

2017 Spring NABC

Appeals Casebook

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NORTH AMERICAN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS



Jazz it Up
IN KANSAS CITY
MARCH 9-19, 2017



American Contract
Bridge League

Foreword

The appeal hearings and commentary descriptions are now being 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 fourteen (14) cases were heard.

Ten (10) cases were from unrestricted (by masterpoints) North American Bridge Championship Events. The names of the players involved are included.

Four (4) 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 are 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 was born and 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.

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.

Chris Willenken was born in New York City, Willenken graduated from Collegiate School and Williams College. Chris is an ACBL Grand Life Master and a WBF Life Master. In 2011, he won the gold medal at the inaugural Sport Accord World Mind Games Individual Championship. In WBF competition, He reached the semifinals of the 2010 Rosenblum Cup and 2011 World Transnational Open Teams Championship and finished fourth in the 2014 World Open Pairs Championship.

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.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Case:	N1
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Event	Baldwin North American Pairs	Event DIC	Kevin Perkins
Date	03/09/2017	Session	First Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣ ¹	1♦
2♦ ²	2♥	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Strong, Artificial, Forcing
2: No Alert, positive with five ♥

Hand Record

Board	5	N	Richard Zucker		
Dealer	N	♠	KJ98		
		♥	K10953		
Vul	N/S	♦	1042		
		♣	6		
W	Brian Ellis			E	Bernie Greenspan
♠	A75			♠	32
♥	QJ762			♥	A84
♦	J73			♦	A6
♣	J3			♣	AKQ974
		S	Ethan Stein		
		♠	Q1064		
		♥	(void)		
		♦	KQ985		
		♣	10852		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 5	E/W +460	♦Q

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called before the opening lead was made. The Director indicated that no Alert was due as 2♦ was a cue bid. Further review was requested, and the DIC of the tournament was asked about the Alertability of 2♦. He indicated that in our Alert Procedures, 2♦ is Alertable – the 2♦ bid was not chosen because it was the opponents' suit, but because it was a transfer to hearts.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The Director then gave the North hand to several players. They considered different calls over 2♦, but all of them asked what 2♦ was before answering.

Director Ruling

Staff determined that although there was misinformation from the failure to Alert, it did not cause the damage. Alert Procedures state that an opponent who actually knows or suspects what is happening, even though not properly informed, may not be entitled to redress if he or she chooses to proceed without clarifying the situation. All of this player's peers asked about 2♦; staff decided this player needed to ask as well.

Law 40B4 says that a side that is damaged as a consequence of failure to explain a call or play is entitled to an adjusted score; staff concluded that the source of the damage was a player of this level not asking a question when he needed the answer to make his decision.

Director's Ruling	3NT by E, Made 5, E/W +460
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The Review

N/S requested a review of the ruling. North was the only player who spoke to the Reviewer. He felt he had been misinformed, and that with the proper information he would have bid a lead-directing 2♣ rather than 2♥, planning to raise diamonds later.

The Reviewer spoke to six national-champion level players. He gave the North hand as a bidding problem. All six asked what 2♦ was; two were vehement that it was critical, as it could be nearly anything. They suggested Pass, 2♠ and 3♦ were among the calls they would consider.

When the Reviewer asked how much sympathy they would have for a player who did not ask about 2♦, two said that they could sympathize, although at the table they themselves would always ask. One of those two indicated that it never would have occurred to him that 2♦ was hearts. The other four had no sympathy at all; one suggested that over a natural or artificial 1♣, so many pairs play transfer structures in competitive auctions that it would never occur to him to proceed without clarifying the situation.

Panel Findings

The Reviewer concluded that the above-cited provision in the Alert procedure did indeed cover this situation – even if this player did not suspect that this auction was anything special, all his peers did. He was expected to protect himself. Law 21A says no redress is due a player who acts on the basis of his own misunderstanding; there was no legal basis to apply Law 40B4 (see above). The table result was allowed to stand. As the initial ruling was delivered on an incorrect application of the Alert rules, this review was deemed to have merit.

Experts Consulted: Billy Miller, Chris Moll, Jerry Helms, Bob Hamman and two others.

Panel Decision	3NT by E, Made 5, E/W +460
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Koltnow
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Commentary

Goldsmith: Those polls are convincing. I would have ruled otherwise without them. Good job, everyone. It's a bit of a surprise that the Director thought 2♦ was not Alertable. The first cue bid example in the Alert Pamphlet covers this case.

Marques: A lot of players have difficulties understanding the concept of “self-protection.” This case is a very good example. N/S know that 2♦ is artificial. Therefore, if they need to know the meaning, they should ask, even if not alerted, as demonstrated by the results of the TD and Panel polls, where all the pollees asked about the meaning of 2♦ before bidding. Good call by the staff, establishing that the source of damage was North's lack of questioning when he needed to know. Nice example of the use of law 21A.

Wildavsky: E/W use an unusual method and are responsible for knowing that it requires an alert, even in the face of the ACBL's Byzantine regulations. Justice demands that we adjust their score. As for N/S, the stated regulation, if enforced consistently, would make a mockery of the Alert system, and would be impractical since players would need to ask about nearly every unalerted call. In my view N/S were due an adjusted score as well.

I do not understand why players were polled as to the amount of sympathy they'd feel. The question is whether accurate information would make the winning call more likely than the one chosen - clearly it would have.

Willenken: Muddled reasoning for the original ruling here. This case contains not just MI issues but also substantial UI issues. Was this a failure to alert by East or a forget? If it was a failure to alert, N/S might potentially be entitled to defend 4♥ Doubled. It did appear from the subsequent auction that East forgot the agreement (and so was never planning on raising hearts) but making that determination should have been one of the Director's first priorities.

Assuming that the Director had made sufficient findings of fact to render this purely an MI case, I am comfortable with the Panel's reasoning that North should have protected himself. Contrast this situation with that of case N6 from Orlando-- here, the player could have asked the meaning of 2♦ without placing his side in jeopardy. If 2♦ were some sort of general cue, North could bid hearts. If 2♦ instead showed hearts, the extraneous information from North's ask-and-pass sequence (possibly implying heart length) would stem from E/W's failure to alert and thus would not constrain South in the play

Woolsey: While North could have asked about the 2♦ call, I do not believe he is required to in order to protect himself against an unusual meaning such as this. How often have we had players say that asking a question about 2♦ tells partner that North wants a diamond lead or has some diamond support. Thus, I do not agree with the ruling to let the table

result stand because North didn't ask. East's failure to alert was improper, and North was potentially damaged from this failure to alert.

I don't buy North's self-serving statement that he would have bid 2♠ had he been properly alerted. I think he would have either bid 3♦ or passed. One thing is for sure. He would not have made a natural 2♥ call. E-W have a 5-3 heart fit which the 2♦ call locates, and there is every reason to believe that E-W would have gotten to 4♥ had North not bid 2♥. Therefore, I would adjust the contract to 4♥, with whatever adjudication seems proper for that contract.

Subject of Appeal:	Unauthorized Information	Case:	N2
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Event	Lebhar IMP Pairs	Event DIC	Matt Koltnow
Date	03/11/2017	Session	First Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2NT ¹	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Hand Record

Board	4	N	Brian Glubok		
Dealer	W	♠	QJ5		
		♥	J64		
		♦	Q1086		
Vul	Both	♣	A32		
W	Ray Jotcham			E	Richard Chen
♠	K76			♠	10983
♥	A1092			♥	Q8
♦	K95			♦	AJ7
♣	Q76			♣	KJ108
		S	David Treitel		
		♠	A42		
		♥	K753		
		♦	432		
		♣	954		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted as relay to ♣

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by W	Made 4	E/W +630	♦6

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called after play of the hand had ended. East had intended his 2NT bid as a natural invitational bid. East/West play a system where 2NT is a transfer to clubs; invitational notrump hands are bid another way. East had unauthorized information by the unexpected alert of his invitational 2NT bid.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Five players were polled with the East hand. All bid as East the first two rounds. On the third round, one player passed, while the other four bid 3NT. Three of the players who bid 3NT said the auction was impossible, while the fourth said that, although the 3♣ bid is possibly natural in theory, East's holding in clubs made it clear that West couldn't hold strong enough clubs for this to be the case. This player did not believe West could hold a club suit such that he would be trying to "escape" from 2NT to a "safer" part score in clubs.

Director Ruling

Although E/W did not agree on the meaning of 2NT, the question was one of Unauthorized Information for East rather than misinformation for N/S. Based upon the poll results, the Director ruled that Pass was not a Logical Alternative under Law 16B2 and ruled that the table result stood.

Director's Ruling	3NT by W, Made 4, E/W +630
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The Review

North/South requested a review of the ruling. They believed, based on the poll finding one player that would pass and another that felt that 3♣ was possibly natural in this auction, that pass was a logical alternative. The Reviewer conducted his own poll.

In polling, similar results to the original poll were gathered. Of the seven players polled, only one was found that would pass. Follow up questions were asked of the player that passed. It was found that the player that passed was unfamiliar with the methods used by E/W. The player was also unable to construct a hand for partner that would bid as given. Many of those polled that bid also play the methods of this pair, and some questioned whether this pair played the rest of the system that accompanies this bid being a relay.

Panel Findings

Although it was found that some players might pass, it was determined that it was likely to only be those unfamiliar with the methods of E/W. Without the Alert, a player that plays the methods given would most likely realize that the 3♣ was unusual enough to determine that the 2NT bid was misinterpreted and bid again. Therefore, the table result was allowed to stand. Due to the finding of a pass in the original ruling, the appeal was deemed to have merit.

Experts Consulted: Janice Seamon-Molson, six players of the E/W masterpoint level

Panel Decision	3NT by W, Made 4, E/W +630
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Kevin Perkins
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Commentary

Goldsmith: There's a second UI issue. I strongly suspect East showed enough surprise when 2NT was alerted that West knew he had forgotten. And if not, if East tried to figure out his ethical requirements, his 3NT wasn't prompt. If East remembered what 2NT meant, he'd also know his follow-up after 3♣, so West knew 3NT wasn't to be trusted systematically. So, what was the meaning of the sequence 2NT then 3NT in the pair's system? Probably whatever it was, West had a normal pass, but imagine that it showed 4135 or 4126! West has a pretty good hand opposite those shapes. Or if it showed shortness in diamonds and club length, 5♣ might be much better than 3NT.

This sort of case has come up several times in the last decade, and rulings have converged on judging that the AI duplicates the UI. What will happen when the natural auction 1♠-1♠; 1NT-2NT; 3♣-pass occurs?

Marques: I'm surprised by the decision. On the initial poll, out of five, one player passed, and one considered passing. For these borderline cases, where the possibly LA is a minority action, the reasoning behind choices and alternatives is essential, and often even more important than the concrete choices of the players polled. There is no mention in the writeup regarding the thought process of the player (or of the others), and it would also be useful to know what were the questions used for the poll. My instincts tell me that Pass is a LA, based on the indications from the initial poll. The Panel's conclusion is inevitable with the data from the second poll, but I would be more confident if I knew that the critical questions were: "1NT is limited to 14, 2NT is invitational, what is your bid?" and "Partner alerted 2NT as relay to clubs, your thoughts?", or something along these lines.

Wildavsky: The methods of the pair in question are not relevant, because East clearly forgot them. He was woken up by his partner's alert, and this information is unauthorized. We then come to the question of whether passing is a logical alternative. Upon reading Law 16 we can see that the poll results show that it is.

I don't understand why the TD and Panel would go out of their way to rule in favor of the offenders here. Even if the decision were a close one, and I do not think it is, allowing pairs to use the Alert procedure to rescue themselves from misunderstandings can only hurt the game. Not only does it encourage future use of UI, it fails to properly discourage players from agreeing to use methods that they cannot remember.

Willenken: Ugh. I thought we had moved past allowing pairs to use the alert procedure to recover from these lebensohl-related accidents. I guarantee you that if East had heard 2NT explained as natural, he would correctly have found a pass of 3♣, perhaps playing partner for bidding e.g. x Kxx Kxxx AQxxx in a sensible manner. These 2NT-relay-to-3♣ cases should not require a poll unless the 3NT bidder contends that his hand has no LA to bidding opposite a signoff 3♣. Otherwise, pass is always a LA.

Woolsey: Suppose West held Qxx, Kx, Qxx, AQxxx. West is concerned about the heart suit since he knows East has fewer than 4 hearts, so West makes a natural 3♣ call as an offer to play. East is happy to pass that, since he can deduce what West is worried about, and the optimal contract is reached.

The above example illustrates that the 3♣ call is not so unusual that East can determine without the UI that his 2NT bid was mis-interpreted. If I were East, I would pass 3♣ is a flash and not consider it a remotely close decision. I think that pass is not only a LA; it is clearly the correct call.

If the polling were done correctly, where those polled were given no hint that the 2NT bid might be anything but natural, and everybody bid 3NT anyway, then I suppose the Directors and the Panel had no choice but to rule as they did. However, it is always a big if about the polling being done correctly.

Subject of Appeal:	Break in Tempo, Unauthorized Information	Case:	N3
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Event	Lebhar IMP Pairs	Event DIC	Matt Koltnow
Date	03/11/2017	Session	Second Final

Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Weak, Alerted
2: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	21	N	Michael Schreiber
Dealer	N	♠ KQ8	
		♥ J105	
Vul	N/S	♦ K9865	
		♣ 97	
W	Billy Cohen		
♠	1092		
♥	A3		
♦	742		
♣	Q10652	E	Gary Cohler
		♠	J64
		♥	KQ9642
		♦	(void)
		♣	K843
		S	Mark Bartusek
		♠	AJ52
		♥	87
		♦	AQJ103
		♣	AJ

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♦ by S	Made 5	N/S +600	♣2

Facts Determined at the Table

East/West called the Director at the end of play. There was an agreed break in tempo prior to the 3NT bid by North. E/W believed this influenced South's decision to bid further.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The Director polled two players with the South hand. Both passed over 3NT.

Director Ruling

It was ruled that the break in tempo suggested bidding, and passing was a logical alternative per Law 16. The auction was adjusted to 3NT by North. The Director polled the same players as to their likely lead with the East hand. Both said it was a tossup between leading a high or a low heart. Based on this, it was determined that half of the time North would make five in 3NT, and half of the time North would go down two. Giving sympathetic weight to the non-offending side, an assigned score of 60% of down two, and 40% of making five was given, per Law 12C.

Director's Ruling	60% 3NT by N, Down 2, E/W +200 40% 3NT by N, Made 5, N/S +660
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The Review

E/W requested a review of the ruling. East thought that the weighting given was not appropriate. East claimed that he would always lead fourth best, and that a poll would find many more leading low than high. He thought not enough players were polled. The Reviewer polled seven additional players with the East hand and the auction to 3NT. Four of the players led a high heart, while only three led a low heart.

Panel Findings

A more thorough poll supported the original ruling that it is a close decision, and the weighting given was not out of line with this. Therefore, the original ruling was allowed to stand. Due to the limited and informal poll used to determine the weighting, the appeal was found to have merit.

Experts consulted: Justin Lall, Diego Brenner, five additional expert level players

Panel Decision	60% 3NT by N, Down 2, E/W +200 40% 3NT by N, Made 5, N/S +660
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Kevin Perkins
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Commentary

Goldsmith: Good job. I would have guessed that at IMPs, many more would lead low than high. South gets a 1/4 board PP for not passing 3NT. Not only was passing a LA, I suspect bidding 4♦ was not.

Marques: Noting that this appeal comes from a pairs event, and the fact that only two players were initially polled, one can presume that the TD had a very busy session. The arguments by East to appeal are very reasonable, but the Panel's poll clearly supported the TD's decision. Regarding the weights that were chosen, leaning slightly in favor of the non-offending side is normal (and a good approach). Good job from the Panel.

Wildavsky: Good rulings by the TD and the Panel. I agree with Chris and Jeff, though, that an additional PP against NS was called for.

I was told when we introduced weighted scores that experience in other jurisdictions showed that there would be few appeals regarding the weights used. I was skeptical about this. I shall start to keep track.

Willenken: Good solid reasoning, but I'd like to see a PP here-- South must have known that passing 3NT was a LA, so his 4♦ bid is a clear violation of 16(B)1. Now that the Laws no longer award the offenders the worst result that is at all probable, Directors need to be a bit quicker on the PP trigger in order to provide sufficient incentive for players to honor their ethical obligations.

Woolsey: Reverting the contract back to 3NT is clear. There was UI, the UI suggested not passing 3NT, and passing 3NT is a LA.

As to the adjudication, the Panel did a good job. This is a perfect hand for polling on the opening lead, and a perfect hand for a weighted average since the result in 3NT depends upon the lead and the lead is not clear. Based on the polling, the weighted results look fine to me.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Case:	N4
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Event	Lebhar IMP Pairs	Event DIC	Matt Koltnow
Date	03/11/2017	Session	Second Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♦ ¹	2♦ ²
3♣	Pass	5♣	5♥
Pass	5♠	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Alerted, Precision
2: Explained as "likely Natural"

Hand Record

Board	14	N	Dan Morse		
Dealer	E	♠	5432		
		♥	J84		
		♦	Q1065		
Vul	None	♣	J5		
W	Paul Holmes			E	
				Eric Gettleman	
♠	87			♠	AK
♥	532			♥	6
♦	K7			♦	AJ98432
♣	AK10942			♣	Q76
		S	John Sutherlin		
		♠	QJ1096		
		♥	AKQ1097		
		♦	(void)		
		♣	83		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
5♠X by N	Down 2	E/W +300	♣6

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called after the final pass. When West had asked North about the meaning of South's 2♦ bid, North had answered, "Undiscussed, but over a short suit, it is probably natural." N/S had not discussed what a cuebid of a "could be short" minor suit opening would mean. E/W felt this provided South Unauthorized Information when the auction came back around to him. The Director instructed the pairs to play out the hand and call him back after the play if E/W believed they were damaged, which they did.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The TD polled six players, giving them the South hand. All either bid 2♦ or accepted it as a normal bid. Four of the six players passed 5♣.

Director Ruling

Based upon the player poll, it was ruled that pass was a logical alternative. The Director ruled that South had made use of the UI, and per Laws 16B & 12C, the result was adjusted to 5♣ by West, making 5, E/W +400.

Director's Ruling	5♣ by W, Made 5, E/W +400
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The Review

E/W requested a review of the ruling. They claimed the Director did not address the fact that they were given misinformation. They contended that the Director was wrong in assigning only 11 tricks in 5♣. With the correct information,

West would be too strong to bid only 3♣, non-forcing over a Michaels bid. Under their system, West would cuebid 2♥, showing clubs. The auction would continue as it did after that, but then East would play the hand. With East as declarer, a diamond ruff is improbable, and diamonds can be set up to take 12 tricks. They also wanted to address the possibility of bidding the slam.

Panel Findings

The Reviewer examined the E/W agreements and concluded that it would be likely to have East declaring in clubs. With the contract being played by East, 12 tricks would be taken by fairly easy play. Five new players were polled with the adapted auction using the E/W methods over Michaels. The auction for all reached to 5♣, but none bid on to slam. All thought 12 tricks would be taken. Therefore the contract was adjusted to 5♣ by East, making six, E/W +420.

Panel Decision	5♣ by E, Made 6, E/W +420
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Kevin Perkins
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Commentary

Goldsmith: "The Director ruled that South had made use of the UI." That ruling claims something that cannot be known to be true. In the Director's scenario, were E/W damaged? No, because North was about to lead a diamond, his partner's suit, against 5♣. At IMPs, what else is there to do but lead a low heart to get another ruff? E/W were about to go minus, so the violation did not damage them.

What was the actual agreement? We can't rule MI if North's explanation was correct. In that case, result stands, because E/W were not damaged. If Michaels was the correct agreement, it's not at all unlikely that E/W play unusual vs. unusual or transfers of some sort, but we don't know what agreements they have, so we can't rule.

Four of six passed 5♣. That makes judging passing not to be a LA a tough sell. Despite that, I think bidding 5H is within normal range, so I wouldn't give a PP to South.

Marques: On this one, I would like to know the exact questions of the initial poll. Asking the pollees what would they bid with South's hand without the UI is not enough. This question should be complemented with something along these lines: "If you are allowed to know that partner thinks that your 2♦ bid is natural, does it help or change your call?" The reason for this is very simple. Imagine that all the six players polled say that their action is the same independently of the information received. Pass is a logical alternative, but the conclusion of the poll would probably be that bidding was not suggested over passing, and therefore there should be no adjustment to the score.

From the writeup, it is clear that Pass was properly established as a logical alternative, but it is not clear whether the UI was shown to demonstrably suggest bidding over passing.

Also, from the writeup, E/W got the correct information about the system of the opponents (2♦ was undiscussed). In that case, I don't see the basis for the Panel's decision to award an extra trick to EW in comparison with the TD's decision.

Wildavsky: Why was there a Panel of one for an NABC+ event? As for the adjustment, I like Jeff's reasoning. E/W were correctly informed as to the fact that N/S had no agreement, so there was no MI. North thought his partner held diamonds, so he'd have likely led a diamond against 5♣ and gone plus. No damage to E/W! But adjusting to E/W +420 is also reasonable, since Law 21Bb instructs the TD to presume Mistaken Explanation in the absence of evidence to the contrary.

Willenken: Excellent job by the Panel, essentially finding that the MI had damaged E/W by their loss of a transfer response. This issue was subtle and easy for the Director to miss, perhaps because E/W themselves might well not have noticed the issue until later.

Woolsey: Rolling the contract back to 5♣ looks clear. South has UI, the UI suggests bidding, and passing is a LA as the poll indicates.

The argument that E/W might bid slam is nonsense. In addition, if they do bid slam that slam may well go down. If West is declarer South will make a Lightner Double, and if East is declarer South might try the big underlead.

The Director's adjudication of E/W +400 is absurd. How can North find a diamond lead or the jack of hearts lead against 5♣? E/W +420 is clearly the proper adjudication. The Director simply forgot to look at the hand, which resulted in a waste of the Panel's time.

Subject of Appeal:	Unauthorized Information	Case:	N5
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Event	Platinum Pairs	Event DIC	Terry Lavender
Date	03/11/2017	Session	First Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass
Pass	Dbl	2♦	2♠
3♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Intended Relay to ♦

Hand Record

Board	26	N	Robert Levin		
Dealer	E	♠	A1098		
		♥	K97		
Vul	Both	♦	J32		
		♣	AJ8		
W	Michael Polowan			E	Haig Tchamitch
♠	KQ6			♠	53
♥	J8			♥	Q432
♦	KQ10			♦	A9764
♣	Q6542			♣	K9
		S	Michael Golden		
		♠	J742		
		♥	A1065		
		♦	85		
		♣	1073		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♦ by E	Made 3	E/W +110	♠2

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called at the completion of play. East/West play 2♣ as a relay to diamonds in the sequence that occurred in the auction, but the agreement is for an unpassed hand. They had not discussed if it applied by a passed hand. North claimed he would pass rather than Double if he knew East's bid was meant to be a relay and might have passed if he knew they had no agreement.

Director Ruling

The Director ruled that North was given misinformation from the failure to alert the 2♣ bid. With this information, he would have passed. The score was adjusted to 2♣ by West, making 2, EW +90, per Laws 21B & 12C.

Director's Ruling	2♣ by W, Made 2, E/W +90
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The Review

E/W requested a review of the ruling. West claimed they don't have a relay agreement if made by a passed hand. He claimed it doesn't make sense to play it, because the related 2♦ artificial game-force is not logical by a passed hand. East claimed he had not thought of the implications of a passed hand and West's reasoning. The Reviewer polled several players about their methods in this type of sequence. Of all who played the checkback system employed by E/W, none played it by a passed hand, nor would consider it to be on by default by a passed hand.

Panel Findings

Based on the polling of players as to the methods in question, it was determined that East had misbid, applying a system that was not in agreement in the actual auction. Therefore, there was no misinformation and no adjustment was warranted. Law 75C states that there is no infraction and no adjustment due if the opponent's methods have been accurately given to the other side following a mistaken call. The table result was reinstated.

Panel Decision	3♦ by E, Made 3, E/W +110
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Kevin Perkins
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Commentary

Goldsmith: Good job, Panel. This was a serious error by the Director. There has been a pattern of MI cases in which the TD didn't determine the actual agreement.

There was, however, UI to East about the meaning of 2♣ due to the failure to alert. I think West's pass produces AI that pretty much duplicates the UI, but that is arguable. Could West have chosen to pass with AQx xx xx Axxxxx, figuring that no matter what responder had in mind, 2♣ was probably high enough? If opener had alerted and explained and still passed, might East have passed the Double, then competed to 3♣ over 2♦ and gone minus? My instinct says that this scenario is extremely unlikely and East is allowed to do what he wants, but it's not 100% clear.

Marques: The initial decision is odd. If E/W explained at the table that their agreement was valid only for unpassed hands, the TD could (should) have dug deeper, as the Panel did. N/S got the wrong information about East's hand, but the right information about E/W's system. Good decision by the Panel.

Wildavsky: I'd say that the TD got this one right. Per Law 21Bb: "The Director is to presume Mistaken Explanation rather than Mistaken Call in the absence of evidence to the contrary." Other opinions are reasonable, though. The best thing to do would be for the ACBL to clarify its policy regarding Alert requirements for calls where a pair has no explicit agreement but might have an implicit one.

Willenken: A thorny case in a philosophical arena on which the Laws are silent. I would like to see ACBL come up with published, consistent answers to these questions:

- a) If there is agreement about the meaning of a bid by an unpassed hand but no discussion of whether it applies as a passed hand, does that bid require an alert?
- b) If there is agreement about the meaning of a bid absent a Double by the opponents but no discussion of whether it applies after a Double, does that bid require an alert?

I think the answer should be yes to both questions. However, without a set policy that informs West of an obligation to alert here, it would be hard to find a procedural violation that merits an adjusted score.

Woolsey: This is a tough one. The normal assumption if a pair can't document what they are playing is that it is the explanation which is incorrect, not the bid. If that is the case N/S are certainly entitled to an adjustment, since North wouldn't have bid had he known that 2♣ was a relay to 2♦.

The problem here is that it is pretty clear that E/W didn't have any particular agreement for passed hand. Given that, West thought it was a natural call. West is not expected to alert something that doesn't exist, and the default is no agreement is natural. Thus, it is hard to see that West did anything wrong. That makes East's 2♣ call a flight of fancy outside of the logic of "undiscussed". Most of the time it would turn out badly for them, but as it happened North's reasonable re-opening gave them a chance to recover. It is annoying, but I don't see any other ruling than to let the table result stand.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: N6
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Event	Leventritt Silver Ribbon Pairs	Event DIC	Harry Falk
Date	03/12/2017	Session	First Qualifying

Auction

West	North	East	South
		1NT ¹	Pass
3♣ ²	Pass	3♦ ³	Pass
3♥ ⁴	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Hand Record

Board	6	N	Bob Feller		
Dealer	E	♠	AJ10862		
		♥	74		
Vul	E/W	♦	10542		
		♣	K		
W	Barry Bragin			E Fred King	
♠	54			♠	KQ3
♥	652			♥	KJ8
♦	K63			♦	AQJ8
♣	AQJ92			♣	1064
		S	Mark Bennett		
		♠	97		
		♥	AQ1093		
		♦	97		
		♣	8753		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Puppet Stayman
3: Alerted, no five-card major
4: "Something in hearts"

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 4	E/W +630	♥ Q

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called at the end of the play. Before making the opening lead, South asked about 3♦. West described 3♦ as no five-card major and concern about one of the majors. South asked about 3♥, and West described his hand as having "something in hearts." Declarer won the opening lead with the ♥K and took a losing club finesse. North returned the ♠J.

South said he would have led the ♥10 had he known that "something in hearts" could be as little as three small. North said he would have known to return a heart had partner led the 10. He said he returned a spade because East's hand was described as being "concerned" about one major suit.

Director Ruling

Staff concluded that North/South had received a correct explanation of the E/W agreements. They felt East's 3♦ call was mistaken (he said he forgot that 3♦ expressed concern about a major), and that West's explanation was also a correct description of their agreement. As such, there was no legal justification to adjust the score.

Director's Ruling	3NT by E, Made 4, E/W +630
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The Review

N/S requested a review of the ruling. They felt that they had been misinformed and that with the right information, they would have defeated 3NT. The Reviewer spoke with both sides together. E/W brought system notes which supported West's description of the East hand; they described the 3♥ bid as showing a "helpful fragment" in hearts.

Panel Findings

The Reviewer spoke first to seven national champion level players. None felt that 6-5-2 was a combination they would regard as a "helpful fragment" or "something", terms which they considered to be equivalent. One of the six did indicate that he did not take "something" literally – he felt that the sequence simply suggested that West was not concerned by hearts. He wanted East to bid 3NT if he could stop spades.

The Reviewer spoke next to three additional national champions, giving the North hand as a single dummy defense problem. The first player returned a heart. When asked if he thought he would still work out the problem had partner led the ♥10 to declarer's jack, he said he thought that increased the likelihood from very likely to certain. The second player returned the ♠J; he felt that he was no better off with the lead of the ♥10. He felt it was still just as reasonable to return a spade instead of heart. The third player returned a heart, saying that it was not at all clear, but that it was more attractive. He felt that the lead of the ♥10 would have made it more challenging to return a heart; after the lead of the queen, partner just needs one higher card in the suit for hearts to be right. After the lead of the 10, partner needs two higher cards.

The Reviewer concluded that N/S had indeed been given misinformation about the West hand. As it was far from certain that N/S would choose a defense that would lead to down two, the Reviewer assigned a score of one-third of 3NT, down two, N/S +200, and two-thirds of 3NT, making four, E/W +630, by Laws 40B4 and 12C1c.

Experts consulted: Paul Lewis, Jason Feldman, Gary Cohler, Aaron Silverstein, Will Ehlers, Kevin Dwyer, Jacek Kalita, Michal Nowosadzki, Zack Grossack and Adam Grossack.

Panel Decision	1/3 - 3NT by E, Down 2, N/S +200 2/3 - 3NT by E, Made 4, E/W +630
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Koltnow
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Commentary

Goldsmith: The notes say "helpful fragment?" Where's the MI? West chose to risk playing 3NT with hearts xxx vs. xx, but not with spades xx vs. xx. I think the Director got this one right. Yes, perhaps the notes ought to say, "concern about the other major," since that's what they really mean, but I think that's understood.

Smith Echo anyone?

Marques: Assuming that "something in hearts" means a fragment of sorts, then N/S were correctly informed about the system, and the TD's decision is right. E/W brought written support for this, so it is hard to understand the Panel's final decision, unless something came up, convincing the Reviewer that the notes didn't reflect E/W's system. Going through the writ-up, it sounds that the Panel's decision is wrong. However, I'm certain that the Panel knows better than that, so probably the writeup doesn't reflect accurately what really happened.

Wildavsky: I prefer the Panel's ruling to the TD's.

Willenken: I am extremely confused by the reasoning here. E/W describe the 3♥ bid as showing 'something in hearts'. This regular partnership's system notes show that 3♥ denotes a 'useful fragment in hearts'. All of the players polled thought that those two descriptions were equivalent.

In light of those factual findings, there has by definition been no MI and therefore no scope for awarding any type of adjustment. It is true that West's hand didn't match the explanation given, but West is entitled to deviate from his agreements, and it is easy to see why he did so here – he had a good hand that rated to make 5♣ if his partner couldn't stop spades.

I would advise E/W that having seen this hand, they should probably describe 3♥ in the future as 'asking for a spade stopper'. However, there is no reason that players of this level should have anticipated holding hands like West's in crafting their initial agreement.

Woolsey: I do not understand why it was West who was saying his 3♥ call showed "something in hearts". That is East's job to explain West's calls. In particular, West didn't really have anything in hearts. West should have shut up when asked about the 3♥ call and let East explain. If West is going to give an explanation, with the hand he held he should have said something like: Better hearts than spades. The actual explanation is misleading, particularly since made by the person who doesn't really have what he is saying he has.

I agree that South would have led the ♥10 (if not a small heart) with the proper information. I wonder just how the poll was conducted. The writeup says players were given as a single-dummy problem. The first player returned a heart and was then asked if he thought he would work out the problem had the ♥10 been led. That indicates that the polling was flawed, since it appears he was given the problem with the ♥Q lead. The proper polling is to see what he would have

returned had he received the ♥10 lead. Directors must learn to conduct these polls properly -- not as quizzes to see what players would do with the MI given at the table but to see what players would have done with the correct information.

My judgment is that North would be well over 50% to return a heart with the 10 lead (what he would return with the queen lead doesn't matter). Thus, I would probably make it about 2/3 for 3NT down 2 and 1/3 for 3NT making 4.

Subject of Appeal:	Tricks Scored	Case:	N7
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Event	Rockwell Mixed Pairs	Event DIC	McKenzie Myers
Date	03/14/2017	Session	First Qualifying

Auction

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

Hand Record

Board	16	N	Jill Marshall		
Dealer	W	♠	J63		
		♥	A102		
Vul	E/W	♦	Q1093		
		♣	AQ7		
W	Marti Malcolm			E	Chuck Malcolm
♠	AKQ954			♠	1082
♥	98			♥	QJ6
♦	5			♦	A8642
♣	K983			♣	102
		S	Joe Degaetano		
		♠	7		
		♥	K7543		
		♦	KJ7		
		♣	J654		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♠ by W	Down 2	N/S +200	♠3

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called after the hand was over. There was a disagreement on the number of tricks scored. Both sides had agreed on a result of down two, but E/W said they had agreed to down two having miscounted earlier tricks.

The two sides agreed on the play of the first 11 tricks, but there was a dispute as to the facts regarding what happened on the last two tricks. N/S described the last two tricks as the defense having led a diamond, on which declarer discarded the ♣9. Her last card was the last trump.

E/W say that she ruffed the diamond at trick 12 and led the club at trick 13, expecting it to lose. All the players agreed that declarer did not think the club was a winner, perhaps having forgotten dummy's 10. Declarer had lost a trick earlier to one of South's small clubs. East told the Director that West could not be compelled to make a stupid play; no one would discard at trick 12 to retain a trump for trick 13.

Director Ruling

The Director ruled that the N/S description of what happened sounded more reasonable. By Law 85A, he directed that the score be recorded as 3♠ by West, down two, N/S +200.

Director's Ruling	3♠ by W, Down 2, N/S +200
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The Review

E/W requested a review of the ruling. All four players attended the review. E/W said that the Director made the wrong ruling as he misunderstood the facts. Declarer had never played to trick 12; she claimed by showing both cards. The declaring side asked that the Director be asked specifically whether a claim had been made.

The Reviewer asked the Director whether anyone had ever indicated a claim was made. The Director said that the only evidence was dummy's suggestion that the Director could not compel declarer to take a stupid line of play (discarding the club at trick twelve).

Panel Findings

The Reviewer considered both sides' arguments, and he felt that it was unclear which set of facts accurately described what happened. One possibility was the original ruling, where declarer discarded the club and won trick 13. The other possibility was that there was a claim made during trick twelve after the diamond lead.

Even if West's actions were to be understood as a claim, the Reviewer would then need to apply Law 70A to resolve it. As there was no original claim statement, Law 70D1 prohibits the Director from accepting a line of play not previously mentioned if there is an alternative normal line of play that would be less successful. Normal is defined as including careless. The Reviewer felt that any player who did not know the ♣9 was a winner might carelessly discard it at trick 12.

What actually happened at the table can never be known with certainty. However, the Reviewer was convinced that either path led to down two, and the original ruling was upheld. As E/W felt their version of the facts was never understood or considered by the Director, the review was deemed to have merit.

Panel Decision

3♠ by W, Down 2, N/S +200

Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Koltnow
Consultant	David Metcalf

Commentary

Goldsmith: This is impossible to tell, and in cases of disputed facts, without evidence to the contrary, we are to accept the Director's judgment. Since he knew about the possibility that there had been a claim, I don't see any reason to overturn his ruling, even though he seems to think it's close to 50-50.

Marques: Oh, the fine art of fact gathering... One "trick" that I routinely use is to restate the facts (or each version of it) to the players: "So, as I understand, you are saying that it happened like this..." Using it would have saved the day for the TD. It might happen that the TD got an accurate description of the facts at the table and that the "facts" changed with time. Happens frequently, and the fact that it happens doesn't mean that players do it intentionally. It's the perception of the players about the facts that changes, involuntarily. Confirming with the players what they express to the TD allows him to crystallize the description of the facts on a statement agreed by everyone at the table.

The Reviewer did a good job. It does seem that there was a claim, poorly made but a claim nevertheless, and in that case, the final decision is correct.

Wildavsky: A pox on all their houses. They agreed on down two. If they cannot figure out how the play went then down two it is. It is troubling that one pair felt that the TD was unwilling to hear their account. I'd like to see such things followed up.

Willenken: Good work all around.

Woolsey: I don't see how it is possible to make a judgment without knowing how the first 11 tricks went. It is vital for casebook hands which involve the play that the actual play of the hand is given, card for card.

Subject of Appeal:	Misinformation	Case:	N8
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Event	Rockwell Mixed Pairs	Event DIC	McKenzie Myers
Date	03/14/2017	Session	First Qualifying

Auction

West	North	East	South
			1NT ¹
2♥ ²	Pass	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
Pass	4♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Alerted as ♥ & a minor

Hand Record

Board	11	N	Ala Hamilton-Day		
Dealer	S	♠	Q92		
		♥	3		
		♦	K10975		
Vul	None	♣	J1098		
W	Sherman Gao			E	Weiling Zhao
♠	J103			♠	K8754
♥	K109654			♥	J82
♦	J3			♦	AQ64
♣	Q6			♣	3
		S	Buddhadeb Biswas		
		♠	A6		
		♥	AQ7		
		♦	82		
		♣	AK7542		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♣ by S	Made 4	N/S +130	♥10

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called at the end of play. West explained his bid showed just hearts, not hearts and a minor. South stated that, with the correct information, he would have played the diamond suit differently as he believed West to hold at least four cards in the suit.

Director Ruling

The Director determined that there had been misinformation, as the actual E/W agreement was that 2♥ shows just hearts. After winning the opening lead with the ♥Q, South played a diamond toward dummy. He asserted that he would have played the 10 rather than the king with the right information. This would result in an extra trick, allowing a spade to be discarded on a diamond. The result was adjusted to 4♣ by South, making five, N/S +150.

Director's Ruling	4♣ by S, Made 5, N/S +150
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The Review

E/W requested a review of the ruling. They felt the correct information would not have made the play of the ♦10 more attractive. West believed that, with the correct information, the king would be the more reasonable play to limit the losers in diamonds to only one.

Panel Findings

The Reviewer spoke to two expert players to see how they would have played 4♣ with the right information. One played a spade toward the queen at trick two. When asked whether a diamond to the 10 (or running the eight) was attractive, he stated that was not an option he would consider.

The other expert said he would always play a diamond to the king. He said he would make 11 tricks on a ruffing finesse, playing East for the queen based upon restricted choice as West did not split.

The Reviewer then gave the hand to three peers of South. Two played a diamond toward the king. One took the ruffing finesse, giving the same reasoning as the expert. Another tried to ruff out diamonds playing for 3-3, which would have led to 10 tricks. The third played a diamond to the king, playing for 3-3. She felt if West was likely to be two-suited, running the ♦8 was a better play.

For no player was the play of the ♦10 more attractive with the correct information. Therefore, there was no legal justification to adjust the score, and the table result of 4♣ by South, making four, N/S +130, was restored.

Experts consulted: Mikael Rimstedt, Diyan Danailov

Panel Decision

4♣ by S, Made 4, N/S +130

Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Koltnow
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Commentary

Goldsmith: If declarer plays a diamond to the 10 at Trick 2, the defense just plays three rounds of diamonds, promoting the CQ to a third trick. With the correct explanation of 2♥, however, declarer would draw trump before playing on diamonds. I don't know why he didn't.

I agree that the MI didn't have any impact on the location of the ♦A.

Marques: "Thy shall poll..." This case went into appeal basically because the TD omitted to poll any players. It's OK, and recommended, to have an opinion about each case, but it should be checked against the opinion of players who are not influenced by the knowledge of the hands, by what happened at the table, by the arguments of the players (often very convincing...)

The Reviewer didn't need to talk to a lot of experts to conclude that declarer's arguments were not valid. I agree with the Panel on this one.

Wildavsky: The write-up is incomplete. As one of the expert consultants pointed out, declarer can still make 11 tricks after a diamond to the king. What happened after that? Enquiring minds want to know!

Willenken: Good work by the Panel overturning a very sloppy Director ruling. When South asserted that he would have played a diamond to the ten with the correct information, did not the Director think to ask him why?

Woolsey: South's statement that he would have gotten the diamonds right had he received the information that West has just hearts is totally self-serving. If anything, he is more likely to play a diamond to the king. The Director did not have the bridge ability to see this. Fortunately, the Panel with the help of some experts got this right.

Subject of Appeal:	Break in Tempo, Unauthorized Information	Case:	N9
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Event	Rockwell Mixed Pairs	Event DIC	McKenzie Myers
Date	03/15/2017	Session	Second Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Dbl	2♥	3♠ ¹	4♥ ²
Dbl ³	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: STOP Card used
2: No hesitation
3: Hesitation

Hand Record

Board	25	N	K Fung		
Dealer	N	♠ Q4	♥ J1075		
Vul	E/W	♦ KJ	♣ AQ932		
W	Ida Groenkvist			E	Haig Tchamitch
♠	AK2			♠	J109876
♥	94			♥	Q
♦	A1095			♦	8764
♣	KJ87	S	Erez Hendelman	♣	54
		♠	53		
		♥	AK8632		
		♦	Q32		
		♣	106		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by E	Down 1	N/S +100	♥K

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called after the play of the hand. East had placed the STOP card on the table before his 3♠ bid, and left it there for approximately five seconds. When he removed the card, South bid with minimal hesitation (approximately one second). West then took about 10-15 seconds before her Double. South asked East at the time if he agreed to a break in tempo. East responded that West did "take a little time".

Director Ruling

South is expected to pause when a skip bid is made. This is to protect both sides, who may need extra time to think due to the elevation of the auction. When South bids before taking the requisite 10 seconds, West may still need time to think. At this level of the auction, it is expected for the tempo to be slower. Given the amount of time all players felt was taken by the South and West players, it was determined that no unmistakable hesitation occurred. Therefore, the table result was ruled to stand, 4♠ by East, down one, N/S +100.

Director's Ruling	4♠ by E, Down 1, N/S +100
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The Review

N/S asked for a review of the ruling. They felt that East agreed to a break in tempo at the time, and only later questioned the lack of pause by South.

Panel Findings

The appellants provided no new evidence and no error in procedure was found. Therefore, the ruling by the Director was upheld. The appeal was found to have no merit, and an Appeal Without Merit Warning was assigned.

Panel Decision

4♠ by E, Down 1, N/S +100

Panel Members

Reviewer	Kevin Perkins
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Commentary

Goldsmith: I strongly disagree. The proper procedure for the Stop Card was not followed. East held the Stop Card for 5 seconds, then took it back. South bid after another second. 6 seconds is close enough to be in tempo after a skip bid warning. South surely thought that East was indicating that he was free to act when he did. So, South did nothing wrong.

There was a BIT. Everyone agreed to it. It suggested 4♠ over passing. I think bidding 4♠ was a violation and the right ruling is 4♥x making. I don't think this is particularly close, and the AWMW is silly. It's far closer to a PP to E/W for abuse of UI than to an AWMW, but I think bidding 4♠ is reasonable enough that I wouldn't do that, either.

Marques: N/S asked for a review based on a silly technicality, and on top of that, it was South that was at fault for not respecting the STOP pause! AWMW well deserved, and I would not be shocked if the Panel had handed some other "gift" to N/S.

Wildavsky: I'd say that the problem was caused in large part by the ACBL's unfortunate Stop Card policy. We no longer have Stop Cards - time will tell whether that's an improvement.

This appeal did have merit, since there was a substantial question as to the facts. The write-up says the ruling was upheld because "(t)he appellants provided no new evidence and no error in procedure was found." Appeals can and do cover differing bridge judgements - it seems the Panel applied a policy that does not exist.

Willenken: Very dangerous ruling. In practice, six full seconds is plenty of time to wait for a skip-bid in a routine and not particularly tempo-sensitive situation, and almost nobody waits longer in reality. The idea that South's tempo here would allow West to break tempo for ten to fifteen seconds without consequence is incredibly destructive.

Furthermore, it is important not to focus too much on the exact number of seconds taken by West. In my experience, non-litigious players in an expert game virtually never allege a BIT unless it was obvious to all that the alleged hesitator had a problem. Sometimes it's a ten-second huddle. Other times it's seven seconds and a look of agony, which comes to the same thing. So, if a player attempts to establish a huddle before seeing the hesitator's hand and the hesitator's hand looks like one which could prompt a huddle, the Director should rule BIT absent extenuating circumstances.

Had the Director or Panel correctly judged a BIT in this case, a poll to determine whether pass with the East hand is a LA would have been in order-- I could see the answer going either way.

Woolsey: The Director was far better placed than the Panel to determine whether or not there was a BIT. The Director judged there was not, and that is that. Definitely an AWMW. For what it's worth, I think East has a clear 4♠ bid anyway.

Subject of Appeal:	Break in Tempo, Unauthorized Information	Case:	N10
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Event	Machlin Women's Swiss	Event DIC	Charlie MacCracken
Date	03/19/2017	Session	First Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠ ¹
Pass	4♣ ²	Pass	4♥ ²
Pass	5♦ ²	Pass	5♠ ³
Pass	6♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Four-card support
2: Control bids
3: Break in tempo

Hand Record

Board	22	N	Pamela Nisbet		
Dealer	E	♠	A1042		
		♥	(void)		
Vul	E/W	♦	AK86		
		♣	A9754		
W	Wei Wang			E	
				Shuoyan Liu	
♠	J86			♠	Q3
♥	8642			♥	QJ105
♦	Q103			♦	J94
♣	K62			♣	J1083
		S	Ru Hong Terajewicz		
		♠	K975		
		♥	AK973		
		♦	752		
		♣	Q		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
6♠ by N	Made 6	N/S +980	♦4

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called at the end of play. Screens were in use, with North/East and South/West as screen mates. The Director was told that the tray had been noticeably delayed on the S/W side at the point of the 5♠ bid and the following pass. All players agreed to that fact.

North claimed South's 5♠ bid denied possession of both the ace and king of hearts; South was unable to confirm that agreement and said she didn't know how to proceed further over 5♦. N/S were not an experienced partnership.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The Director polled seven players from the Jacoby Swiss final and the regional A/X swiss. Four players passed 5♠, three of whom said no other action deserved consideration. Two other players bid 6♠ and said it was clear cut. One other bid 6♠ but said it was a close choice and would consider passing. Two of the players who passed were asked after they chose their action if they thought a slow 5♠ would suggest bidding on and they said it did.

Director Ruling

Per Law 16B1, the Director determined from the poll result that the hesitation "demonstrably suggested" not passing 5♠ and that pass was a logical alternative. Thus, per Law 12C, the score was adjusted to 5♠ by North, making six, N/S +480.

Director's Ruling	5♠ by N, Made 6, N/S +480
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The Review

N/S appealed the ruling. All four players attended the review (which was recorded). The Reviewer explained to N/S the steps the Director had taken to arrive at the ruling, and that for the Panel to overturn it some fault would have to be found with the ruling.

All players confirmed to the Reviewer that there was a significant delay before the tray returned after 5♠-Pass. The Reviewer explained the rationale for the ruling and how the law operates in this kind of case.

North disputed that the slow 5♠ bid suggested bidding six. She also explained that her partner's previous actions suggested strength due to the fast arrival methods they play, and that her own bidding was therefore aimed at deciding whether or not to bid a grand slam. She said she always intended to bid at least a small slam. She said that her partner was not as experienced a player as she was and that she had been bidding slowly all week so her tempo did not mean anything to her in this auction. She thought, by the methods she uses, her partner had denied both the ace and king of hearts with her 5♠ bid, so she had to have a card somewhere else, thus making bidding the small slam clearly correct over 5♠. When the Reviewer pointed out that her partner did not share that opinion of what 5♠ showed relative to hearts, she said she assumed during the bidding that she did.

Panel Findings

While it seemed apparent who was hesitating in the auction, the Reviewer decided to further poll the question of whether it demonstrably suggested bidding the slam. Two players were given North's hand and the auction. One bid six, and the other passed. Both believed a slow 5♠ bid suggested bidding slam.

The Panel was satisfied that there was an unmistakable hesitation that suggested not passing, and found that the Director polled appropriately to determine that pass was a logical alternative. Therefore, the table ruling was upheld.

N/S were issued an Appeal Without Merit Warning.

Players consulted by the Reviewer: Cenk Tuncok, Jeff Miller

Panel Decision	5♠ by N, Made 6, N/S +480
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Matt Smith
Member	Matt Koltnow
Member	Jenni Carmichael

Commentary

Goldsmith: North asked for an AWMW three times; it would have been a crime not to give one to her. This wasn't close. Nicely played, by the way.

Marques: Many players have the misconception that on issues of UI they should bid ignoring the UI. In fact, a player cannot choose an action over other(s) less successful if that action is demonstrably suggested by the UI. In this case, even if North was 100% committed in her mind to bid the slam, she should know that bidding 6♠ would be disallowed and also that the review had no chance at all of success. Why? (1) there was a BIT on the other side of the screen, clearly attributable to South, (2) the BIT demonstrably suggests bidding the slam, and (3) pass was a logical alternative.

Impeccable approach and decision by the TD. The Reviewer tried to explain to N/S that they were in trouble with the request for a review... Another well deserved AWMW.

Wildavsky: "North disputed that the slow 5♠ bid suggested bidding six." Flummery. What else could it suggest? A well deserved AWMW.

Willenken: Good job by everyone involved.

Woolsey: This is classic slow signoff sequence. The BIT was determined to have occurred, the UI clearly suggests bidding on, and passing is a LA as shown by the poll. The case was handled properly.

Subject of Appeal:	Card Designation	Case:	R1
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Event	First Sunday AX Swiss Teams	Event DIC	Peter Wilke
Date	03/12/2017	Session	First Session

Auction

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦ ¹	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Hand Record

Board	28	N	Ellen Kent		
Dealer	W	♠	AQxxxx		
		♥	9x		
Vul	N/S	♦	xxx		
		♣	xx		
W	Frank Merblum			E	Jeff Juster
♠	J8			♠	Kx
♥	QJx			♥	Axxxx
♦	KQJ10x			♦	Ax
♣	Qxx			♣	Axxx
		S	Robert Kent		
		♠	109x		
		♥	K10x		
		♦	xxx		
		♣	KJ10x		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Multi 2♦ - Alerted

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 3	E/W +400	♠10

Facts Determined at the Table

The contract was 3NT by East. South led the ♠10 to the jack, queen, and king. Declarer then cashed the ♦A and played a diamond to the board, stating "run the diamonds." However, he called for the king and queen of diamonds individually and in both cases West waited for the card to be called before playing it to the trick.

After the third round of diamonds was played, North failed to turn over her card. North said that declarer told her to turn over her diamond. She thought that he had called for a card from the board, so she played the ♥9. East said that the ♥9 came down before he told North to turn over her card and the ♥9 was on the table face-up on top of the still-upturned diamond. N/S added that dummy had initially said he did not know if a card had been called or not but later changed to say that a card had definitely not been called. Dummy denied this.

Director Ruling

The Director ruled that the declarer had not named a card to be played to the fifth trick. The ♥9 was ruled to have been played and was a major penalty card. Declarer then led a club to the ace and a club towards the queen. When South won the ♣K, declarer required him to lead a heart (Law 49D2a) and made 3NT.

Director's Ruling	3NT by E, Made 3, E/W +400
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The Review

N/S appealed the ruling and were the only players to meet with the Reviewer. North remained adamant that she thought declarer had called a diamond from dummy. South said he could not explicitly remember whether East had called

for a card from dummy, but he suspected declarer had called a card since he is very conscious to warn North (who is visually impaired) that she is about to play incorrectly and did not do so in this case.

N/S also felt that if North's ♥9 had not become a major penalty card, there was no way for declarer to make 3NT.

Panel Findings

The Panel judged that, although declarer had called the diamonds individually, he had initially called for the run of the diamond suit from dummy. The Reviewer confirmed with the Director that all four players had agreed on this. Therefore, although declarer may or may not have called for the fourth diamond from dummy, the Panel ruled that declarer's intent was clear. Declarer had made no attempt to stop the run of the diamond suit, and the 3-3 diamond break could not have been an unpleasant surprise or have required declarer to rethink his plans. If North's ♥9 is discarded on the fourth round of diamonds, declarer can come to only eight tricks (the spade at trick 1, two aces, and five diamond tricks). Therefore, the Panel adjusted the score to 3NT by East down 1, N/S +50.

(There is a possibility that declarer will go down more than one—if he takes the heart finesse after running the diamonds in an attempt to make 3NT, North/South can win and cash five spades for down two. However, given that there was no Victory Point difference between down 1 and down 2, the Reviewer did not revisit the issue with the Panel.)

Panel Decision	3NT by E, Down 1, N/S +50
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Eric Bell
Member	Matt Koltnow
Member	Scott Humphrey

Commentary

Goldsmith: If the Director really saw two face up cards in front of North and no card played from dummy, it seems tough to overrule his call. "Run the diamonds" allows dummy to play a diamond without declarer's calling one, but it doesn't allow a defender to play before dummy. I think the Director got this one right.

I have some sympathy for the Panel's attempt to restore equity, but I don't think declarer caused the problem.

Marques: I understand the reason why the TD ruled the way he did (although I definitely think that it was the wrong ruling, for the reasons laid out by the Panel). If I was East or West at the table, I would be embarrassed for accepting that the H9 was a lead out of turn. Declarer created the problem by his irregular way of calling the cards from dummy and initially got away with it. I agree with the Panel on this one also.

Wildavsky: Good decision by the Panel, correcting an injustice. I find it difficult to imagine what the TD at the table was thinking, or why East thought it would be proper to make his contract in this way. "Run the diamonds" is not a statement permitted by the laws. Since East caused this problem he cannot be allowed to benefit from it.

Willenken: Really fantastic ruling, showing great wisdom at reconciling the Laws with the spirit of the game itself. It is impossible to overstate how much rulings like this one do to keep our game fun and equitable.

Woolsey: I would like to see all the spots, not just the x's. For example, the spades might be potentially blocked. It shouldn't be that difficult for the Directors to get this information.

I think the Panel got it right. When declarer says, "run the diamonds", that is basically the same as calling for the fourth round of diamonds as soon as the third round is completed. East was trying to get something for nothing after creating the problem himself by his "run the diamonds" statement. The Director would have let him get away with this. Fortunately, the Panel was smarter.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: R2
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Event	Wednesday A/X Pairs	Event DIC	Hank Meyer
Date	03/15/2017	Session	First Session

Auction

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♠
Dbl	2NT	Pass	3♣ ¹
3♥	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Explained feature, no Alert

Hand Record

Board	2	N	John Potter	
Dealer	E	♠	K6	
		♥	A107	
		♦	A8	
Vul	N/S	♣	Q107532	
W	Tom Trachuk			E Andy Avery
♠	103			♠ Q94
♥	KQJ43			♥ 9652
♦	KJ5			♦ 10632
♣	AJ6			♣ K4
		S	Hugh Brown, Jr.	
		♠	AJ8752	
		♥	8	
		♦	Q974	
		♣	98	

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♠ by S	Made 4	N/S +620	♥K

Facts Determined at the Table

Before the opening lead, West asked about the auction. He was told that 2NT was artificial and forcing, and that 3♣ showed a feature. South, who had intended his 3♣ bid as an Ogust response (bad hand, bad suit), did not speak up even though he believed Ogust to be the partnership agreement.

South won the ♥A, then led the ♣2 to the 4, 9 and jack. West switched to the ♦K. South crossruffed the red suits, ending in hand with the ♠AJ87 and the ♣8. South exited with his club. East, upon winning the king, was down to ♠Q94 and the ♥9, exited with the heart but was endplayed when South led a small trump, making 4.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The Director polled three pairs, of varying abilities, to see how they would have defended the hand. All of the players with the West hand continued with the ♥Q at trick 3, with either explanation of the opponents' bidding.

Director Ruling

N/S violated Law 40 when South did not correct North's explanation of their agreement. E/W were damaged by this, as West would have not switched to the ♦K if he did not think he had to kill the entry to the club suit in dummy. N/S were assigned down 1, -100, per Law 12C1c. Based upon the poll, the Director decided that West had committed a serious error when he switched to the ♦K, severing his right to redress, per Law 12C1b, so E/W received the table result.

Director's Ruling	N/S: 4♠ by S, Down 1, E/W +100 E/W: 4♠ by S, Made 4, N/S +620
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The Review

Both sides appealed, and South and West attended the Review. South acknowledged that N/S were on different pages regarding rebids after 2NT. They had only one filled out convention card. South maintained that, regardless of the explanation of 3♣, he couldn't hold the ♣K, after trick 2.

West disagreed, positing that South could still hold the ♣K, if he started with K98. West acknowledged that, in this case, his best defense at this point would have been to play a small club, expecting East to ruff and exit with a diamond.

The Reviewer finally read Law 12C1b aloud.

"If, subsequent to the irregularity, the non-offending side has contributed to its own damage by a serious error, (unrelated to the infraction) or by a wild or gambling action, it does not receive relief in the adjustment for such part of the damage as is self-inflicted."

The Reviewer told the players that his fellow Appeals panelists would have a difficult time convincing him that, even if West's switch to the ♦K had been a serious error, it was not in fact directly related to the MI.

Panel Findings

The Panel was unanimous that the Directors had misapplied Law 12C1b, since West's defense was clearly affected by North's explanation of 3♣. The Panel assigned a result of 4♠ by South, down one, E/W +100 for both sides, per Laws 40B6b and 12C1c. Since the Directors had misapplied Law 12, and misunderstood the play, the Panel decided that it was reasonable for both sides to request a review of the ruling.

Panel Decision

4♠ by S, Down 1, E/W +100

Panel Members

Reviewer	Gary Zeiger
Member	Matt Koltnow
Member	David Metcalf

Commentary

Goldsmith: What was the actual agreement? This is never mentioned. Was it ever discovered? If the agreement was feature, there's no MI, so the result stands.

If the agreement was Ogust, there was MI. In that case, I like the Panel's ruling, and I'd award N/S a 1/4 board PP for failing to correct the explanation before the opening lead. When such a failure leads to a score adjustment, a PP is appropriate.

Marques: A very good decision by the Panel, on a good instructional case. Without the wrong explanation, West would never have played like that. Even if West's play is considered to be a "Serious Error," there is a clear connection between it and the misinformation, so 12C1b (at the time of the tournament, 2007 Laws) does not apply.

Wildavsky: I like the Panel's reading of the law.

Willenken: This all seems reasonable, but unless South had a blackout and North's explanation was clearly correct, South badly deserved a PP for his failure to correct partner's explanation.

Woolsey: South definitely should have spoken up after the auction was over. He knew the explanation was incorrect, or at best misleading. South should have received a PP for failure to do so, since he was knowingly committing an infraction. That is what PP's are for. This PP should exist regardless of the adjudication of the hand.

West still has to play bridge. Did he really think that South had the king of clubs and was playing a club to the 9 at trick 2 after West made a takeout double? That is absurd, as indicated by the poll which had nobody shifting to the king of diamonds regardless of the explanation.

I agree with the Director assigning E/W -620. However, I don't like assigning N/S -100. When West defends like that, N/S are entitled to the table result. I would have table result stand, with PP for N/S.

I totally disagree with the Panel. West didn't play bridge when he shifted to the king of diamonds.

Subject of Appeal:	Break in Tempo, Unauthorized Information	Case:	R3
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Event	2 nd Friday Daylight Open Pairs	Event DIC	Bob Hendricks
Date	03/17/2017	Session	Second Session

Auction

West	North	East	South
			1♦
1♥	Pass	1♠ ¹	2♦
Dbl ²	3♦	Pass ³	Pass
3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Forcing one round
2: Intended support double
3: Break in tempo

Hand Record

Board	3	N	4500 MP		
Dealer	S	♠ QJ	♥ J654		
Vul	E/W	♦ Q643	♣ 982		
W	5700 MP			E	5500 MP
♠ K73	♥ AKQ109			♠ A10985	♥ 32
♦ 87	♣ 653			♦ K9	♣ QJ104
		S	1400 MP		
		♠ 642	♥ 87		
		♦ AJ1052	♣ AK7		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3♠ by E	Made 4	E/W +170	♣A

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was called after the 3♠ bid by West. It was agreed that East had first alerted West's Double then when asked for explanation had taken back the alert. East had taken about 8-10 seconds before passing. East said he had to do a "reset" after realizing the Double was not an alert, before making a bid.

Director Ruling

The Director ruled the break in tempo was not significant due to the circumstances of West's Double being first alerted, then not alerted by East. The table result was ruled to stand.

Director's Ruling	3♠ by E, Made 4, E/W +170
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The Review

N/S appealed the ruling. N/S felt East's hesitation and its implications had not been given proper consideration in the Director's ruling.

West said he made the Double thinking it was a support double but realized immediately after he bid that was not their partnership agreement.

Panel Findings

This hand occurred in the next to last round of a two-session event, thus limiting the Director's ability to gather additional facts or conduct any polls.

Four polls were taken by the Reviewer. All the players polled had between 4200-6600 MPs
 Six peers were polled with the West's hand given the auction: 1♦-1♥-Pass-1♠-2♦-Double-3♦-Pass-Pass-, with the Double explained as showing a good overcall. Four passed, one Doubled, and one bid 3♠.
 Four of those polled players were asked the following questions in the order below.

Poll #2: What would Double show in this situation? Two said cards, one said good hand, one said takeout.

Poll #3: In the above auction, if partner alerted, then after being asked unalerted, then takes eight seconds to pass, Is this a hesitation? All four said yes.

Poll #4: What does the hesitation show? The answers were "Partner is unsure", "Partner has doubt", "Partner doesn't know what to do", "extras".

The Panel determined there was a break in tempo which provided unauthorized information to partner (Law 73C); pass was a logical alternative (Law 16B1a); and that the unauthorized information demonstrably suggested not passing due to the results of Poll #4. Per Law 12C1c, the result was changed to 3♦ by South, down one, E/W +50.

Panel Decision	3♦ by S, Down 1, E/W +50
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Jeff Jacob
Member	Eric Bell
Member	Jenni Carmichael

Commentary

Goldsmith: An easy one. The Panel was right. 1/4 board PP to West for blatant abuse of UI. The easiest way to look at it is to imagine that Double was support. It was alerted and explained correctly. East passed quickly. What's the chance that West would bid 3♠? Zero. He wouldn't want to play a 4-3 fit at the three-level.

Marques: East went for the alert, then when asked took it back. The alleged 8-10 seconds, was that including all this or just after the alert was taken back? It's not completely clear, but from the Panel's decision it seems that it's the time taken after the "non alert." East's reason why he took that time is reasonable, but from West's point of view, that is irrelevant. The TD seems to have decided that there *was* a BIT because he concluded that the BIT was not relevant. His conclusion is wrong because it's based on the reason for it, instead of on the effects on partner's actions. There was a BIT, then. Reasons for it are irrelevant because West won't know them. West bid 3♠. Are there less successful logical alternatives? Yes (namely, "pass"). Is bidding on suggested by the hesitation? Clearly. Good decision by the Panel.

Wildavsky: Thorough work by the Panel leading to a conclusion I agree with.

Willenken: Easy Panel ruling, but how can we have a Director who cannot understand that the retracted alert is relevant UI?

Woolsey: It seems clear that if there was a BIT then the Panel ruling is fine. The question is was there a BIT? I'm not sure I understand the Director's ruling. It says: The BIT was not significant. I don't get this. If there was a BIT, it is significant. If not, then there is nothing. I don't think the Panel should override the Director's determination that there wasn't a BIT. However, from the writeup it isn't clear to me what the Director determined.

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: R4
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Event	2 nd Sunday A/X/Y Swiss Teams	Event DIC	Jay Bates
Date	03/19/2017	Session	Second Session

Auction

West	North	East	South
		1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♦ ¹	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Game Force, artificial

Hand Record

Board	10	N	11,800 MP		
Dealer	E	♠	J109x		
		♥	10xx		
		♦	K		
Vul	Both	♣	J10732		
W	2200 MP			E 5800 MP	
♠	Axx			♠	KQxx
♥	Qxx			♥	KJxx
♦	AJ10xxx			♦	8x
♣	Q			♣	Kxx
		S	300 MP		
		♠	85		
		♥	Axx		
		♦	Q9xx		
		♣	A9xx		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 3	E/W +600	♠5

Facts Determined at the Table

Before the opening lead, South asked about East's likely shape. West said that East should be either 4-4-4-1 or have a hand with four hearts and five clubs. E/W were a first time partnership and had had not discussed this auction. East did not speak up to clarify there was no such understanding.

South's lead of the ♠5 was non-systemic. The play went:

- Trick 1: ♠5 – ♠small – ♠9 - ♠K
- Trick 2: ♦8 – ♦small – ♦J - ♦K
- Trick 3: ♣3 – ♣small - ♣A - ♣Q

South now led the ♦9, after which East made nine tricks. The Director was called after the hand. N/S asked for redress due to East's failure to speak up about West's description of her hand pattern.

Director Ruling

The Director determined that East had violated Law 20F5b when she did not correct West's statements about partnership agreements which did not actually exist. Per Law 12C1c, the Director decided that without the misinformation about the E/W agreements, South would have continued with a club at trick four 75% of the time (leading to down two), and shifted to a diamond 25% of the time (allowing East to make). Since the result at the other table was N/S +100, the Director's ruling resulted in N/S -.5 IMPs.

Director's Ruling	75% - 3NT by E, Down 2, N/S +200 25% - 3NT by E, Made 3, E/W +600
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The Review

E/W appealed, and North, East and West attended the Review. South was unable to attend due to his flight reservation. E/W confirmed their status as a first time partnership. East admitted that West's statements about her hand pattern were not based on any agreement or partnership experience. She said she didn't know she was supposed to say anything.

North stated that South's opening lead was "creative", not part of any defensive agreements. North said that she led a small club to trick 3, requesting that South continue the suit. She said that her partner would not have gone wrong at trick 4 without the misleading explanation of East's club length.

E/W said that South's shift to the ♦9 showed he was unaffected by the MI.

Panel Findings

Three players were given the defensive problem with the same misinformation South received. Two of them were peers of South, and they each returned a club. Another player with a higher masterpoint holding returned a spade. None considered shifting to a diamond regardless of the information they had about E/W's bidding agreements. The Panel noted that East could easily be 4-4-4-1, and a club continuation would still be correct if North held J10xx. The Panel decided that, for this South, the misinformation about East's pattern did not cause his damage. Law 40B4 says that a side that is damaged as a consequence of its opponents' failure to provide disclosure of the meaning of a call as these Laws require is entitled to an adjusted score. The Panel concluded that the damage was not a consequence of the misinformation, and restored the table result of 3NT by East, making 3, E/W +600.

The Panel would have preferred to base its decision on more polling data, but because this ruling came on the last hand of the last session more players to poll were not available.

Panel Decision	3NT by E, Made 3, E/W +600
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Panel Members

Reviewer	Gary Zeiger
Member	Matt Koltnow
Member	Jenni Carmichael

Commentary

Goldsmith: There was MI. It made the winning defense substantially harder to find. I think, therefore, that the NOS was damaged. But a diamond can never be right; it's a serious error. I'd rule E/W -200, N/S -600. Had South continued spades, I'd rule reciprocal 200s.

Marques: Clearly, a rushed decision by the TD (last hand, last session, last day...) so not much time for thinking it out. I give the TD a mulligan on it. South's play doesn't make sense, and the Panel did well to diagnose that the damage was self-inflicted. East should have spoken before the opening lead. Maybe a PP should be assigned, depending on the criterion used.

Wildavsky: I prefer the TD's ruling to the Panel's. We don't need a poll to see that the more clubs East has shown the less attractive a club continuation is. E/W should not be allowed to profit from their double violation of the law: West explaining an agreement the pair did not have and East failing to offer an explanation when becoming declarer. Whether the N/S score ought to be adjusted is a separate matter and depends on how serious an error the diamond switch was. Anything except a club would have led to the same result. I don't find the play so egregiously poor as to deny N/S redress per Law 12c1e, and in any case the error was clearly related to the infraction, so I would adjust the score for both sides as the TD did.

Willenken: I feel sorry for poor, inexperienced South here.

Woolsey: Of course, East must speak up. Once again, I would give East a PP. Once players start getting PP's for failure to correct their partner's bad explanation before the opening lead is made, this sort of problem will stop happening.

South's defense looks absurd whatever East's shape is. The Director didn't know how to play bridge. Restoring the table result is correct.