

APPEAL	NON NABC+ SIX
Subject	Unauthorized Information
DIC	Albright
Event	Daylight Open Pairs
Session	Second Session
Date	July 24, 2010

BD#	21
VUL	NS
DLR	N

3402 Masterpoints	
♠	KQ7
♥	A3
♦	J653
♣	AQ82

8376 Masterpoints		Summer 2010 New Orleans, LA	11974 Masterpoints	
♠	JT5		♠	A864
♥	7642		♥	T
♦	T9		♦	AKQ82
♣	KJ93		♣	T64

2043 Masterpoints	
♠	932
♥	KQJ985
♦	74
♣	75

West	North	East	South
	1N ¹	2♣ ²	2♥ ³
P	2♠	P	3♥ ⁴
P	P	P	

Final Contract	3♥ by South
Opening Lead	♦T
Table Result	Down 1, EW +100
Director Ruling	4♥ S down 2, EW +200
Panel Ruling	4♥ doubled S down 2, EW +500

(1)	15-17 HCP
(2)	Alerted as transfer to Diamonds
(3)	Break in tempo and announced as transfer
(4)	Break in tempo before 3H bid

The Facts: North-South admitted that in their system if there had been no intervening bidding, 2♥ followed by 3♥ would be a forcing hand with 5-5 in the majors.

The Ruling: The Director ruled that there was unauthorized information and that North would bid over 3H without the unauthorized information. The Director also determined that South would bid 4♥ over partner's rebid because partner might not be able to make use of the heart suit in any other contract. The score was adjusted to 4♥ by South, down two for +200 East-West.

The Appeal: East-West appealed the Director's ruling and North and East attended the Panel hearing. East argued that it was obvious from South's table actions

that she did not have the values to bid game. East asserted that had North-South's misunderstanding forced them to 4♥, she would have doubled knowing that partner had some values. East also pointed out that North-South have been playing together intermittently for fifteen years.

The Decision: The Panel consulted six top players to determine whether East would have a legitimate double over 4♥ in this auction. Two doubled the final contract, three passed and one passed but said double was a real possibility. The Panel reasoned that East was denied the opportunity to double the projected final contract by North's precipitous pass, so there was more than enough agreement with her stated intent to change the final contract to 4♥ doubled down two for +500 East-West pursuant to Laws 16B.1(a), 73C, and 12C.1(e).

The Panel: Charles MacCracken (Chairman), Harry Falk, and Ken Van Cleve.

Commentary:

Bramley: Suppose 4♥ had been cold (and very small rearrangements make it so). Would East have then asked for the contract to be changed to [fill-in-the blank] spades, doubled, going down? Because shouldn't North be forced to prefer spades forever, no matter how many times South bids hearts? Nah.

But I digress. Even though East won the case, this strikes me as abuse of the appeals process. East had already received a highly favorable ruling, and then wanted to get a complete top. Perhaps this was the "correct" decision. (I do have a hard time finding fault with the Panel's logic.) If so, then something is wrong with the system that allows it.

A (slightly) fairer decision would have been split scores: +200 to E/W (most likely) and -500 to N/S (at all probable). You're not entitled to free candy every time you ask for it.

Goldsmith: 3♥ was 100% forcing. North passed because he blatantly took advantage of UI. First order of business is a 1/2 board PP and a good yell at North. I think the lowest number of hearts N/S can play is 5. If North behaves, South has lots of options; probably the most successful is to pass whatever North bids, so we have to determine likely and at all probable outcomes. I think it is likely that N/S will play 5♥x for -800, so that is the appropriate score for each side. It is at all probable that N/S can do better, but that does not help them. I do not want to know how South managed to go down in 3♥.

Rigal: I am not sure the Panel addressed the right issue. Assume screens so no UI; wouldn't you as a savvy world champion who's been around the block more than once KNOW what this auction means...it's like a natural 2NT bid where partner converts to 3C. I think North is allowed to take a chance in the concept of the double and pass 3H. The argument for the double looks absurd to me, by the way, but the Panel bought it.

Wildavsky: All fair enough. I wonder why the contract was not adjusted to 4Sx or 5Hx though. I'm also surprised E/W appealed. They had a perfect right to, but the change from +200 to +500 cannot have gained them much.

Wolff: CD again and should not be tolerated. Perhaps East thought she was acting according to the laws and sadly maybe even she was, but how can we accept such aberrant behavior? For everyone to bury their heads in the sand and allow such an act and the awful result obtained is the same as catering to total unethality and as far as I am concerned when East didn't speak up after the bidding was over and WHETHER OR NOT NORTH ASKED is nothing short of overt cheating. Sad, but not surprising, that EW should accept such a ruling, but even worse yet that the committee and the whole high-level bridge community would not insist that East had a duty to inform North and if by not so doing to benefit from the result and not to be disciplined for what he (she) did. Perhaps by not doing so, we all deserve everyone to act suspiciously and unethical and none of us to care one whit what happens. If this committee is an example, I shudder to think of what we want the future of bridge to be. SHAME ON ALL who contributed.

Furthermore if we go to the genesis of this possible law, Edgar Kaplan may have had in mind, to now penalize the bid of 2 hearts as showing spades would be the same as not allowing psychics. To that I say: East had no intention of psyching, but rather thought her two heart bid is a limit raise or better in clubs. Again, very sadly, our administrators are catering to that very novice like interpretation of her bid, although why on earth would West think that East, his partner, might be intending it to show 5 spades. However what should sophisticated opponents think about what they heard in the bidding and its explanation? Do we need to psychoanalyze our opponents and if so how can we do it? Until we cast the strict letter of the law interpretation of some bridge activity and try and restore honor and equity to our game we will continue to make bridge seem, during these times, to be a laughing stock.

STRONG LETTER TO FOLLOW!