

APPEAL NON-NABC+ ONE

Subject: Misinformation (MI) and Unauthorized Information (UI)

DIC: Harry Falk

Event: Educational Foundation Pairs

Session: Thursday Evening, March 30, 2006

(6040 MPs)
Board # 27 ♠ J 9 4
Vul: None ♥ 8 7 5 3
Dir: S ♦ 5 3 2
 ♣ 7 5 3

(3192 MPs)	(3726 MPs)
♠ T	♠ K 8 6 3 2
♥ J T 9 6 2	♥ K Q
♦ A Q T 8 7	♦ J 9 4
♣ T 2	♣ K J 8

(11171 MPs)
♠ A Q 7 5
♥ A 4
♦ K 6
♣ A Q 9 6 4

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

(1) Strong Club.

(2) Not Alerted.

The Facts: Upon arriving at the table and finding that the opponent played a strong club, E/W agreed to play 'Suction.' South asked about the meaning of the 2♠ bid at his second turn to call. East responded that it was spades. South inquired again as to whether the 2♠ call was 'Suction.' East said it was natural. After the opening lead of the ♥J, the contact failed by five tricks (down five, N/S -250).

The Ruling: While there was misinformation, there is insufficient connection between the infraction and the damage to adjust the score. South could have been aware that there was a potential misunderstanding and chose not to clarify the situation. This severed the link between the infraction and the damage. The table result was allowed to stand. See law 40 C and the ACBL Alert Pamphlet.

The Appeal: While they were aware that there was an appeal, E/W chose not to appear. Both North and South attended. South believed that East should not have been as assertive about the meaning of the 2♠ call. After the play, East acknowledged that he wasn't 100% positive that his partner's call was natural. South said that he would not have bid 3NT with that information. South said his hand was worth a 2NT opening bid in 'Standard' because of the 5-card club suit. Because it was a hard hand to reopen, he played his partner for 4 HCP. South said his partner's first Pass could have been made with a hand of 8 HCP because of the level of the interference. He was expecting a spade lead and his hand was too good to Pass.

The Decision: The panel found that there was misinformation (law 21 B 3). East wasn't aware that West played that both the one and two level were 'Suction' depending upon shape. The panel believed that East could and should have stated that a two-level call was undiscussed. In a poll taken of three expert players who had the same misinformation that South had, all three chose to Pass. Since even with the best scenario (that E/W held spades), no expert bid. The panel deemed that there was no connection between the MI and the 3NT bid. The panel decided that 40 C did not apply.

Another poll was taken about the opening lead from West. The experts polled were given the information that the 2♠ call was Alerted and explained as clubs or the red suits. Since two of the three experts consulted led a spade, the panel was convinced that without the UI, West may have led a spade. The panel considered a spade lead a logical alternative and that a non-spade lead was demonstrably suggested by the UI (i.e. the non-Alert and explanation).

The panel adjusted the result to 3NT down two, N/S minus 100.

The Panel: Patty Holmes (Reviewer), Su Doe, Gary Zeiger

Players consulted: On Bidding: Bruce Ferguson, Fred Hamilton, Haig Tchamitch
On Lead: Jim Kirkham, Drew Casen, Tarek Sadek

Commentary:

Polisner Not an easy case, but reasonably decided by the Director and improved upon by the Panel.

Rigal The panel reasonably decided that South's decision to bid 3NT earned him his bad result. The point about the lead is an obscure one, though possibly valid; nothing would stop me from leading a heart, I admit!

Wildavsky I do not understand what more the tournament director (TD) expected the South player to do. South asked about the call, got a suspicious answer, and asked again. There's only so much that's possible before clarification becomes badgering. That said, I agree with the panel that there was no causal connection between the MI and the damage.
The Panel improved upon the TD's ruling by considering the UI aspect of the case – the TD should not have missed it. In fact I'd have issued a procedural penalty for that ♠T lead, which surely constituted blatant use of UI.

Wolff Non bridge caused by convention disruption infested "lesser players". Keeping in mind that since it is as close to impossible as anything in bridge to determine a fair judgment this committee did a credible job, but, so what?