

APPEAL	Non-NABC+ Eleven
Subject	Claim
DIC	Jeff Alexander
Event	Thur/Fri Morning KO – Bracket Two
Session	Second
Date	November 30, 2007

BD#	<b>9</b>
VUL	<b>E/W</b>
DLR	<b>North</b>

<b>4,188 Masterpoints</b>	
♠	A Q 7 5
♥	5
♦	5
♣	A K Q 8 7 6 4

<b>1,782 Masterpoints</b>		<b>Fall 2007 San Francisco, California</b>	<b>1,701 Masterpoints</b>	
♠	K 8 4		♠	J 9 3
♥	K J 9 8 7		♥	T 3
♦	A J 9 6 4		♦	K Q 7 2
♣	Void		♣	9 5 3 2

<b>2,790 Masterpoints</b>	
♠	T 6 2
♥	A Q 6 4 2
♦	T 8 3
♣	J T

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	5♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Final Contract	<b>5♣ by North</b>
Opening Lead	<b>♥T</b>
Table Result	<b>5♣, making 5, N/S +400</b>
Director Ruling	<b>5♣, making 5, N/S +400</b>
Committee Ruling	<b>5♣, making 5, N/S +400</b>

**The Facts:** Defenders had won two tricks with eight cards remaining and North claimed stating “pulling trumps” when West had the lead. The play was as follows:

1. ♥T ♥A ♥8 ♥5
2. ♠2 ♠4 ♠Q ♠3
3. ♠A ♠9 ♠6 ♠8
4. ♠5 ♠J ♠T ♠K
5. ♦A ♦5 ♦2 ♦3

**The Ruling:** Valid claim poorly worded, since declarer can return to hand with a diamond ruff to pick up all four trumps when West shows out.

**The Appeal:** With the 4-0 trump split, if Declarer were to try to return to hand by ruffing a Heart after a Heart return at the time which the claim was made, the ♣9 would be promoted to a winner for the defense.

**The Decision:** The play was as follows: Heart was led and won in dummy by the ♥A. Spade led to the queen followed by the ♠A. Third spade led won by West's ♠K followed by West's ♦A. At this point the claim was made with declarer playing the ♠K to ruff a red suit return. Declarer now stated that she was drawing trumps.

With the 4-0 trump split, a club to the ♣J and ♣T would leave declarer in dummy needing to return to his hand to draw the last two trumps. Declarer can get back to his hand by either ruffing a diamond or a heart. With the care that declarer had already shown by preparing to ruff a fourth spade if necessary, the fact that missing the entire diamond suit and no opposition bidding, it would be irrational to return to hand with a heart rather than a diamond given that declarer holds a total of six hearts and only 4 diamonds.

Director's ruling of 5♣ by North making five, N/S plus 400 was upheld.

The appeal was found to have merit.

**The Panel:** Harry Falk (Reviewer), Terry Lavender and Roger Putnam.

**Commentary:**

**Polisner** It would be "rational" for a player with 4,188 master points to not make the contract. Good decision.

**Polisner** No merit to my mind. Declarer's careful play thus far clearly demonstrates they were not going to go down (even had they ruffed the second heart high -- declarer does have AKQJ10 of trumps to cope with 9xxx!

**Smith** Good decision, and a distasteful appeal. This was not a "doubtful point", and it would have required worse than "careless or inferior" play by this declarer to avoid making 5♣ after the unanticipated 4-0 club split was revealed. I think E/W should have received an AWMW.

**Wildavsky** Good work all 'round.

**Wolff** An important ruling on a fairly common situation. It would be no less than irrational for North to return to his hand by ruffing a heart instead of the diamond. I would award one of those AWMWs to E/W for greed alone. It would be hard to imagine E/W thinking that North would bamboozle this simple situation and to try and get a windfall from the panel deserves some punishment.