

APPEAL	Non NABC+ FOUR
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Doug Grove
Event	Red Ribbon Pairs
Session	First Qualifying
Date	March 14, 2007

BD#	7
VUL	Both
DLR	South

780 Masterpoints	
♠	8 2
♥	Q 2
♦	K T 6
♣	A K Q T 5 3

1,928 Masterpoints		Spring 2007 St. Louis, Missouri	1,695 Masterpoints	
♠	Q		♠	K 7 6 4 3
♥	K J T 9 7 5 4 3		♥	A 6
♦	Q 9 5		♦	8 7 2
♣	2		♣	J 9 7

699 Masterpoints	
♠	A J T 9 5
♥	8
♦	A J 4 3
♣	8 6 4

West	North	East	South
			Pass
4♥	Pass ¹	Pass	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Final Contract	4♥ doubled by West
Opening Lead	♣A
Table Result	4♥ dbld down 1, N/S +200
Director Ruling	4♥ down 1, N/S +100
Panel Ruling	4♥ down 1, N/S +100

(1) Alleged hesitation, no stop card used, 25 seconds according to W, 10-15 by N.

The Facts: West alleged that there was a 15 second break in tempo (BIT) after the required 10 seconds before North passed 4♥. North said he hesitated 10 seconds but certainly no more than 15 seconds. No stop card was used. South and East each agreed with the respective partner's assessment of the BIT.

The Ruling: The director judged that an unmistakable BIT occurred. A pass by South over 4♥ was judged to be a logical alternative (LA) and the double was demonstrably suggested by the BIT. In accordance with laws 16, 73 F1 and 12 C2 the result was adjusted to 4♥ undoubled down one, N/S plus 100.

The Appeal: The four players involved remembered the pause as follows:
South = 10 seconds, North = 13 seconds, East = 16 seconds and West = 22 seconds.
North said he knew he was supposed to wait even though the stop card was not used.
South said she had played quite a lot and knew she could not bid if her partner took too much time for his call.
West said he knew he would have to call the director if South did not pass because North took so long to make his pass.

The Decision: The panel ruled that an unmistakable hesitation had occurred. Two players with about 700 masterpoints who passed as dealer also passed after 4♥ by West. So, pass was deemed to be a LA. The double was removed.
No appeal without merit was given because there was a serious question about the facts.

The Panel: Charles MacCracken (Reviewer), Patty Holmes and Candy Kushner.

Commentary:

- Polisner** The failure of West to have used the stop card is of no importance. North is required to hesitate approximately 10 seconds. From the description of the facts, I find it unclear as to how the director judged an “unmistakable” BIT which is the first step in a UI analysis. Many players don’t realize how long it takes for a 10-second hesitation. It feels longer. I am sympathetic with N/S’s appeal.
- Rigal** Assuming North and South are at the same level, maybe Ron Gerard will use the doctrine of ‘res ipsa loquitur,’ any North who passes a double of 4♥ (If you jump to 6♣, would you play diamonds ‘correctly’ and make it?) does not get his partner to reopen with a takeout/penalty double. Again – yes this is sounding like a broken record – we are approaching procedural penalty territory when N/S take gross advantage of UI and then appeal the decision to the panel.
- Smith** The director and panel seem to have followed good procedure to come up with a good decision. I wonder where the other loser went.
- Wildavsky** The TD and panel decisions look right to me. For a complete discussion of a similar situation see - http://www.bridgeworld.com/default.asp?d=article_sampler&f=samed.html.
- Wolff** A simple hand, but a good decision. No real precedent involved, only a confirmation of a UI study which should have prevented the balance.