as best as he could.

## Committee Findings

There was an agreed BIT following the 4♥ bid. Most slow passes suggest bidding rather than doubling, and a 4♣ bid by West would certainly not be allowed following a BIT. However, a slow pass also suggests extra values, and that East expected 3♠ to make. Thus, the BIT made it demonstrably more attractive for West to double in order to protect a positive score from 3♠.

West's arguments were both logical and attractive, and many strong players might choose to double. However, East's bidding might have been predicated on good diamond support (Qxx or QJxx), and North might have bid 4♥ because he held either xxx or Axx in spades and believed he had a perfect fit with partner. If that was the case, 4♥ could easily be making, and doubling could turn a 30-35% result into a zero, while turning plus 50 into plus 100 for down one would not adequately compensate for making plus 140 in 3♠.

Although Double appears to be the percentage action, since North might often be bidding 4♥ as a cheap save against 3♠, the Committee judged that pass was a logical alternative. Therefore, the Director ruling was confirmed, 4♥ by North, down 2, E/W +100.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>4♥ by N, Down 2, E/W +100</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Douglas Doub
<b>Member</b>	Gail Greenberg
<b>Member</b>	David Caprera
<b>Member</b>	Aaron Silverstein
<b>Member</b>	Don Kern

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I agree. It doesn't matter that the BIT doesn't seem to suggest doubling, but bidding, because West's Double caters to the possibility that partner will bid 4♣ when his hand is unsuitable for defense. Good job.

An AWMW is possible. I assume the AC didn't give one, because they thought West's action was the correct bridge action, even though it wasn't legal in context.

**Marques:** The TD's procedure and decision look flawless, as long as it is agreed that 7 seconds is a BIT. From the write-up of the case, this seems to be the case. I resist a little on this (see case N1).

**Meiracker:** I agree with the TD and AC.

**Wildavsky:** I agree with the TD and AC rulings.

**Woolsey:** It was judged that there was a BIT so West had UI. The UI certainly suggests doing something other than passing. As the poll indicated, passing is a LA. Case closed.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Misinformation	<b>Case:</b>	N10
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<b>Event</b>	Blue Ribbon Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Harry Falk
<b>Date</b>	12/02/2015	<b>Session</b>	Second Semifinal


### Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♣	1♥
Dbl <sup>1</sup>	2♦ <sup>2</sup>	Pass	2♥
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Explained as 4 or 5 spades
2: Weak heart raise

### Hand Record

<b>Board</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>N</b>	Michael Polowan		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>E</b>	♠	J106		
		♥	A963		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>Both</b>	♦	J85		
		♣	1054		
<b>W</b>	Rose Yan			<b>E</b>	Jiang Gu
♠	Q87542			♠	K9
♥	10			♥	QJ5
♦	AQ94			♦	732
♣	72			♣	AQJ86
		<b>S</b>	Tom Townsend		
		♠	A3		
		♥	K8742		
		♦	K106		
		♣	K93		

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
3♥ by S	Down 2	E/W +200	♣ 7

### Facts Determined at the Table

South called the Director at the beginning of the next round to claim misinformation. He stated that had he known it was possible for West to hold six spades, he would have found the correct play to only go down one on the hand. West stated, that while East/West do have a partnership agreement that would allow her to show six spades, she did not believe her hand to be strong enough to apply it.

### Director Ruling

As East did not bid spades at his second turn to call and West bid Spades on her own at her second turn, it could be inferred from the available information of the auction that the likely spade split was six-two. Per Law 40C, "a player may deviate from his side's announced understandings always, provided that his partner has no more reason to be aware of the deviation than have the opponents." Therefore, any damage was due to the choices made by Declarer, not from any lack of information provided by the opponents.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>3♥ by S, Down 2, E/W +200</b>
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### The Appeal

N/S appealed and were the only players to attend the Committee. They argued that the explanation of the Double by West was that it specifically showed four or five spades. The fact that West could have a sixth spade and not show it was not mentioned.

With the information that South had, the only shape possible for West after play to the first four tricks was 5-1-5-2, which would allow Declarer to escape for down one if East held Qx in diamonds. If South had known that the sixth spade was possible for West, then he would have a second possibility for down one, if East held a doubleton spade honor



## Committee Findings

The Committee, after much discussion, ruled that the explanation provided was incomplete and therefore misinformation had been given. Because of the MI, Declarer was never afforded the opportunity to find the correct play, and accordingly was damaged and eligible for redress. The Committee adjusted the result to 3♥ by S, down 1, E/W+100.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>3♥ by S, Down 1, E/W +100</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Scott Stearns
<b>Member</b>	Becky Rogers
<b>Member</b>	Greg Herman
<b>Member</b>	Meyer Kotkin

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** If I were told that Double showed four or five spades, I'd assume that six was a possibility. This imprecise explanation is very common, and I think bridge players should know that. When someone explains "that promises four-card support and game forcing values," is anyone surprised that it might have five-card support? If Declarer had asked, "can 1♥ include six spades," and was told, "no," I'd have more sympathy for his case.

Has West ever done this before? If not, her action was probably just a deviation.

Do E/W play support doubles there? If so, then N/S should have known that spades were 6-2. Most don't play them, reserving Double to show real diamonds, but some do, particularly those who do not differentiate between four and five spades immediately.

It seems to me that the 2♣ rebid strongly suggests that spades are 6-2. Would West have rebid a so-so five-card suit?

The above questions were not answered by the write-up, so I don't really know what the best ruling is, but I'm inclined to rule no MI for failing to allow for the possibility of a six-card suit. Most say, "four or five," here when they mean "four or more," because they are lumping together the traditional negative double, which shows four spades and the traditional 1♠ response, which shows five or more. This imprecision is so commonplace that I expect players to protect themselves if they need to know whether a six-card suit is a possibility.

Even if Declarer had asked and had been told that six was unlikely, I'd probably judge that West just chose to treat spades as a five-card suit due to the robust quality of the suit.

**Marques:** Is the system "4 or 5 spades" (and West decided to deviate) or is it "4 or 5 spades, 6 if weak"? From the write-up, it seems to me more like the former. If so, there is no infraction. I dislike the AC's decision.

**Meiracker:** If the agreement is 4 or 5 Spades and West decided to double with 6 Spades, then there is no MI and the AC made the wrong decision.

**Wildavsky:** I prefer to AC's ruling to the TD's. E/W did not adequately disclose their understanding.

**Woolsey:** It would be nice if we were told how the play actually went. I'm guess that it went club to ace, queen of clubs to king, king of hearts, heart to ace, and diamond to 10 and queen, ace of diamonds, another diamond, and Declarer could now no longer take advantage of the favorable spade position.

What I don't understand was the Committee's conclusion that the explanation was incomplete. Why couldn't the explanation have been completely accurate, with West making the decision to treat the hand initially as if it were a 5-card spade suit. I don't see any such evidence to suggest otherwise. In fact, East's failure to raise or make a support double (if available), combined with West's 2♣ rebid, is pretty strong evidence that this is exactly what happened. I don't see any reason to think there was MI. I disagree with the Committee.



<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N11
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<b>Event</b>	North American Open Swiss	<b>Event DIC</b>	Tom Marsh
<b>Date</b>	12/04/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Qualifying


### Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♦	1♥
1♠	2♦	2♠	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
4♠	Pass <sup>1</sup>	Pass	5♥ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	6♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Hesitation, Forcing Pass
2: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

<b>Board</b>	14	N	Piotr Tuczynski		
<b>Dealer</b>	E	♠ 9	♥ A85		
<b>Vul</b>	None	♦ AK832	♣ A974		
W	Wafik Abdou			E	
♠	Q108763			♠	KJ54
♥	64			♥	K
♦	10			♦	QJ764
♣	J1086	S	Bertosz Chmurski		
		♠	A2		
		♥	QJ109732		
		♦	95		
		♣	Q5		

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
6♥ by S	Made 6	N/S +980	♦ 10

### Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was summoned before the opening lead. The auction had gone briskly until 4♣. The BIT over 4♣ did not convey unauthorized information as the pass was forcing. South took about 15 seconds to bid 5♥. East/West asked for a review to determine if 6♥ was in violation of Law 16.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Five players were polled with the North hand and the auction. All five believed that the pause before 5♥ did not suggest one action over another.

### Director Ruling

As the poll was unanimous that the BIT did not suggest a particular action, then Law 16 was not violated. The table result was confirmed.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	6♥ by S, Made 6, N/S +980
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### The Appeal

E/W appealed the ruling and all four players attended the Committee. E/W believed that the 15 second hesitation before 5♥ suggested bidding. The Committee asked N/S as to what 4NT then 5♥ would show, but they had no agreement.

## Committee Findings

This was a close case. The Committee was divided as to whether a 15 second hesitation was meaningful. The screening Director opined that while the hesitation was likely meaningful, to violate Law 16 it had to demonstrably suggest one action that was advantageous over another. As the player poll indicated that the hesitation did not suggest a particular action, there was no reason to overturn the Director's ruling.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>6♥ by S, Made 6, N/S +980</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Mark Bartusek
<b>Scribe</b>	Hendrik Sharples
<b>Member</b>	Don Kern
<b>Member</b>	Scott Stearns
<b>Member</b>	James Thurtell

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** Huh? The ruling is right, but the reasoning confuses me. As I see it, South was deciding between doubling and bidding 5♥, right? Those are his only two reasonable choices. That he seriously thought about doubling suggests passing, not raising. I think that suggestion is very clear, well past "demonstrably." Was E/W thinking that South was considering bidding six when he'd signed off in four on the previous round?

Since the UI suggests passing over bidding 6♥, bidding is fine. If North had passed 5♥ and six would have gone down, then E/W might have a case.

I'm curious how Declarer made exactly six. If he diagnosed the opening lead as a singleton and dropped the ♥K, he ought to make seven on a trump squeeze. If he didn't drop the ♥K, he might well go down after a spade to the ace and a losing trump finesse.

An AWMW seems reasonable, as E/W didn't add any new arguments, and the ruling is obvious, but I think the TD didn't come to grips with the case, so I wouldn't award one, on the basis that if the TD had outlined the reasoning above, E/W would almost certainly not have appealed.

**Marques:** The screening Director apparently tried to steer the E/W pair away from appealing. Good try. I see no merit in the appeal, just a waste of time.

**Meiracker:** Nothing to add.

**Wildavsky:** I see no merit to the appeal.

**Woolsey:** I agree that the BIT doesn't suggest bidding slam. In fact, if anything the BIT would indicate that South was choosing between bidding 5♥ and doubling (which was probably the case looking at the South hand). Thus, the UI would argue against bidding the slam. North got to a poor contract and got lucky.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N12
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<b>Event</b>	Reisinger BAM Teams	<b>Event DIC</b>	Matt Koltnow
<b>Date</b>	12/04/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Qualifying


### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Takeout
2: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

<b>Board</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>N</b>	Bobby Levin		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>S</b>	♠ 94	♥ K32		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>Both</b>	♦ A10	♣ AKQ1074		
<b>W</b>	Carlos Hoyos			<b>E</b>	Jorge Barrera
♠	Q72			♠	AKJ3
♥	Q4			♥	A1095
♦	75432			♦	QJ86
♣	J86			♣	2
		<b>S</b>	Steve Weinstein		
		♠	10865		
		♥	J876		
		♦	K9		
		♣	953		

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
3♦ by W	Made 4	E/W +130	

### Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called by North/South following the 3♦ bid and again at the end of play. Both sides agreed that East had hesitated noticeably prior to passing over 3♣.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Five players were polled with the West hand. All five bid 3♦. Pass was not deemed to be a logical alternative.

### Director Ruling

As there was no logical alternative to bidding, the UI from the BIT was deemed to be immaterial and no adjustment was necessary.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>3♦ by W, Made 4, E/W +130</b>
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### The Appeal

N/S appealed the ruling, and South and West attended the hearing. South argued that North's 1NT rebid was not explained in the player poll as showing an 18-19 HCP hand. West had the opportunity to bid 3♦ over South's Double, and South believed that ethically, West should have passed once his partner hesitated.

West stated that he and his partner were aware that the 1NT rebid showed 18-19 HCP. He passed the Double to wait and see what North did. He would have been willing to defend against 2♠, and maybe 2♥ (he was still deliberating

that notion). Also, he believed his partner's 2♦ bid showed short clubs and extra values, since it was bid over an 18-19 1NT bid.

## Committee Findings

The Committee agreed with West that the 2♦ bid likely showed short clubs and extra values. The other possibility was that East may have held five diamonds instead. Under either alternative, the Committee agreed with the player poll that defending against 3♣ with the West hand was not a logical alternative. Therefore, the Director's ruling was confirmed.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>3♦ by W, Made 4, E/W +130</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Richard Popper
<b>Scribe</b>	Joel Wooldridge
<b>Member</b>	Thomas Carmichael
<b>Member</b>	Ed Lazarus
<b>Member</b>	Rick Rowland

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I'm skeptical. Did the five players polled bid 3♦ and say there was no alternative? I bet Edgar Kaplan wouldn't have bid. "No aces, no kings, no singletons, no voids. No hand." I think passing is a LA, particularly red at BAM, since when 3♦ is going down, it's going down doubled pretty often (for example, swap the red kings), so I'd rule 3♣ down one.

**Marques:** I have a nagging feeling about the poll. It seems to me that pass would be the first choice of at least a significant proportion of players. Were the pollees informed that 1NT showed 18-19 HCP? If not, the poll would not be valid, and the AC should start afresh, disregarding the poll. The write-up is not clear enough for me to form a final opinion on this case.

**Meiracker:** It seems that the poll showed that all five bid 3♦, but did the TD asked the question about what a hesitation would suggest? Not satisfied by the decision of TD and AC.

**Wildavsky:** I find the TD and AC rulings unsatisfying. If it was so clear that 2♦ showed short clubs with extra values then why did East hesitate over 3♣?

The West hand was used as a Master Solver's Club problem in the September 2018 issue of The Bridge World. Seven panelists passed over the Double of 2♦. Of those, three passed over 3♣ and four continued on to 3♦. That makes it crystal-clear than passing is a LA. I fear the TD and the AC erred badly here. If the decision were a close one any benefit of the doubt ought to have gone to the non-offenders.

**Woolsey:** Is it really so clear to bid 3♦ vulnerable at BAM (where you are very likely to be doubled and go for 200 if you are wrong) with no aces, kings, singletons, or voids, and when you may have already done well to kick the opponents out of notrump into a lower scoring minor-suit partial? It isn't so clear to me. I might bid 3♦ but passing sure would look like a reasonable action.

I would like to know the thinking of those polled. Did they think it was a close call, or did they think 3♦ was clear? If they all thought 3♦ was clear and pass was not on their radar, then I would bow down to the poll result. Unfortunately, the Directors don't ask the right question. The question isn't what to bid on the West hand -- it is what the candidate choices are.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Misinformation	<b>Case:</b>	N13
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<b>Event</b>	North American Open Swiss	<b>Event DIC</b>	Tom Marsh
<b>Date</b>	12/04/2015	<b>Session</b>	Second Qualifying


### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Intended as Artificial Force

### Hand Record

<b>Board</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>N</b>	Mike Cappelletti
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>E</b>	♠	AK73
		♥	1093
<b>Vul</b>	<b>N/S</b>	♦	A83
		♣	Q106
<b>W</b>	Robert Bitterman		
♠	8642		
♥	AKQ74		
♦	J1064		
♣	(void)	<b>E</b>	Robert Cappelli
		♠	Q105
		♥	87
		♦	K95
		♣	AKJ98
		<b>S</b>	David Grainger
		♠	J9
		♥	J62
		♦	Q72
		♣	75432

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
2♣ by E	Made 2	E/W +90	♣ 2

### Facts Determined at the Table

North/South called the Director at the end of play of the hand. West had intended 2♣ as artificial and forcing. East believed that the bid was natural after interference. The Director asked to see the E/W convention cards and system notes, but these were never provided. In the play of the hand, the low club went to the Queen and Ace. Declarer crossed to the ♥A and finessed the ♦J to the Queen. The defense took two spades, two diamonds and a spade ruff.

### Director Ruling

Per Laws 20F5 and 75B, West should have explained at the end of the auction that East had failed to Alert their 2♣ bid. With proper information, South was likely to lead a spade. With that lead, it was judged likely that East would only come to seven tricks, so, per Law 12C, that result was assigned.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	2♣ by E, Down 1, N/S +50
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### The Appeal

N/S appealed the Director ruling and presented their case to the Committee. They argued that with a spade lead and a diamond shift, Declarer was likely to guess incorrectly in diamonds and go down a second trick.

## Committee Findings

The Committee agreed that if correct information had been given, the opening lead was likely to be a spade. A diamond shift was also agreed to be a probable scenario. However, even with this defense, the Committee found it completely unlikely that Declarer would go down more than one trick with seven tricks available for the taking. Therefore, the Committee upheld the Director's ruling of down one.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>2♣ by E, Down 1, N/S +50</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	Aaron Silverstein
<b>Scribe</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Patty Tucker
<b>Member</b>	Greg Herman
<b>Member</b>	Mayer Kotkin

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** Nice lead, David. Declarer could have taken ten tricks.

First off, what's the actual agreement? If 2♣ was systemically natural, result stands, as there was no MI. For example, had West started at East's pass, then said as he put down dummy, "sorry, I didn't see the overcall until you passed," would any ruling other than result stands even be considered? So, let's assume that it was artificial.

It is possible Declarer would have gone down two (that would have been a heck of a defense), but I'm sure it isn't likely, and I doubt it is at all probable. It is reasonable, however, to rule that E/W get -100 and N/S get +50.

I think E/W should get a 1/4 board PP for failing to announce the failure to alert before the opening lead. (Again, this assumes 2♣ was artificial.)

The appeal had merit. I'm pretty close to awarding a split score; I think the winning defense will happen 5-10% of the time, just a tad short of being at all probable. Unlike the AC, I don't think a diamond shift is probable. I think close to 90% of the time, North will try to give his partner two spade ruffs.

**Marques:** It's truly difficult to play this hand poorly enough to go two down! I fail to see the appeal's merit, but perhaps I'm too harsh on this one.

**Meiracker:** Appeal without Merit?

**Wildavsky:** N/S were asking for a lot. I see no merit to their appeal.

**Woolsey:** Are we looking at the same hand? There is no way North would ever shift to a diamond at trick 2, knowing he can give his partner an immediate spade ruff and will have a diamond entry to put another spade through for a potential trump promotion. North will play king, ace, and a spade in a split second. South will ruff, play a diamond to North's ace, and North will play another spade. Declarer will ruff, play ace, king, and a club, and come to 8 tricks. N/S should have been happy with the favorable adjudication handed to them by the Director. I would punish them for such a foolish appeal by reverting the score to 2♣ making.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	N14
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<b>Event</b>	North American Open Swiss	<b>Event DIC</b>	Tom Marsh
<b>Date</b>	12/05/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Semifinal


### Auction

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1♥	3♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4♣ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	5♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

Board	15	N	Scott Stearns		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>S</b>	♠ 10	♥ AK74		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>N/S</b>	♦ AJ62	♣ AJ109		
<b>W</b>	Leonardo Cima			<b>E</b>	Valerio Giubilo
♠	A86			♠	KQJ7542
♥	J6532			♥	98
♦	K5			♦	1087
♣	Q54			♣	7
		<b>S</b>	Jay Segarra		
		♠	93		
		♥	Q10		
		♦	Q943		
		♣	K8632		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♣ by S	Made 6	N/S +620	

### Facts Determined at the Table

East/West called the Director following North's 5♣ call. South had taken about two minutes before bidding 4♣, and E/W believed the long hesitation had influenced North's bid.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Several players were polled as to whether pass was a logical alternative with the North hand, and what did the long BIT suggest. Three strong players rattled off several choices that South may have been considering, but none of the players felt that any particular call was "demonstrably suggested" by the BIT. One player explicitly stated that South must have around 6 HCP (at least) on this auction.

### Director Ruling

As the player poll indicated that no action was deemed to have been demonstrably suggested by the BIT, the criteria under Law 16 for adjustment were not met. Therefore, the table result was confirmed.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>5♣ by S, Made 6, N/S +620</b>
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## The Appeal

E/W appealed the ruling, and North, South, East and the E/W team captain attended the hearing. East argued that the BIT implied that South was trying to decide between bidding game or not bidding game. Since he decided to not bid game, pass was a logical alternative to bidding by North.

South stated that he was trying to decide between bidding 4♣ and 4♥, as he thought his partner had five hearts from their opening bid and his ♥Q10 might be all partner needed.

## Committee Findings

The Committee agreed with the polled players that the BIT before 4♣ did not demonstrably suggest one logical choice over another. South could have been thinking about passing with four spades, bidding 4♥, or several other options. Therefore, North is free to bid anything he chooses as the Law 16 conditions were not met. The table result and Director's ruling were upheld.

<b>Committee Decision</b>	<b>5♣ by S, Made 6, N/S +620</b>
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## Committee Members

<b>Chairman</b>	James Thurtell
<b>Member</b>	Jeff Meckstroth
<b>Member</b>	Mike Passell
<b>Member</b>	Greg Herman
<b>Member</b>	Philippe Cronier

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I disagree. South is thinking about picking one of: pass, 4♣, 4♥, and 5♣. In each case other than 4♣, he's considering trying for a larger score. Therefore, I think the UI suggests bidding over passing, and passing is surely a LA. I'd roll it back to 4♣.

This case is a little odd in that we don't really know what South is thinking about, and therefore could easily judge that the UI doesn't suggest anything. But after combining all of the possible things South could be considering, we see that the UI strongly suggests some actions (bidding) over others (passing) as a group, even if not individually.

**Marques:** Another case where the BIT doesn't demonstrably suggest any specific action. I like the AC's approach and conclusion.

**Meiracker:** Pass was not a LA with the North hand as a result of the poll. Agree with TD and AC

**Wildavsky:** Troubling. On the many hands that offer no play for game South would find an in-tempo 4♣. It's possible that he was thinking of passing the Double, but in my experience most players who consider passing for penalties at length do in fact pass.

**Woolsey:** It is true that South might have been thinking of various things. It is also true that the BIT doesn't suggest any bid (other than pass) by North will be more successful than some other bid. However, the BIT makes it very clear that South doesn't hold xx, xx, xxxx, xxxxx, thus the BIT does suggest that some action by North other than passing is more likely to be successful than if there had been no BIT. The argument that South must have at least 6 HCP is nonsense. East could easily have a fairly strong hand for a 3♣ preemptive overcall opposite his passed partner.

The issue is whether or not pass is a LA, not whether bidding 5♣ is suggested. Is pass a LA? I know that I would bid 5♣, but that doesn't mean pass isn't a LA. The narrative says that several players were polled as to whether or not pass is a LA with the North hand, the right question to ask, but the narrative doesn't say what the result of this poll was. I don't have a strong opinion as to whether or not pass is a LA, so I would accept the results of such a poll.



<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Inadvertent Designation	<b>Case:</b>	R1
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<b>Event</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday AXY Swiss	<b>Event DIC</b>	Jenni Carmichael
<b>Date</b>	11/29/2015	<b>Session</b>	First

### Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention


### Hand Record

<b>Board</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>N</b>	2100 MPS		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>N</b>	♠ 4	♥ 8765		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>N/S</b>	♦ J98	♣ J9653		
<b>W</b>	5100 MPS			<b>E</b>	7000 MPS
♠	KQ1076			♠	A953
♥	92			♥	KQ103
♦	A102			♦	Q76
♣	KQ8			♣	102
		<b>S</b>	2060 MPS		
		♠	J82		
		♥	AJ4		
		♦	K543		
		♣	A74		

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
4♠ by W	Down 1	N/S +50	♣ 5

### Facts Determined at the Table

After winning the second round of clubs, Declarer cashed the King and Queen of spades drawing 2 rounds of trump then led a heart to the King, won by South. The ♠J was returned, Declarer playing low, North pitching a club and Declarer called "spade", then almost immediately corrected to "Ace of spades". The Director was called by North/South to determine whether or not West was entitled to change the original designation of a small spade.

### Director Ruling

The Director invoked Law 45C4b. While the change of call was made almost immediately, the standards for determining that the change was timely ("without pause for thought") had not been met. The burden of proof failed to meet the standard of overwhelming as directed by the Laws Commission.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	4♠ by W, Down 1, N/S +50
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### The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling. There was virtually no dispute as to the facts. All four players agreed that the change of call happened quickly. The Reviewer did ask Declarer why she did not finish pulling trumps as there appears to be no valid bridge reason for abandoning this line of play. The attempt was to find out if Declarer might have thought trumps were drawn and/or confused as to which hand contained the remaining high trump. Declarer offered no reason other than she wanted to knock out the ♥A.

## Panel Findings

The Panel concluded that Law 46 (incomplete designation of a card from Dummy) was the more appropriate law to apply to this case. Being that the ♠J was the last outstanding trump, it had been led, and the Ace was in the Dummy, playing last to the trick, it was highly unlikely that Declarer could be thinking of leading a spade to the subsequent trick or taking a finesse. The Panel decided that the call of 'spade' had been incomplete and that the ♠A was the incontrovertible intent of Declarer. Furthermore, the Panel felt that if Law 46 was not applied to this case, there would be little point to having it at all.

<b>Panel Decision</b>	<b>4♠ by W, Made 4, E/W +420</b>
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## Panel Members

<b>Reviewer</b>	Marc Labovitz
<b>Member</b>	Matt Koltnow
<b>Member</b>	Jeanne van den Meiracker

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** The Panel got it right. Declarer didn't draw a third round of trumps, because she wanted to lead hearts towards the KQ. Maybe someone will duck twice.

**Marques:** It's always a judgment call. When Declarer called "spade," did he mean the ace or a small? The fact that the change was almost immediate, and no mention to signs of confusion from Declarer in the write-up, make me gravitate towards "Ace."

**Meiracker:** I was a member of the Panel.

**Wildavsky:** I find it troubling that TD's would differ on a case like this, where the facts are not in dispute. If pressed, I prefer the TD's ruling. The Panel cites Law 46, but that law supports either ruling.

**Woolsey:** My understanding is that if the call of "spade" is judged to be a slip of the mind, as opposed to a slip of the tongue, then the play stands. Obviously, this is a subjective decision. It seems to me that the Director at the table is in the best position to make this decision, so I would accept that decision.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Misinformation	<b>Case:</b>	R2
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<b>Event</b>	10K IMP Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Peter Wilke
<b>Date</b>	11/30/2015	<b>Session</b>	First Qualifying


### Auction

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

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 10-12 HCP
2: Strong, 15-17 HCP
3: Explained as minors

### Hand Record

Board	17	N	5600 MPS		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>N</b>	♠ 652	♥ K32		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>None</b>	♦ Q32	♣ KQ65		
<b>W</b>	1900 MPS			<b>E</b>	400 MPS
♠ A87				♠ KJ4	
♥ AQJ104				♥ 98	
♦ 1098				♦ AK6	
♣ 87			♣ A10942		
		S	5700 MPS		
		♠ Q1093			
		♥ 765			
		♦ J754			
		♣ J3			

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4NT by E	Down 1	N/S +50	♥ 7

### Facts Determined at the Table

The opening lead was ducked to the king, and the ♠K return was also ducked. A low club exit by North was ducked to South's jack. South played a diamond to the queen and ace. Declarer then played the club ace. When South showed out, the Director was called.

North/South stated that they use their defense to a strong 1NT opening as their runout over a penalty double of their 10-12 1NT. South stated he forgot their agreement when he bid 2♣, which he meant as the start of a scramble sequence. However, the agreement that 2♣ showed both minors over a Double of 1NT could not be verified on the N/S convention cards, and they did not have system notes.

### Director Ruling

The table Director initially ruled that South had forgotten the agreement that 2♣ showed both minors. Since this would not be an infraction of law per Law 75C, he allowed the table result to stand. However, because North/South could not provide evidence of this agreement, the Director then presumed that the explanation was incorrect rather than the call and changed his ruling per Laws 75B, 75C, and 12B1 to 4NT by East, making 4, E/W +430.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	<b>4NT by E, Made 4, E/W +430</b>
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### The Appeal

North/South appealed the ruling and attended the review, although East and West both spoke with the Reviewer prior to the review. North/South felt that their explanation of 2♣ was correct according to their understanding, and that the Declarer's play of the hand should not have been affected by the meaning of the 2♣ bid.

## Panel Findings

The Panel noted that after the return of the ♠K, ten tricks were available by winning the king with the ace and driving out the remaining club honors, since all other suits were still at least double-stopped. They polled five players ranging between 1100 and 8000 MP, and all five players won the ♠K with the ace at trick two and made 4NT. None of the polled players indicated that either possible explanation of the 2♣ bid had any impact on the chosen line of play.

The Panel therefore ruled that although there was misinformation given to East as defined in Law 75B, the damage to E/W was self-inflicted and unrelated to the misinformation. The Panel therefore restored the table result of 4NT by East, down one, N/S +50.

<b>Panel Decision</b>	<b>4NT by E, Down 1, N/S +50</b>
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## Panel Members

<b>Reviewer</b>	Eric Bell
<b>Member</b>	Matt Smith
<b>Member</b>	David Metcalf

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** Again, the Panel got it right and the Director got it wrong. This was pretty easy, and I don't see why the Panel had to do a poll.

Nice spots, North

**Marques:** Good recovery by the AC. Declarer did not count his tricks, and even at 400 MPs that is "Declarer Play 101..."

**Meiracker:** I agree with the Panel.

**Wildavsky:** Nice work by the Panel.

**Woolsey:** The Panel's analysis was correct. Declarer's play was wrong regardless of the meaning of 2♣, and if South had held QJxx of clubs, certainly possible from the information Declarer had, the duck would have meant down 1 in a cold contract. There is no reprieve for a blunder such as this, considering that winning the ace of clubs and continuing clubs was 100% to make.

<b>Subject of Appeal:</b>	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	<b>Case:</b>	R3
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<b>Event</b>	Monday AXY Pairs	<b>Event DIC</b>	Doug Rankin
<b>Date</b>	11/30/2015	<b>Session</b>	First


### Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	3♣	3♠
4♥	4♠	5♥	5♠
6♥	Db1 <sup>1</sup>	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

### Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

### Hand Record

<b>Board</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>N</b>	5000 MPS		
<b>Dealer</b>	<b>N</b>	♠ K865	♥ 86		
<b>Vul</b>	<b>N/S</b>	♦ KQ6532	♣ 4		
<b>W</b>	8500 MPS			<b>E</b>	5200 MPS
♠ 3	♥ KQJ107432			♠ J	♥ A95
♦ 8	♣ A108			♦ 10	♣ QJ976532
		<b>S</b>	4300 MPS		
		♠ AQ109742	(void)		
		♥ AJ974	♣ K		

<b>Final Contract</b>	<b>Result of Play</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opening Lead</b>
6♠ by S	Made 6	N/S +1430	♣ A

### Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called to the table at the end of play. The Director determined that, before North's Double of 6♥, there was a break in tempo. The North player confirmed that he thought for about 15 seconds before doubling.

### Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Eight players of approximately equal level as the South player were polled, and, after North's Double (but with no mention of a break in tempo), six of the eight polled would Pass. The other two would bid 6♠.

### Director Ruling

According to Law 16B1a, "After a player makes available to partner extraneous information that may suggest a call or play, as for example ... by unmistakable hesitation ... the partner may not choose from logical alternatives one that could demonstrably have been suggested over another by the extraneous information." The Director ruled that the break in tempo may have demonstrably suggested bidding on rather than passing, and that pass was a logical alternative. The score was adjusted, therefore, to 6♥ doubled by West, down 1, for N/S +100.

<b>Director's Ruling</b>	6♥X by W, Down 1, N/S +100
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## The Appeal

The Reviewer met with all four players and confirmed that the hesitation was approximately 15 seconds. Furthermore, while North/South claimed they bid slowly, all agreed that this was a longer time than the remaining bids in the auction.

N/S argued that, in a high-level competitive auction such as this one, a 15-second pause was normal tempo, that any player in such a position was entitled to consider carefully, and that the break therefore was not "out of tempo" for the auction. North stated that he was reviewing his system and what his bids meant in this situation, and this should not suggest any particular option to his partner. They claimed (but were unable to produce system notes supporting their claim) that at the 5 or 6 level, when their side was bidding to make their contract, then when the opponents compete, a pass would show that earlier bids were based on shape, while Double would imply that they were based on values. They averred that a pass would not be forcing here - if both North and South were bidding based on shape, they were not required to double the opponents.

## Panel Findings

The Panel recognized that, as an auction reached high levels, particularly in competition, players do tend to bid more slowly. However, in an auction such as this one, while a break of 8-10 seconds might not convey information, fifteen seconds is a rather long time, and certainly expressed doubt. For example, if North's high cards had included a trump trick, then he would likely have been able to double significantly faster. North's actual tempo suggested that all of his values were outside of hearts, which made a 6♣ bid more attractive.

The Panel determined that the 15 second pause did constitute an unmistakable hesitation and made South's 6♣ bid more attractive. The Director's poll established that Pass was a logical alternative, so the ruling of 6♥X by West, down 1, for a score of N/S +100, was upheld per Laws 16B1 and 12C1e.

Some consideration was given as to whether the appeal had merit: did the appellants bring to the appeal an argument not encompassed by the Director's initial decision? It was felt that the length of the break in a high-level auction was sufficient cause for the situation deserving a second look, so the appeal was found to have some merit

<b>Panel Decision</b>	<b>6♥X by W, Down 1, N/S +100</b>
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## Panel Members

<b>Reviewer</b>	David Metcalf
<b>Member</b>	Matt Smith
<b>Member</b>	Gary Zeiger

## Commentary

**Goldsmith:** I can't believe West allowed N/S to play 6♣. Since on a slightly different layout (1-1 hearts and 1-1 clubs), it could be successful, maybe it isn't quite a "serious error," but it looks pretty ridiculous to me. 7♥X is surely going for less than their game, and there's nearly no chance that 6♣ is going down. Betting that partner has a defensive trick is a wild gamble. That West also needs his ♣A to cash makes it a massive underdog. The only reason I'd consider not bidding 7♥ is the fear that they'd bid 7♣.

I'm pretty surprised that most polled players passed 6♥X. I suspect most players with 4300 masterpoints would bid 6♣ at the table.

Assuming we don't let E/W keep their bad result, then the ruling is fine except for the missing AWMW.

**Marques:** The table TD gave an impeccable ruling, well supported by a poll. This case should never have come to appeal, IMO. A narrow escape from an AWMW.

**Meiracker:** Good ruling by the TD, so why not an AWMW?

**Wildavsky:** I see no merit to the appeal.

**Woolsey:** The Director judged (rightly or wrongly, but that is not our job to determine), that there was a BIT. The BIT suggested bidding. Passing is clearly a LA. End of story.