

APPEAL	NABC+ SEVEN
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI)
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Rockwell Mixed Pairs
Session	First Final
Date	March 14, 2007

BD#	20
VUL	Both
DLR	West

Ron Smith	
♠	A 8 5
♥	K 9 8
♦	6 5 2
♣	T 9 8 7

Petra Hamman		Spring 2007 St. Louis, Missouri	Hemant Lall	
♠	6 3		♠	J T 9 7 4 2
♥	T 7 3		♥	A J 6 2
♦	A K Q J T 9 8 4		♦	7 3
♣			♣	5

Linda Smith	
♠	K Q
♥	Q 5 4
♦	Void
♣	A K Q J 6 4 3 2

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♠	Dbl
4♦ ¹	Pass	4♠	5♣
Pass	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♦	Dbl	6♠	Dbl
7♦	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Final Contract	7♦ Doubled
Opening Lead	♦6
Table Result	7♦ W dbld, down 2, E/W -500
Director Ruling	6♠ E dbld, down 3, E/W -800
Committee Ruling	6♠ E dbld, down 3, E/W -800

(1) East explained 4♦ bid as showing long diamonds and spade support

The Facts: The director was called at the end of the hand (North made his objections known after seeing dummy, but time for the round had expired). East explained the 4♦ bid as showing long diamonds plus spade support. It was not clear when the explanation was given, but all agreed it was before the 7♦ bid. After declarer won the first trump, she led a spade. North went up with the ace and led another trump. Now the defense can only win two tricks.

The Ruling: There was UI per laws 16.A. and 73 F.1. Knowing that partner thought she had spades demonstrably suggests that West bid 7♦. Pass is a logical alternative. The result was adjusted to 6♠ doubled down three, N/S plus 800.

The Appeal: West stated that she didn't want to chance a spade stack when she had eight solid diamonds. Partner had not jump shifted in spades which would show a strong hand, and had not made a forward going bid over her 4♦ call. She also stated that if 5♥ showed the ♥A, then he couldn't have good spades. East stated that he didn't know if anyone would actually pass six spades, but maybe pass was a logical alternative.

North stated that the table had a time problem and there were directors at the table when 7♦ was bid, and the director said "we may have a problem".

The Decision: The committee asked themselves if pass was a logical alternative to bidding 7♦. They felt that a substantial minority of players would choose pass. They then discussed the play in 6♠ doubled. Although the ♠K lead followed by the ♠Q, then ♣A, then a heart shift garners N/S +1100, the most likely defenses lead to N/S +800.

The committee then analyzed the defense to 7♦ doubled to determine if the defense was egregious and decided that the defense of leading a trump, then playing the ♠A by North was not unreasonable. North knew that South had no trumps and assumed that West had club losers.

Thus, the committee upheld the director's ruling of 6♠ doubled down three, N/S plus 800.

The committee believed that players of the caliber of the appellants should have known that there was no merit in bringing this appeal. Therefore, an appeal without merit warning (AWMW) was issued.

The Committee: Gail Greenberg (Chair), Abbie Heitner, John Lusky, Chris Moll, Aaron Silverstein

Commentary:

Goldsmith Passing 6Sx was a logical alternative. It's unlikely that diamonds will gain two tricks assuming no UI, so passing is enforced. The appeals committee (AC) got this right, good. But L12C2 wasn't applied. Yes, -800 is the most likely result. But was -1100 at all probable? I think the answer to that is, "yes." South knows that West doesn't really have spades when she bid 6♦. So a trump lead is reasonable. When it holds, playing a second one and then playing clubs is obvious. If North high-lows in trumps and gives count in clubs, it is right to shift to hearts, and some Souths would get that right. So E/W get -1100. Is -1100 likely? I don't think it is; it requires very good play by both defenders, and in reality, won't happen a third of the time, so N/S get +800. If the AC had judged that the defense to get 1100 wasn't at all probable, I could buy that, but the write-up didn't say that. Was the defense against 7♦ egregious? It was clearly wrong; at trick one, South surely played the ♣A. At trick two, South surely played the ♠K. North now knows that declarer is 2-8 in the pointed suits and either 3-0 or 2-1 in the rounded. Playing a second trump can't be right. But playing a club could be right if the ♥Q is with declarer. It probably isn't; partner doubled rather than bid clubs, but that wouldn't be an awful defense and would lead to the same 500, so getting 800 is hard enough that failing to do so, even by a line that wasn't best, isn't egregious. If the AC thought the appeal had no merit, why not consider a procedural penalty (PP) against West? Of course, giving them the -1100 I think they should get might be painful enough, but...

Polisner Again I am surprised that this pair would appeal such a clear situation.

Rigal I think there was some merit to the E/W argument, although I'm not sure whether there was enough to escape the AWMW. Sensible decision of course – the UI taints the final call. Once East bids 4♠ after West has defined her hand, West can't bid 7♦, I think. Plus 800 looks fair enough for both sides.

Smith Another good and thorough job by the directors and the committee. There is some sense to the E/W arguments, but not nearly enough to overcome the burden that UI presents. I agree with the AWMW.

Wildavsky I agree that this appeal had no merit.

Wolff Convention disruption (CD) again. Remember when CD occurs it affects everyone at the table and, at the very least, causes "confusion", especially, like here, when it is a highly competitive auction and involves itself also with opening leads and later defense. WE MUST DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO LESSEN ITS OCCURENCE and, to me, the only answer is to penalize it out of existence. I agree with the decision, but do suggest that the above caveat be our guiding light and get that message across, especially to the high-level game.

Zeiger As a side note, I don't think 6♦ would have been allowed, but since that bid did not ultimately damage N/S, it escaped the ax. Less than zero merit.