

APPEAL	NABC+ ONE
Subject	Unauthorized Information
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Life Master Pairs
Session	Second Semi-Final
Date	7/24/10

BD#	<b>15</b>
VUL	<b>NS</b>
DLR	<b>S</b>

<b>Shome Mukherjee</b>	
♠	A986
♥	AQJ87
♦	53
♣	82

<b>Paul Bethe</b>		<b>Summer 2010 New Orleans</b>	<b>David Moss</b>	
♠	QJT2		♠	7
♥	53		♥	KT94
♦	82		♦	QT97
♣	KJ654		♣	Q973

<b>Mark Aquino</b>	
♠	K543
♥	62
♦	AKJ64
♣	AT

West	North	East	South
			1NT
2♣ <sup>1</sup>	Dbl <sup>2</sup>	3♣	3♠
P	4♠	P <sup>3</sup>	P
Dbl	P	P	P

Final Contract	<b>4♠ Dbl by South</b>
Opening Lead	<b>♣ 4</b>
Table Result	<b>Down 1, EW +200</b>
Director Ruling	<b>4♠ down 1, EW +100</b>
Committee Ruling	<b>4♠ doubled down 1, EW +200</b>

(1)	Alerted as Clubs and a major suit
(2)	Alerted as Stayman
(3)	Alleged BIT

**The Facts:** The final table result was 4♠ doubled, down 1 for a score of -200 North-South after the club opening lead. The director was called after the bidding had commenced on the next board. North-South claimed that East broke tempo for about ten seconds before his pass of 4♠. West insisted that there was no “hitch”. East said that he paused “a normal amount of time for this auction”. 2♣ was properly alerted to show clubs and a major. North’s double of 2♣ was Stayman.

**The Ruling:** The director ruled that there was a noticeable BIT by East providing UI to West. Pass was considered to be a logical alternative for the West hand. Thus, the score was adjusted to 4♠ undoubled down 1, +100 to East-West pursuant to Laws 12C and 16B.

**The Appeal:** East-West appealed and East/West attended the hearing. East-West claimed that East had his hand closed at the time of the 4♠ bid. He opened his hand and thought briefly about the “fit” implications (about 4 seconds), and then passed. During the auction on the subsequent board, North started asking West questions such as “How many diamonds did you have?” “How many points?” and “How could you double?” North claimed that East “hitched” after 4♠. East-West stated that no time period had been mentioned and that the director had just written ten seconds on the appeal form. Additionally, no one had mentioned any problem with the tempo of the auction at the time of the bidding. North then called the director. West stated that they had a 46% score in the afternoon, needed matchpoints, and this looked like a good speculative opportunity since he had two trump tricks and needed very little from partner to be successful.

**The Decision:** The Committee decided by applying Laws 16 and 12 that the alleged “hitch” after 4♠ did not qualify as a BIT. The East hand is allowed 3-5 seconds in this competitive auction at these colors, and there was nothing really to think about with the given hand. East had already shown 4+ clubs and some values with his 3♣ bid. West’s double appeared to be a reasonable shot at procuring extra matchpoints. The Committee reasoned that any potential BIT by East would demonstrably suggest sacrificing in 5♣, not doubling 4♠ since West’s club values would probably be useless on defense. The result was changed to 4♠ doubled, down 1 for +200 East-West.

**The Committee:** Mark Bartusek (Chairman), Bob White, Patty Tucker, Josh Parker, and Ed Lazarus.

### **Commentary:**

**Bramley:** The director did a half-hearted job by failing to apply “demonstrable suggestion”, although he followed standard procedure in ruling against the alleged offenders in what seemed to be a close case.

**Goldsmith:** It is completely obvious to West that East is thinking about saving. Knowing that East thinks 4♠ will make hardly suggests doubling over any other action, so the AC got it right.

The argument that there was no BIT seems wrong. 99% of the time, East will have nothing to think about. If he had any reason to save here, he probably would have bid more than 3♣ the previous time, so even a short hesitation is meaningful therefore it seems likely that a BIT did, in fact, occur.

**Kooijman:** Why needs the committee all these arguments? If the 3 to 5 seconds pause can not be considered a hesitation the case is closed. It is less easy for me, I consider 5 seconds in this situation as long, and do think that considering 5♣ at this moment might take some time. So I need the conclusion that east’s hesitation does not suggest the double, with which we arrive at the same decision.

How does the ACBL deal with Law 16B3, which tells us that the TD should be called at the end of the play of the board? Noticing a hesitation and reporting it with the conclusion that UI was available and might have been used should not wait until the next board is being played. Calling so late is not an infraction but it weakens the position considerably. Saying it with other words: A player needs a good reason not to call at the end of play at latest.

**Rigal:** I agree with the appeals committee here. No tempo break, and if there were it would not suggest doubling it would suggest clubs – hence making a double less attractive.

**Wildavsky:** The well-reasoned AC decision was an improvement over the TD's ruling.

**Wolff:** NS didn't call the director until the next board had begun. The contract turned on the location of the heart king. If the ace had been held over the king the contract would have made and the table would not have called the TD.

However, West's partner did break tempo and then West did double, which without speculating, may or may not have contributed to the decision to double. Hence for match point purposes, +100 only for EW and -200 to NS.

I think it is important to protect the field (PTF) in a matchpoint event. Never forget that when a TD is called and then later an appeal of his decision is made there is a possible violation committed lending to justifying a less than average board ruled.