



2016

EBU Appeals

ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION

2016

APPEALS

All the appeals from the EBU's major events have been included here. It is hoped that they will provide interest and an insight into the way that people in England are ruling the game. The booklet is produced by the Laws & Ethics Committee but the comments shown here (including those from members of the L&EC) are the personal opinions of the writer.

Our thanks to the commentators, who have donated their time and their expertise.

If you have any comments, or would like to be involved in the production of future booklets, please contact the L&EC Secretary:

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Commentators

Jeffrey Allerton is a tournament player from Surrey, England. He has won many of the main English and British events. He has represented England on several occasions, including in the 2018 European Championships. He is also a past European and World junior champion. He qualified as a club and county director two decades ago, but no longer directs events. However, he has a keen interest in the application of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge and is an active member of the EBU panel of referees.

Heather Dhondy learned bridge from her parents. Her first trophy was the Portland Bowl representing York University and she has an impressive record since then having won five European Championships including the winning women's team at the 2016 European Championships, three world championships, and a silver medal in the Venice Cup. She is a member of the EBU Board and has served as the Chairman of the EBU Selection Committee, and is the current Chairman of the Laws and Ethics Committee and Tournament Directors Development Group.

Jacob Duschek is a Danish EBL Tournament Director living in Copenhagen. His best results as a player are a bronze medal in 2011 and a silver medal in 2012 in the Danish teams championship. He has authored four books on the Danish teams championships and six booklets on appeals from Danish tournament bridge. Unfortunately, all those books are in Danish, as is the weekly bridge laws column on his website, bridgeregler.dk, but to make up for that, he is currently finishing an English translation of his textbook about the bridge laws. When not directing or writing about the bridge laws, he works full-time as a software developer.

Richard Fleet used to compete in a lot of bridge events and represented both England and Great Britain on several occasions. However, he is now retired from tournament bridge and has not played at all for over four years. He has captained England teams on many occasions, most recently in the 2016 Camrose.

Over the years he has been heavily involved in bridge administration, having served for lengthy periods on the London Committee, including ten years as Chairman, and the EBU Laws & Ethics and Selection Committees. After a hiatus from administration lasting some nine years, he was elected back onto the L & E in 2015 but has decided not to seek re-election in 2018.

He has researched the history of English tournament bridge and the first instalment of this work, covering the period from 1925 to 1945, was published on the EBU website towards the end of 2016. He is at present writing his autobiography and any further work on bridge will have to await the completion of this.

Paul Lamford is the author of a couple of books on bridge, *50 Bridge Puzzles* and *Starting Out in Bridge*, and is a frequent contributor to Bridge magazine and *Metrobridge*. He is a County Director, regular poster on bridge forums, and has been a member of many Appeals Committees.

Tim Rees has been playing bridge since school, and has won most of the English and Welsh national titles at some stage. He has represented Wales at Europeans, Olympiads and Commonwealth Games since devolution from Great Britain in 2000, with his greatest successes being silver at the 2002 Commonwealth Games, and gold at the 2014 Games in Glasgow. Tim is a previous Chairman of the Laws and Ethics Committee for England. He works at the Transport Research Laboratory, analysing (and hopefully solving) motorway congestion.

Alan Wilson is an economic consultant by profession. He has played bridge for 40 years, since learning bridge at school from a couple of friends and a Reese book for beginners. He plays a mixture of club bridge and some of the more serious county and national competitions, without quite reaching the top level – best results one Gold Cup semi-final and two Crockfords finals. For the past few years he has captained the Oxfordshire County team.

Although never formally qualified as a club TD, he runs a few informal events. He has taken an interest in TD rulings for a number of years, and is now a member of the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee.

APPEAL No: 16.002

Tournament Director: James Vickers

Appeals Committee: Tim Rees (C), Neil Rosen, Sandy Davies

<p>♠ 976 ♥ J74 ♦ 9872 ♣ A73</p> <p>♠ J53 ♠ Q4 ♥ K932 ♥ A65 ♦ 10 ♦ AK6543 ♣ J10965 ♣ K4</p> <p>♠ AK1082 ♥ Q108 ♦ QJ ♣ Q82</p>	<p>Board 7: Dealer South: All vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1NT (1)</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Dbl (2)</td><td>Rdbl (A,3)</td></tr><tr><td>Pass (4)</td><td>2♣ (5)</td><td>2♦</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>2♥ (6)</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Dbl</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) (2) penalties (3) has a 5-card suit (4) after asking lots of questions (5) pass or correct (6) N asked before doubling and was told it showed a 5-card suit. East: 'I expect a 5-card suit'</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				1NT (1)	Pass	Pass	Dbl (2)	Rdbl (A,3)	Pass (4)	2♣ (5)	2♦	Pass	2♥ (6)	Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																						
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Pass (4)	2♣ (5)	2♦	Pass																						
2♥ (6)	Pass	4♥	Pass																						
Pass	Dbl	All Pass																							

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – Strong NT 15-17

Form of Scoring: XIMPs Teams of 8.

Result at table: 4♥x -1 by West; NS + 200. Lead ♣A

Director first called: At the end of play.

Director's statement of facts:

The contention is the explanation of the 2♥ bid by West, whether it shows 5 cards or could be a 4-card suit. West will bid immediately over the redouble with a weak hand, so the pass then 2♥ shows an unbalanced hand (according to system notes) and some values. When asked why he bid 2♥ on a 4-card suit West said he was stuck for a bid as clubs was his only long suit. He could have bid 2NT, but chose to bid 2♥. East says he expected a 5-card suit and bid accordingly. North claims they would have defended differently had they known they could have been defending a 4-3 fit. He might well have not led ♣A, perhaps a trump instead, and taken at least one extra trick.

Director's ruling:

Score stands.

Details of ruling:

It looks as if West has deviated from their agreement, and East has taken no unexplained action.

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal:

Not given

APPEAL No: 16.002

Director's comments:

No further comments.

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

East/West had an agreement on the general principle after 1NTx, but it didn't apply here. Therefore there was misinformation.

80% EW 4♥x – 1; NS + 200

20% EW 4♥x – 2; NS + 500

The correct explanation should have been 'normally 5, but could have 4'. West should have volunteered this at the end of the auction. With the correct information that EW were in either an 8- or 7-card fit, we don't believe North would change his lead. However, South might ruff in later with the ♥10. On the actual explanation, ruffing with the 10 could not gain. It could also not cost, or S does not get full redress, but he might have found the defence with the correct information.

L&E Comment

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

There was a subtle different between how North and East each reported North's answer to the question about 2♥. This would seem to be a disputed fact and so the TD (and the AC) ought to have explained on which version they were basing their rulings.

I would be extremely surprised if E/W did have an explicit agreement about this obscure sequence, so on balance of probabilities, I would presume that East's version "I expect a 5-card suit" is what was actually said at the table. This wording should have made it clear to N/S that he was reporting an inference rather than a specific agreement (and frankly, the sight of dummy would have confirmed to N/S that East was *expecting* a 5-card suit opposite.

The AC's statement:

"The correct explanation should have been 'normally 5, but could have 4'"

overlooks the fact that the specific sequence had not been discussed.

The AC has analysed the play and reports that if declarer was guaranteed to have a 5-card suit the it did not matter how South defended.

Furthermore, South ought to have been 'woken up' by North's double: with nothing in the side suits apart from the club ace, it was quite likely that he had something in trumps.

So even if there was any significant misinformation (and I don't think there was any), then South was not damaged by it.

I also observe that the AC's final weighting (80% of 1 off and 20% of 2 off in 4♥) is sufficiently similar to the TD's (100% of 1 off in 4♥) that is not appropriate to change the TD's ruling.

So for several reasons, I much prefer the TD's ruling to the AC's.

APPEAL No: 16.002

HD :

I'm not sure how many partnerships would be on solid ground here, and to say he expected a five-card suit is a reasonable guess. I'm sure West would rather have had one when he made the bid. I don't think there is a great difference between "I expect a five-card suit" and "normally five, but could have four". I would let the result stand.

JD :

Consider the following two scenarios.

A. E-W are in an auction with a firm agreement. East says, "I expect a 5-card suit". At the end of the auction, West says, confidently, "it only promises a 4-card suit, although then the hand will be unbalanced". This sounds like an automatic correction with no reference to West's actual hand.

B. No firm agreement. East says, "I expect a 5-card suit". West is not sure either, but at the end of the auction he is supposed to say, "I am not sure that it promises a 5-card suit". West would hardly make such a vague remark if he had a 5-card suit, so N-S can be fairly confident that West actually holds a 4-card suit.

Thus, in scenario B, correcting the explanation provides N-S with more information than they are entitled to, which is not the case in scenario A.

In scenario A, I think it is fair to adjust the score based on the assumption that N-S had both explanations available during play because West must clear correct partner's explanation. In scenario B, not so clear. But of course, East should have said, "we have no specific agreements about this auction, so natural principles apply" instead of offering his personal ideas on natural bidding which may or may not reflect partner's ideas.

RF :

No Comment.

PL :

I agree that West should have corrected the explanation before the opening lead, and stated that he could have four hearts. With that correction, I think it is normal for North to lead a spade, rather than a trump. I would be giving perhaps 50% of two off here.

TR :

E/W were trying to claim agreements from other parts of their system that were clearly not analogous. But the clinching aspect of this hand was when we asked them what they would bid as West next time this hand came up, and they said they would bid 2♥ again. Therefore 2♥ is not a deviation, it's part of their agreement.

AW :

I would be happy to accept the TD's ruling here. It doesn't sound like EW really had an agreement to bid on a 4-card suit here, but West nevertheless decided that it was convenient to do so. So I am not convinced there was really any MI.

APPEAL No: 16.003

Tournament Director: James Vickers

Appeals Committee: Frances Hinden, Alan Mould, Derek Patterson

<p>♠ 2 ♥ K9654 ♦ KQJ753 ♣ 7</p> <p>♠ 8764 ♠ K5 ♥ - ♥ AJ7 ♦ A10964 ♦ 82 ♣ 8532 ♣ AKJ1064</p> <p>♠ AQJ1093 ♥ Q10832 ♦ - ♣ Q9</p>	<p>Board 28: Dealer West: NS vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♣</td><td>2♣ (A,1)</td></tr><tr><td>4♣</td><td>4♥</td><td>5♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>5♥</td><td>Dbl</td><td>All Pass</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) Both majors</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	Pass	Pass	1♣	2♣ (A,1)	4♣	4♥	5♣	Pass	Pass	5♥	Dbl	All Pass
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
Pass	Pass	1♣	2♣ (A,1)														
4♣	4♥	5♣	Pass														
Pass	5♥	Dbl	All Pass														

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – not record

Form of Scoring: XIMPs Teams of 8

Result at table: 5♥x – 1 by N; NS - 200

Director first called: At the end of play.

Director's statement of facts:

North explained the play: East led 2 top clubs, North ruffed and played ♠A and ruffed a spade. He led a heart and East thought for a long while before playing low. North reasoned that East would not think with AJ7 and so played the queen. He argued he might play the 10 if East plays in tempo. East said he had been trying to work out the distribution of the hand and whether he should play the ace.

Director's ruling:

70% of 5♥x – 1 by North; NS -200

30% of 5♥x= by North; NS + 850

Details of ruling:

East does not have a demonstrable bridge reason for breaking tempo at this point in the play, and could have known that doing so could work to his advantage. North has drawn a false inference and might have finessed. (Laws 73D1, 73F, 12C1(a), 12C1(c))

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal:

None given

Director's comments:

No further comments.

APPEAL No: 16.003

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.
Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

The appeal committee agreed no demonstrable bridge reason to think. We had a long discussion about 'could have known' and decided that it applied (not 'did know'). Committee was minded to give EW 10-15% more but thought this was 'a minor adjustment to the TDs ruling' and hence left the TDs ruling unchanged.

L&E Comment:

Opinions were divided as to whether there was a "demonstrable bridge reason" for East to think, some suggesting that the decision as to whether or not to win the trick was surely a good reason. However, a poll had been taken at the time which determined that there was no good reason.

There was also some doubt as to whether the hesitation actually damaged declarer.

APPEAL No: 16.003

Commentators :

JA :

I agree with the AC.

It seems unlikely that declarer would have taken a first round finesse of the heart ten had East played low smoothly, so the TD's award of declarer finding that line of play 30% of the time (even taking into account sympathetic weighting) seems generous to me.

However, the AC is quite right. Section 1.8.3.4 of the White Book states that ACs "should not just make minor adjustments to the weighting".

HD :

I agree that there is doubt as to whether it damaged declarer. I doubt that he was going to play the ten which is a big position to take. I would be annoyed as North, however. I think that some adjustment should be given and the director's ruling looks about right to me

JD :

Dummy is good except for the trumps, so I see no valid bridge reason for thinking.

However, it is less clear whether East could have been aware that a hesitation could work to his advantage. Would there be any valid bridge reason for thinking if East held the Ax of trumps instead?

Time would have been spent better conducting a poll to learn what players would have done in the North seat with or without a hesitation by East. This would tell us whether North was damaged – and at the same time whether East "could have known", because the position is so simple.

RF :

I would give North 100% of 5♥X making. Looking at the dummy and the way that the defence has gone, there is no conceivable reason for East not playing in tempo.

PL :

I don't think the BIT did damage declarer, as declarer would not have finessed the ten in any case. If East had Ax of hearts, he would also play low. I don't think East does have a demonstrable bridge reason, but I cannot see how North was damaged. He is trying for a double shot. If the hearts are 2-1 he is cold, if not, then he will cry foul. I prefer to reinstate the table score.

TR :

We're in danger of not allowing players to think. If a player has a choice of whether to win the trick or not, I would have thought that that constitutes a demonstrable bridge reason to hesitate. Even if it appears obvious that a player should win or duck, their brain may need time to process the information available.

Should we rule differently on "demonstrable bridge reason" when a player is an expert?

AW :

I'm a bit surprised both by the conclusion that East didn't have a bridge reason to think and the implication that declarer was misled by it.

APPEAL No: 16.004

Tournament Director: David Burn

Appeals Committee: Tim Rees (C), Frances Hinden, Graham Osborne

<p>♠ 109 ♥ J87 ♦ KJ8764 ♣ A7</p> <p>♠ AK63 ♠ 754 ♥ AK1092 ♥ 654 ♦ - ♦ A1095 ♣ J642 ♣ K108</p> <p>♠ QJ82 ♥ Q3 ♦ Q32 ♣ Q953</p>	<p>Board 32: Dealer West: EW vulnerable Contract: 4♥ by West Auction not supplied.</p> <p>On right is the position at the point of the claim:</p>	<p>♠ 109 ♥ J ♦ KJ8764 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ AK6 ♠ 754 ♥ 1092 ♥ 6 ♦ - ♦ 1095 ♣ J6 ♣ 10</p> <p>♠ QJ82 ♥ - ♦ Q3 ♣ Q9</p>
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Basic systems:

North-South system – not given

East-West system – not given

Form of Scoring: IMPs KO teams

Result at table: 4♥ - 1 by West, NS + 100. Lead ♣A

Director first called: Called by phone in a match played privately at the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts: I was called after play had ceased following a concession by West. The play had been: ♣A and another to the king in dummy; ♦A pitching a spade; two top hearts leading to the position shown above. At this point West had said that he would knock out ♣Q and concede a club, a heart and a spade for one down. This had been accepted.

West wished to withdraw his concession, which had been based on the assumption that South would win ♣Q and draw the last trump. When South was unable to do this, West could throw a spade from dummy on ♣J and ruff his losing spade on the table (North can throw spades himself and ruff one of West's tops, but this does not matter – the contract is cold).

Director's ruling:

Table result stands.

Details of ruling:

Since there is a line of play that will lead to West losing the tricks he said he would lose, I ruled that he must lose them (considering such a line to be 'normal' per the relevant law). (Law 71)

APPEAL No: 16.004

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal: None given.

Director's comments:

This is not a clear ruling. In such cases I think the TD should rule a line 'normal' (i.e. inclusive of careless or inferior play) and let the committee determine whether this is actually the case.

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Conceding a trick when declarer did was very careless, and if he'd played on at that point he could easily have been equally careless. There are various lines that are considered 'normal' under the definition of Law 71 that will lose a trick. It would be no worse than careless to play three rounds of spades, or a trump.

The Appeal Committee believes that this is a clear ruling and would normally have retained the deposit. However, the TD's comment on the form that he thought the ruling was not clear cut, and implying that an appeal would be justified, means that we are returning the deposit.

L&E Comment:

The Committee generally agreed that the ruling was clear, and questioned whether the reason to return the deposit was a sound one.

APPEAL No: 16.004

Commentators :

JA :

I agree with the AC's reasoning, including their decision to return the deposit. The TD has told the players that an appeal would have merit; so it would have been very unsatisfactory if the AC had then withheld the deposit on the grounds that the appeal was without merit.

HD :

I agree that the ruling is clear cut and also agree that the deposit should be returned under the circumstances.

JD :

I agree with every word said by the Appeals Committee, regarding both the ruling and the deposit. Declarer would probably have made his contract if he had just played it out instead of conceding, but he needs more than "probably" to get his trick back by Law 71B.

It seems that the TD followed the old idea of "ruling against the offender and letting them appeal". But this is not the right approach. The TD should do his best to give a ruling that the Appeals Committee will see no reason to change.

RF :

No Comment

PL :

I agree that the ruling was clear, as declarer had not seen that he could later ruff a spade in dummy, but the TD seems to have commented that it was not. Law 81 states: If the Director believes that a review of his decision on a point of fact or exercise of his discretionary power could well be in order, he shall advise a contestant of his right to appeal or may refer the matter to an appropriate committee. To then retain the deposit would be inappropriate and it was correctly returned.

TR :

No comment.

AW :

I agree with everyone on the ruling, and I have more sympathy with the AC than the L&E on the deposit – if the TD feels the ruling isn't clearcut, then it seems harsh to suggest the players should see it as sufficiently obvious for an appeal to be without merit.

APPEAL No: 16.005

Tournament Director: Ken Johnston

Appeals Committee: Jeff Smith (C), Alan Mould, Gary Hyett

<p>♠ 9743 ♥ Q96542 ♦ 2 ♣ Q5</p> <p>♠ K10 ♠ AJ82 ♥ 8 ♥ J ♦ K65 ♦ AQ1043 ♣ KJ109743 ♣ A62</p> <p>♠ Q65 ♥ AK1073 ♦ J987 ♣ 8</p>	<p>Board 5: Dealer North: NS vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td>2♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♠ (A)</td></tr><tr><td>3♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♥ (A, 1)</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>5♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>6♣</td><td>Dbl</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>1) Before bidding 3♥ East said 'I take it this just shows hearts'</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		2♦	Pass	2♠ (A)	3♣	Pass	3♥ (A, 1)	Pass	5♣	Pass	6♣	Dbl
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
	2♦	Pass	2♠ (A)														
3♣	Pass	3♥ (A, 1)	Pass														
5♣	Pass	6♣	Dbl														

Basic systems:

North-South system – not given

East-West system – defence to Multi – standard (X= weak NT or strong hand)

Form of Scoring: MPs to VPs

Result at table: 6♣x + 1 by West; NS – 1190; lead ♦2

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called after play. South feels the question about 2♠ call may have influenced the auction. I looked at the hand and reported back that the result stands after consultation with other TDs, as there was nothing technically wrong. Then I was told that the statement as said in (1) above. I went back and said result still stands and told South he could appeal.

Director's ruling:

Result stands.

Details of ruling:

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal: None given

Director's comments: None

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

APPEAL No: 16.005

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

It is unfortunate that the question ref 'just shows hearts' was asked but despite that, we feel that the auction would have continued to 6♣ as clearly 3♥ was forcing. South's pass over 3♥ seems very odd and given that EW don't have strong agreements, on balance we allow the result.

At least one member of the Appeal Committee thought the appeal frivolous, but on balance this could have been a legitimate case.

L&E Comment:

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

I don't think that the TD or the AC got to the bottom of this one. The AC's comment criticising the actions of a member of the non-offending side is irrelevant.

West is in possession of UI from the nature of East's question. Many people would play 3♥ as showing values/length in hearts and perhaps lacking a spade stopper, so I suspect that 3NT is a logical alternative for West. Did the TD poll peers of West on this point? There is no evidence from the appeals form that the AC even considered the possibility of West bidding 3NT. Of course, East has a good hand for clubs and might well pull 3NT to 4♣, but there are various ways in which the auction might continue. It's matchpoints so West might bid 4NT (natural NF) over 4♣. I suspect we should end up with a weighting of 3NT-2, 4NT-3, 5♣+2 and 6♣x+1 [or maybe 6♣ undoubled, we would need to understand why doubled at the table to decide if the double would be replicated on the putative longer auction].

HD :

The question is a bit naughty and designed to ensure that partner doesn't take the 3♥ bid as natural. However I am not convinced either that 3♥ is artificial or that it is "clearly forcing". East has passed over 2♦ so can't have a good hand with hearts, so if it is natural I would think it would be non-forcing. I wouldn't expect West to pass, however, on the actual hand. I do believe the auction might have been different and would be in favour of adjusting the score. I would also consider fining East for the comment.

JD :

Nothing to add.

RF :

I don't regard South's pass over 3♥ as odd; nor do I see what reason South had for doubling. I would have kept the deposit.

PL :

Technically East should have asked for an explanation of 2♠, rather than make sure his partner knew that it showed a heart fit, but I guess we all ask leading questions from time to time. I agree the auction would have continued in the same way. South did not have any obligation to double 3♥ however, which might help the opponents. East's "just shows hearts?" is communication with his partner, and would merit a PP for an experienced player. I definitely don't regard the appeal as frivolous.

APPEAL No: 16.005

TR :

The AC was very harsh on N/S (South in particular). South's pass of 3♥ is not odd – North should have spades for his pass of 3♣, and South has already expressed an opinion that he didn't want to compete in spades. There is clear UI from East's question/comment over 3♥, which could have influenced West's bidding. The 5♣ bid found at the table look like unauthorised panic; 3NT and 4♣ are logical alternatives here. E/W have few agreements, so assuming that they would get to 6♣ looks wrong; 3NT and 5♣ are also possible contracts. I would have given a weighted ruling, with 5♣+1, 3NT-2 and the table result all possible.

On a separate note, the TD giving a ruling without collecting the facts causes confusion and mistrust from the players. There's always a doubt that the TD has considered the case properly.

AW :

I think East was quite fortunate not to be given a procedural penalty here, even if the TD and AC felt that the table result did not need adjusting – the form of his question was clearly wrong, and might be thought to be designed to make it clear that 3♥ was a cue-bid rather than a suit. I agree that there was a good chance 6♣ would still have been reached without the "question", but I do wonder whether some percentage of 5♣ might have been included in an adjusted score on the grounds that West might just have bid 4♣ if he wasn't sure whether or not 3♣ was natural, and that might have made it tougher for East to go on to a slam.

APPEAL No: 16.007

Tournament Director: Stuart Davies

Appeals Committee: Jeff Smith (C), Simon Cope, Alan Mould

<p>♠ 9 ♥ 43 ♦ KJ108742 ♣ 987</p> <p>♠ AJ103 ♠ K8542 ♥ AQ9762 ♥ K85 ♦ 3 ♦ 95 ♣ 64 ♣ K53</p> <p>♠ Q76 ♥ J10 ♦ AQ6 ♣ AQJ102</p>	<p>Board 14: Dealer East: Love all</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣ (1)</td><td>1NT</td></tr><tr><td>2♥</td><td>3♦ (2)</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>3♥</td><td>4♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl (3)</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Dbl</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>1) 10-12, 3+clubs 2) Competitive, non-forcing 3) Double after some thought (deemed a break in tempo on balance)</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			1♣ (1)	1NT	2♥	3♦ (2)	Pass	Pass	3♥	4♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl (3)	Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																						
		1♣ (1)	1NT																						
2♥	3♦ (2)	Pass	Pass																						
3♥	4♦	Pass	Pass																						
Dbl (3)	Pass	4♥	Pass																						
Pass	Dbl	All Pass																							

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – 1♣ = 10-12

Form of Scoring: not recorded

Result at table: 4♥x + 1 by West; NS - 690

Director first called: After the 4♥ bid.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called to the table after the 4♥ bid by East. North pointed out that West had thought 'for 15 seconds' before bidding. I remained until the opening lead had been made. I was called back at the end of the hand and North invited me to consider whether there were alternatives (principally pass) to East's 4♥ bid. I polled five players of whom two bid 4♥, two passed and one passed but considered 4♥. I therefore deemed that pass was a logical alternative to 4♥.

I then considered whether North's double of 4♥ should be considered as 'wild or gambling' or a 'double shot'. I could see no justification for the double and therefore adjusted the score for NS by the match point difference between the scores of 4♥x + 1 and 4♥ + 1.

Director's ruling:

NS: 4♦x = by North, reduced by match point difference between 4♥x + 1 and 4♥ + 1

EW: 4♦x = by North.

Details of ruling:

'carefully avoid taking advantage of UI' – Law 73C

Definition of logical alternative – Law 16B1(a)

Power to award adjusted score – Law 12A

Contribution to own damage – Law 12C1(b)

Ruling on disputed facts – balance of probabilities – Law 85

APPEAL No: 16.007

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal: no alternative to bidding 4♥

Director's comments: none

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We adjust to 4♦x making for both sides.

We did not deem the double of 4♥ as wild since he can expect 4♥ to go down.

There was a logical alternative of pass to East after 4♦ was doubled out of tempo. Given that East had not raised 2♥ or 3♥ to 4♥ on the previous rounds, we feel that the slow double of 4♦ persuaded East to bid 4♥ when he had a clear logical alternative of pass.

Although we have awarded a worse score to EW after appeal, we feel they were inexperienced and do not believe the appeal frivolous.

Editor's note: West is a Premier Regional Master and East a Premier Life Master.

APPEAL No: 16.007

L&E Comment:

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

I agree with the AC's decision, but I don't understand the comment about having awarded E/W a worse score after appeal. Both the TD and AC decisions involved E/W's score being 4♦x= by North.

In my view, the TD was way off the mark in judging the double of 4♥ as "wild or gambling". It was matchpoints and he expected to make 4♦. The opponents had previously stopped in 2♥; and with an attractive opening lead (singleton spade) it might well be necessary to double to convert a near bottom of +100 into a near top of +300.

HD :

I agree with the TD. I can see no reason why North should think the contract will go down if South hasn't doubled it already.

JD :

Saying that North can expect the contract to go down is optimistic when the strength is equally divided and there are a lot of total trumps. But who knows at matchpoints. Frankly, I am not sure which of the two rulings is better.

The Laws Committee under the Danish Bridge Federation decided in 2010 that the deposit shall always be returned when the ruling is changed.

RF :

Although I agree with the ruling, I would have preferred to see some justification for the AC's view that North can expect 4♥ to go down.

PL :

The bar for wild and gambling is very high, and this does not reach it. I agree that pass over 4♦x is an LA for East. He did not bid 4♥ on the previous round, and now he does when his partner doubles 4♦ slowly... PP territory for experienced players, and I don't see why the deposit was returned, whatever their experience.

TR :

North's double is a gambling action. It's an attempt at a double shot (although that term is not in the laws, it explains why the bid is gambling). North expects the 4♥ bid to be cancelled by the TD if the contract makes, and he's trying to increase his score (and happily keep it) if 4♥ goes down.

There's nothing in North's hand that suggests that 4♥ is going off – indeed if South can't double, then 4♥ is likely to be making.

AW :

Neither the TD nor the AC seem to have established whether there was any systemic agreement about the double of 4♦, nor have they explicitly addressed the question of whether 4♥ was demonstrably suggested over a pass by the BIT. In the perhaps unlikely event that there was a clear agreement that the double was primarily for take-out then the BIT could suggest NOT removing the double rather than doing so. However, in practice I think a slow double suggests taking it out rather than leaving it in, and the AC were perhaps generous to return the deposit given the lack of any obvious grounds for an appeal.

APPEAL No: 16.008

Tournament Director: Ken Johnston

Appeals Committee: Jason Hackett (C), Geoff Kenyon, Eddie Lucioni

<p>♠ J10875 ♥ 32 ♦ Q83 ♣ A96</p> <p>♠ A ♠ 9642 ♥ AQ974 ♥ K10865 ♦ 97 ♦ A4 ♣ J10742 ♣ K3</p> <p>♠ KQ3 ♥ J ♦ KJ10652 ♣ Q85</p>	<p>Board 22: Dealer East: EW vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>2♣ (1)</td></tr><tr><td>2♥</td><td>2♠</td><td>4♥</td><td>4♠</td></tr><tr><td>5♥</td><td>Pass (2)</td><td>Pass</td><td>5♠</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>1) Alerted showing 6-12 weak with diamonds 2) Agreed hesitation</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			Pass	2♣ (1)	2♥	2♠	4♥	4♠	5♥	Pass (2)	Pass	5♠
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
		Pass	2♣ (1)														
2♥	2♠	4♥	4♠														
5♥	Pass (2)	Pass	5♠														

Basic systems:

North-South system – not given

East-West system – not given

Form of Scoring: MPs

Result at table: 5♠ - 3 by North; NS – 150.

Director first called: After the 5♠ bid.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called after the 5♠ bid and West reserved his rights. The hesitation was agreed. Called back at the end of the hand. Consulted other players and ruled 5♠ was based on partner's hesitation.

Director's ruling:

Score adjusted to 80% of 5♥ = by West, 20% of 5♥ - 1 by West.

Details of ruling:

Avoid taking advantage of hesitation – Law 73C

Logical alternative – Law 16B1

Power to award adjusted score – Law 12A

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal: 5♠ bid is automatic.

Director's comments: None

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

APPEAL No: 16.008

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended.

Deposit forfeited

Appeals Committee's comments:

This is an open and shut UI case. Pass by South is a clear logical alternative. Furthermore on the likely lead of ♠K the club guess is totally clear and we think a 90-10 weighting appropriate.

Score adjusted to 90% of 5♥= by West, 10% of 5♥ - 1 by West.

South did not attend, I would need to hear a compelling reason to bid – I don't see one. South has said everything when bidding 4♠. 5♠ might be a decent gamble but the hesitation clearly suggests it.

L&E Comment:

The committee wished to remind ACs that is not appropriate to make marginal adjustments to percentages in weighted rulings.

Commentators :

JA :

If the club guess is "totally clear" then why did the AC consider a 90%/10% weighting to be appropriate? West was a member of the non-offending side, so it should be assumed that he'll get a "totally clear" guess right 100% of the time! Apart from that, I agree with the AC, including the decision to forfeit the deposit.

HD :

Seems pretty clear-cut to me. The only question regarding retaining the deposit would be if North-South were inexperienced.

JD :

Something must have gone wrong in the Appeals Committee. The contract rates to make 12 tricks, not 11, on the lead of the ♠K. However, West is declarer, not East!

At any rate, it is a ridiculous claim that bidding 5♠ is automatic, and forfeiting the deposit is deserved.

RF :

No comment

PL :

I thought the TD ruling of 80% of 5♥= was about right. It might be automatic to Jason to get the clubs right, but not to the average player. I agree with the L&E Comment here.

TR :

South appealed the TD's ruling, but then didn't attend the hearing. While not mandatory to attend, it is rude for the appealing side not to, and it means they can't present their case.

AW :

Looks like a good decision by the TD, which the AC basically agreed with (though they seem to have based a marginal adjustment to the score on a lead out of turn!).

APPEAL No: 16.012

Tournament Director: Matthew Johnson

Appeals Committee: Heather Dhondy (C), Jason Hackett, Alan Kay

<p>♠ J1075 ♥ 1092 ♦ Q986 ♣ Q8</p> <p>♠ 963 ♠ KQ ♥ KJ873 ♥ Q54 ♦ A4 ♦ 105 ♣ K93 ♣ AJ10652</p> <p>♠ A842 ♥ A6 ♦ KJ732 ♣ 74</p>	<p>Board 42: Dealer East: All vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1♦</td></tr><tr><td>1♥</td><td>3♦</td><td>Pass (1)</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>4♥</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) East thought and reached for a bidding card before passing over 3♦</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			1♣	1♦	1♥	3♦	Pass (1)	Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																		
		1♣	1♦																		
1♥	3♦	Pass (1)	Pass																		
Dbl	Pass	3♥	Pass																		
4♥	All Pass																				

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – 5-card majors, strong NT

[1♣ could be 2 cards – not mentioned on original Appeal Form – Ed]

Form of Scoring: IMPs to VPs

Result at table: 4♥ = by West; NS -620.

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called after the play and told of the agreed hesitation and asked to rule. Initially I polled about the double (which everyone would make and not pass). NS then asked me to poll again about the 4♥ bid. I polled a different set of directors and again everyone was bidding and not passing, therefore I ruled result stands. I also asked what the earlier break in tempo suggested after 3♥ and we agreed that it was not clear that it suggested 4♥ over pass.

Director's ruling: Result stands. Law 16.

Details of ruling:

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal: They believe that pass is a logical alternative.

Director's comments:

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

APPEAL No: 16.012

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.
Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We agree with the TD and his poll was unanimous. It's easier at pairs but vulnerable at teams it is normal to push for game.

Note by Editor: NS submitted an appeal to the national authority.

Finding of the Appeal to the National Authority:

The TD had conducted two polls – one about the double, which he found everyone would make and a second (carried out later) about the 4♥ bid. The second poll was restricted to two panel TDs both of whom bid 4♥ and this information was given to the appeal committee. The TD had also spoken to the Chief TD who gave a contrary view but this was not told to the Appeal Committee. This was considered an error in tournament direction.

The L&E committee considered that West passing 3♦ was not a logical alternative, and therefore allowed the double. However, the committee felt that passing 3♥ was a logical alternative, and that the 4♥ bid was suggested by the UI from East, as he must have been considering an immediate 3♥ bid over 3♦. Therefore, the committee disallowed the 4♥ bid, returning the contract to 3♥ + 1.

It was confirmed that the Chief TD could not overrule a TD on a matter of judgement once the decision to rule in a particular way had been made.

APPEAL No: 16.012

Commentators :

JA :

The TD did not poll enough people to determine or not whether passing 3♥ was a logical alternative. I would also question whether polling exclusively tournament directors is the correct approach when Law 16 defines logical alternatives by reference to of “the class of players in question”. I infer from the AC’s comments that the AC members all thought that bidding 4♥ was ‘evident’. This gave the AC a larger sample size of views to consider; so in effect any “error in tournament direction” (by not polling enough people) was mitigated by having the matter considered by the AC. Thus I am surprised that the Appeal to the National Authority led to a change of score based on the Laws & Ethics Committee’s bridge judgement differing from that of the original AC.

HD :

JD :

Both bidding problems can be answered in one poll by first giving the bidding problem over 3D, then asking about the problem over 3♥. It is a pity that the director missed the point about raising, because asking only two players (or directors) is insufficient for confirming that there is no logical alternative. My initial thought was that passing over 3♥ was a logical alternative.

I am worried whether the Appeals Committee answered the right questions when they say that “bidding 4♥ is reasonable”. This is a common pitfall for Appeals Committees consisting of players. They should not decide whether a bid is reasonable, instead they need to address two critical questions, 1) are there logical alternatives, and 2) did UI suggest the action at the table over a logical alternative? When my ruling in a UI case is appealed, I always make sure that the Appeals Committee addresses these questions properly while I carefully avoid to influence their judgement on the same questions.

RF :

I am surprised that an experienced AC allowed the 4♥ bid to stand. The most likely hand type for East is a weak NT, facing which West has a clear game invitation and no more.

PL :

I agree that the first double is automatic, but pass over 3♥ is automatic as well. When one has UI, one has to carefully avoid taking advantage of it. East’s BIT showed 11-12 with three-card heart support (a quick pass would have denied three-card support – “slow shows”). The two panel TDs showed very poor judgment in allowing the 4♥ bid. There is no reason for East to have three hearts, even; what is he supposed to do on KQx Qx xxx AT8xx when game is truly atrocious? This was the single worst decision in the booklet, and correctly overturned by the National Authority.

TR :

This hand demonstrates that UI doesn’t just affect the next bid by partner, but lasts for the whole auction (and also during the play if the pair ends up defending).

AW :

Three questions appear relevant. (1) Was pass a LA to doubling 3♦? Everyone agrees it wasn’t, so there is no problem with the double. (2) Was pass a LA to raising 3♥ to 4♥? Here there seems to be a difference of opinion between those polled by the TD and the National Authority. (It is not entirely clear to me whether this is something on which the chief TD disagreed or not.) I suspect a larger poll might have suggested pass was a LA, even if it remained a minority choice. (3) Was 4♥ suggested over 3♥ by the BIT? The limited poll carried out by the TD suggested that it wasn’t, but again my sympathies lie more with the National Authority which seems to have felt that it clearly was.

APPEAL No: 16.012

Tournament Director: Gary Conrad

Appeals Committee: David Gold (C), Jason Hackett, Mike Bell

<p>♠ 4 ♥ KJ9643 ♦ J96 ♣ 973</p> <p>♠ QJ82 ♠ A97 ♥ Q ♥ A ♦ A852 ♦ KQ104 ♣ KQ62 ♣ AJ1085</p> <p>♠ K10653 ♥ 108752 ♦ 73 ♣ 4</p>	<p>Board 17: Dealer North: Love all</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>1♠</td><td>3♥</td><td>Dbl</td><td>4♥</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♥ (IB)</td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>6♠</td><td>Dbl</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>6NT</td><td>Dbl</td></tr><tr><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠	3♥	Dbl	4♥	Dbl	Pass	4♥ (IB)				6♠	Dbl	Pass	Pass	6NT	Dbl	All Pass			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																										
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Dbl	Pass	4♥ (IB)																											
		6♠	Dbl																										
Pass	Pass	6NT	Dbl																										
All Pass																													

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – not recorded

Form of Scoring: MPs to VPs

Result at table: 6NT x – 1 by East; NS + 100

Director first called: When East bid 4♥

Director's statement of facts:

I was called to the table after East made an insufficient bid of 4♥. I took East away from the table to avoid UI. I asked East about the 4♥ bid which she told me was a cue bid. I asked East if 5♥ would also be artificial and she confirmed 'yes'. I asked East if she had another bid in their system which would have the same or more precise meaning as 4♥ and 'she said no'. I then told her that when we returned to the table I would offer LHO the opportunity to accept the insufficient bid, other she could make a rectification bid of any bid, but her partner would be silenced. LHO declined to accept the insufficient bid and the auction proceeded as shown.

Director's ruling:

That 4♥ was artificial and that a bid of 5♥ would not have the same meaning (Law 27B2)

Details of ruling:

Note by Editor: This ruling was made under the 2007 Laws, prior to the introduction of the 2017 "Comparable Call" terminology. Nevertheless a similar concept was already in place for insufficient bids: "Same meaning as, or a more precise meaning than..."

APPEAL No: 16.012

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal:

Think 5♥ should be allowed under Law 27B1(b)

Director's comments:

I was approached by the EW pair at the end of the session after the hand records were published. They announced their intention to appeal and claimed that if East was permitted to bid 5♥ then West would have bid and made 6♣. East claimed she had misunderstood my question about whether she had alternative bids with the same meaning otherwise she would have bid 5♥.

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: It has nothing to do with the hand record. I told partner about my conversation with the TD and realised that I misunderstood what he said. Partner is more conversant with the laws and so knew to challenge the decision.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands and Table result stands.
Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We do feel that she misunderstood and might have bid 5♥ had she understood. We all felt that 5♥ was close enough in meaning to allow it but felt that although harsh, the TD explained reasonably enough within the laws.

One Appeal Committee member felt the issue of whether the TD should tell the offending player which bids he would allow without the player first suggesting them should be addressed in the White Book.

L&E Comment:

The committee considered what questions a TD should ask a player when taking them away from the table (e.g. after an insufficient bid). Should he ask potentially leading questions? e.g. "Would 5♥ have the same (or more precise) meaning?" rather than "Do you have any bids that would have the same meaning?"

No conclusion was reached, and it was agreed to allow TDs flexibility in this matter.

APPEAL No: 16.012

Commentators :

JA :

Oh dear! The problem here was created by the combination of a badly written Law (2007 Law 27B) and the guidance from the WBF (and adopted by the EBU) as to how to apply it. The TD followed the recommended guidance, confusing though it may be for players not conversant with the intricacies of Law 27B. So there was no TD error in Law; and there is no reason to adjust the score.

HD :

It seems as though the TD asked the right question, but it is important to ensure that the player understands the question, so if the AC believe that she misunderstood at the time then I think they should adjust the score. Whether they are always going to get to 6♣ is questionable.

JD :

When a player misunderstands a proper explanation about the laws, unfortunately we have to let the score stand.

How much should the director help the players? Of course, the director should not give advice as such, but it is often difficult for the players to understand what the laws really say. I see no reason why the director should not try to help the player work out what, say, “comparable call” means in the context of the actual auction when the player clearly understands his system but not the relevant law concept. This is not giving advice but explaining the laws in the player’s terms.

RF :

No Comment.

PL :

The TD is responsible for making sure that players know every aspect of the relevant law, reading out the relevant section. I would say something like “you can make any call in your system which has a similar meaning to the original disallowed call and your partner will be able to bid. “If you don’t do that, your partner will be silenced for one round.” If she asks “can I bid 5♥?”, I would reply, “as long as it does not give partner any more information than the 4♥ bid did.” The comparable call rules are complicated, and we don’t want less experienced players losing out to Secretary Birds.

TR :

It looks like a correction to 5♥ should have been allowed. The TD might have caused confusion by asking an extra question. Once he’s been told that 4♥ was conventional, there was no need to ask about 5♥. Doing so, then asking about other bids, might have given the player the impression that she was being asked about bids other than 5♥.

I would recommend that TDs, when told the IB is conventional, should ask what the sufficient bid in the same denomination would mean. The “more precise” wording can potentially be confusing, especially when a player is put on the spot. I don’t see a problem with TDs partly leading the player here. The TD can always follow up with the “more precise” question later if necessary. The “other calls” question can also come later – it’s not usually relevant.

AW :

I think this is a difficult issue for TDs to handle. It is unfortunate that East appears not to have fully understood, but there does not seem to have been anything wrong with the process followed by the TD and the ruling it resulted in.

APPEAL No: 16.013

Tournament Director: Gary Conrad

Appeals Committee: Frances Hinden (C), Mike Bell, Ian Pagan

<p>♠ QJ432 ♥ 106543 ♦ J83 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ K9 ♠ 87 ♥ KJ2 ♥ 87 ♦ AKQ976 ♦ 10542 ♣ A5 ♣ Q10743</p> <p>♠ A1065 ♥ AQ9 ♦ - ♣ KJ9862</p>	<p>Board 14: Dealer East: Love all</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♣ (1)</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>1♥ (2)</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl (3)</td><td>2♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>1) Announced as short as one 2) Not alerted. System is transfer to spades. 3) West asks about 1♠ bid – is told 2 or 3 spades and weak NT values.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			Pass	1♣ (1)	Dbl	1♥ (2)	Pass	1♠	Dbl (3)	2♠	Pass	4♠	Dbl	All Pass		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																		
		Pass	1♣ (1)																		
Dbl	1♥ (2)	Pass	1♠																		
Dbl (3)	2♠	Pass	4♠																		
Dbl	All Pass																				

Basic systems:

North-South system – 1♣ short as one, transfer responses.

East-West system – not recorded

Form of Scoring: MPs.

Result at table: 4♠x =; NS + 590; lead ♦ A.

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called to the table at the end of the hand. EW claimed that 1♥ was not alerted and description of South's hand after 1♠ was alerted was incorrect. I consulted another senior TD and also another player who is a national TD. My conclusion was that although South has some UI, there is no real logical alternative to 4♠ and therefore the table result should stand. North also has UI after partner did not alert 1♥ but, again, I do not think the result would have been different.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands.

Details of ruling:

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal:

EW don't agree with the ruling.

Director's comments:

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

APPEAL No: 16.013

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We think North has logical alternatives to 2♠ which lead to alternative contracts.

Result adjusted to 4♥x – 1 to NS, EW + 100

North's 2♠ bid is suggested by the UI. He has logical alternatives of pass (and possibly 2♥). If he passes, there are various possible auctions but they all end in 4♥x by North, which seems to make 9 tricks nearly all of the time.

(e.g. 1♣ x 1♥ pass; 1♠ x pass 2♦; 2♥ 3NT¹ 4♥ pass; pass x.

¹ Various options possible here e.g. cue bid, diamond raise but North expects e.g. 2425)

L&E Comment:

[none]

APPEAL No: 16.013

Commentators :

JA :

Good reasoning by the AC.

HD :

Tricky. I suspect the AC are right and North-South might well have got to 4♥ so the amendment looks fair.

JD :

A complex case. I agree that pass instead of 2♠ is a logical alternative for North when partner should have a weak notrump without four spades.

I am less sure that North must bid 4♥ over 3NT. We must remember that North still faces the restrictions caused by the UI, but then we must consider not only whether 4♥ is a logical alternative but also whether it is suggested by UI over passing 3NT and leading a heart (a spade lead is forbidden because of the same UI). And since West had other options than 3NT, it is not so clear that N-S would end in 4♥ always.

We may also have to consider MI implications unless E-W were "more damaged" by North's bids in the presence of UI. Given the actual explanation there was only one unbid suit, but with a correct explanation there would be two, in which case he would probably not double with 3-6 in the unbid suits.

Complex indeed. Several polls may be needed, and without the possibility to do that it is virtually impossible for an Appeals Committee to do a fully satisfactory job. Too much judgement will be biased from knowing the full deal and listening to each other's thoughts before forming an opinion.

RF :

It behoves people using conventions to remember them. In my view, the TD did not focus sufficiently on North's 2♠ bid.

PL :

I agree completely with the AC verdict which was well considered. A poor effort by the original TD.

TR :

The TD over-focused on the UI available to South from North's explanation. North was also clearly in receipt of UI from South's failure to alert, and he had logical alternatives. His selection of 2♠ is actually actively unethical, as it's demonstrably suggested by the UI (he knows they have a 9-card spade fit, solely because of the UI).

AW :

Why are people only talking about the UI to North from the lack of an alert? I suspect the UI to South from North's explanation of the 1♠ bid had a far more serious effect on the auction. Surely this suggested 4♠ over other LAs?

APPEAL No: 16.014

Tournament Director: John Pyner

Appeals Committee: Brian Senior (C), Michael Byrne, Jon Cooke

<p>♠ AJ6 ♥ 103 ♦ 1098 ♣ KJ1063</p> <p>♠ KQ953 ♠ 1084 ♥ QJ874 ♥ 2 ♦ 6 ♦ AKJ75432 ♣ 97 ♣ Q</p> <p>♠ 72 ♥ AK965 ♦ Q ♣ A8542</p>	<p>Board 15: Dealer South: NS vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♦(1)</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>3NT</td><td>Pass (2)</td><td>5♣(3)</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>Rdbl</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Not alerted but East thought she saw North's hand move as if to alert.2. Asked about the 3♦ bid after some thought; was told it showed hearts and diamonds.3. North now realised that 3♦ was a splinter, and explained it as such.	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass	3♦(1)	Pass	3NT	Pass (2)	5♣(3)	Dbl	Rdbl	All Pass	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																		
			1♥																		
Pass	2♣	Pass	3♦(1)																		
Pass	3NT	Pass (2)	5♣(3)																		
Dbl	Rdbl	All Pass																			

Basic systems:

North-South system – 11-14 NT, 5-card majors

East-West system – not recorded

Form of Scoring: IMPs

Result at table: 5♣xx = , NS +1000, Lead ♦ A

Director first called: At the end of the auction.

Director's statement of facts: After the auction described above I was called to the table by East, who related the facts to date. As it was too late for her to change any of her calls, I instructed the players to continue with the board and call me back if required. Initially EW did not wish to pursue the matter but then came to me at the end of the stanza to request a ruling.

South is in receipt of unauthorised information arising from North's failure to alert 3♦. South said that from his point of view it was clear to bid 5♣ as 3♦ had been looking for slam. I conducted a poll in which five out of six players asked would pass 3NT on the given auction. This makes pass a clear logical alternative under Law 16B1(b). South did question why West doubled, holding 5-5 in the majors.

Director's ruling: Score adjusted to 3NT – 4 by North, -400.

Details of ruling: South has used unauthorised information and the bid of 5♣ is therefore disallowed (Law 16B1(b))

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal: clear to bid 5♣

Director's comments:

APPEAL No: 16.014

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision: We confirm the TDs ruling and see no basis at all for the appeal. Accordingly the deposit is retained.

Director's ruling stands.

Deposit forfeited

Appeals Committee's comments:

The appellant had nothing new to say beyond 'I always intended to bid 5/6♣. There is no reason to overturn the 5-1 vote for pass of the six players polled.

L&E Comment:

It was clear to adjust, and the only question arising was whether West should have been penalised for the 'double shot'. The appellants did not give this as their reason for the appeal (despite advice to do so from their team captain, apparently), and this probably contributed to the forfeiture of the deposit.

APPEAL No: 16.014

Commentators :

JA :

I agree with the TD and the AC that Pass of 3NT is a logical alternative for South, so it seems correct for N/S to be assigned 3NT-4.

However, what possessed West to double 5♣ with no obvious defensive trick? Did he infer from East's question that East had some values, i.e. was he 'taking advantage' of the UI from East? Apparently he is saved from a UI adjustment because of the adjustment for South's actions, but that should not stop the TD awarding a procedural penalty for the double. Alternatively, the TD could judge that the double of 5♣ was 'wild or gambling' and award a split score: E/W start with 3NT-4 but then lose the IMPs difference between 5♣XX= and 5♣=.

HD :

I agree with the ruling and the keeping of the deposit, but the double seems wild, and got what it deserved (especially after partner has asked questions). I would have made East-West keep their score.

JD :

The poll clearly indicates that pass is a logical alternative, so the score must be adjusted. However, even if N-S did not mention the double shot aspect, the director and subsequently the Appeals Committee must consider it.

Personally, I don't at all see why West, holding roughly half a trick, should expect 5♣ to go down. In other words, West's double is a gambling action, so someone should have adjusted the score to 3NT-4 but deduct from E-W's score the difference between the imp scores for 5♣ undoubled and redoubled, respectively. And then, since E-W lost points because of the appeal, N-S should have had their money back unless EBU practice says differently.

RF :

Is note 2 correct? I would have expected to find the semi-colon after "bid", not after "thought".

[Editor: There was no punctuation after "bid" in the original document, but it was actually a comma after "thought" – not sure why that was changed to a semi-colon. But perhaps the TD had intended a full stop after "bid" and comma after "thought"? That might have made more sense!]

PL :

I agree with the forfeiture of the deposit, and I would also have given a PP for the pull to 5♣, using the UI. Again the bar for SEWoG* is very high, and West's double does not cross it. He has hearts over South, and double is ill-judged but not ridiculous.

TR :

N/S should get 3NT-4. But what about West's double of 5♣? That appears to be wild, gambling and probably influenced by UI from his partner's questions over 3NT. I know we don't refer to double shots any more, but this seems to be a clear case of one. And the use of UI potentially makes it worse, although I'm not quite sure what Law would cover a wild/gambling action affected by UI.

AW :

Nothing to add really, to well-judged comments from the TD, AC and L&E.

*the 2007 Laws, in place at the time of these rulings, refer to self-inflicted damage by a "Serious Error... or by Wild or Gambling action". In the 2017 Laws, this has become "Extremely Serious Error...or by a gambling action". (12C1E)

APPEAL No: 16.021

Tournament Director: Phil Green

Appeals Committee: Paul Hackett (C), Celia Oram, Andrew Thompson

<p>♠ 973 ♥ A76 ♦ Q1093 ♣ AK3</p> <p>♠ 62 ♠ AKJ85 ♥ K10 ♥ 53 ♦ J865 ♦ K ♣ 98752 ♣ QJ1064</p> <p>♠ Q104 ♥ QJ9842 ♦ A742 ♣ -</p>	<p>Board 16: Dealer West: EW vulnerable Contract: 3♥ by South Auction not supplied.</p> <p>On right is the position at the point of the claim:</p>	<p>♠ ♥ ♦ Q1093 ♣ K3</p> <p>♠ ♠ 85 ♥ ♥ ♦ J865 ♦ K ♣ 98 ♣ J106</p> <p>♠ ♥ 984 ♦ A74 ♣ -</p>
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Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – not recorded

Form of Scoring: not recorded

Result at table: 3♥ + 1 by South, +170

Director first called: When South claimed at the 6-card ending shown above.

Director's statement of facts: I was called by EW after South had claimed saying he would discard ♦4 on ♣K. EW stated that there was no entry to dummy. South said that he thought the ♦Q was the ♦K. (He has known sight problems and playing under a spotlight). I was advised by East that his partner was a trained TD and knew the laws.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands.

Details of ruling:

Play has ceased. I ruled that, with the actual cards, rather than those declarer thought he had, the line for a player of that standard was to play ♦A, hoping to drop the singleton king, hence making the remaining tricks.

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal: E/W felt they should get a trick or tricks.

Director's comments: E/W declined the opportunity to speak to the appeals consultant.

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

APPEAL No: 16.021

Appeals Committee decision:

There were three options for South

- 1) Play ♦ A making 3♥ + 1
- 2) Lead low and play ♦ 10, having realised dummy did not hold ♦ K, 3♥ =
- 3) Lead low and play ♦ Q, 3♥ - 1

Option 2 chosen as the middle way. Score adjusted to 3♥ =

Director's ruling amended.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Dealing with eyesight problems poses difficulties for the TD and Appeals Committee

L&E Comment:

The committee agreed that "keeping people happy" was not an acceptable reason for making a decision that could not have been reached by proper application of the Laws. The AC chose a "middle ground" ruling, whilst application of the claim laws should have resulted in either one of the extreme cases (depending on viewpoint).

The committee wishes to remind ACs that they should make decisions according to the actual Laws of Bridge, and not what they think the laws should be.

APPEAL No: 16.021

Commentators :

JA :

I don't understand the AC's reasoning at all. Their line 2 is not a normal line of play. It seems to me that both line 1 and line 3 are 'normal' lines of play in context, so I would rule the most unfavourable one for the claimant: 3♥-1.

HD :

If declarer thought the ♦Q was the king then a logical play would be to play to the "king" in dummy or cash the ace. Cashing the ace results in plus one and low to the queen is not necessarily one down because when the king is called for, dummy will tell partner that it isn't there and now declarer may revise the line of play. Although the auction is not supplied I suspect that East did open so declarer, having been told what is actually in dummy, may guess correctly. However when there is a false claim it is right that declarer should be made to follow the least favourable reasonable line, and this is the case here.

I think it would be helpful if the auction is supplied and the early play in cases like these since it might help with any inferences able to be drawn.

JD :

If South has not realized that the supposed king of diamonds is in fact only the queen, there is no particular reason to lead the ace first. And after that, there is no particular reason why South should guess to play the ten and not the queen.

So as sorry as we are for South, ruling down one is automatic.

RF :

I would have ruled one down.

PL :

I agree that the right approach is to give a fair ruling, but on the assumption that declarer can see all the cards. If declarer can see that the queen of diamonds is in dummy rather than the king, then it is worse than careless not to cash the ace first. If either the jack or king appear from West in the first two rounds or from East on the first round there is no guess.

70 A states "the Director adjudicates the result of the board as equitably as possible to both sides, but any doubtful point as to a claim shall be resolved against the claimer." In my view, there is no doubt that declarer would have played ace and another diamond, to do anything else would be worse than careless, and I think it should be ruled as +1. And I would rule in the same way if South was not visually impaired.

TR :

The AC has given a "middle-way" ruling to try to keep everyone happy. Unfortunately, this is not supported by the Laws. The AC's job was to identify "normal" lines, and then select the one that gets the worst score for the side that's made the false claim. Here, the AC found three possible lines, but then went astray.

Incidentally, the TD shouldn't be writing the comment about the use (or non-use) of the appeals advisor. That is not relevant to the appeal.

AW :

The TD's ruling seems reasonable to me, although it is not entirely clear to me whether when judging what is normal for the class of player involved one has to consider only players who will mis-see the cards.

APPEAL No: 16.021

Tournament Director: James Vickers

Appeals Committee: Frances Hinden (C), David Gold, Brian Callaghan

<p>♠ 105 ♥ J10 ♦ 9872 ♣ QJ1084 ♠ J98732 ♠ AKQ64 ♥ AQ65 ♥ - ♦ J10 ♦ AKQ53 ♣ 9 ♣ A32 ♠ - ♥ K987432 ♦ 64 ♣ K765</p>	<p>Board 15: Dealer South: NS vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>3♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♦(1)</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>4♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>5♥(2)</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>6♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>7♠</td><td>All Pass</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) Non leaping Michaels, strong with ♦ and ♠ (not alerted) (2) Cue-bid</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>				3♥	Pass	Pass	4♦(1)	Pass	4♠	Pass	5♥(2)	Pass	6♠	Pass	7♠	All Pass
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																		
			3♥																		
Pass	Pass	4♦(1)	Pass																		
4♠	Pass	5♥(2)	Pass																		
6♠	Pass	7♠	All Pass																		

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – not recorded

Form of Scoring: MPs to VPs

Result at table: 7♠= by W, NS -1510. Lead ♥J

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

North called me and explained the auction and said that 4♦ had not been alerted. (West had volunteered before opening lead that he perhaps should have alerted it. He wasn't sure that non leaping Michaels applied in this situation). North wondered whether East would have raised to 7♠ without the unauthorised information from the failure to alert that West does not have a good spade suit. [Sic – In fact, the lack of alert should suggest that West does have a long spade suit. The statement is quoted verbatim from the Appeal Form – Ed]

Director's ruling: Result adjusted to 6♠ + 1 by West.

Details of ruling:

East has UI from the failure to alert that West has a good spade suit. This suggests bidding seven over pass, which is a logical alternative. Law 16B, 12C

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal: None given

Director's comments:

I polled a number of players of similar standard to East to ask what they would do with the given auction and an alert by West. They were roughly equally divided between pass and 7♠, and those who chose one seriously considered the other. (Five or six players polled).

APPEAL No: 16.021

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We found no reason to over-rule the TD who has done a professional job including poll.

It is not enough to say East 'may always have been going to bid'. Under Law 16, she cannot make a call demonstrably suggested by the UI if there are logical alternatives and we agree that (i) 7♠ is suggested and (ii) pass is a logical alternative.

Discussion (and return of deposit) based on debating point (i) above.

L&E Comment:

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

I am surprised at the results of the poll (I'd expect most people to bid 7♠), but as long as the right questions were asked to the right people there is no reason to overturn the TD's ruling. I agree with the AC.

HD :

I agree with the TD and AC.

JD :

Nothing to add.

RF :

No Comment

PL :

I agree with the AC and would have kept the deposit, and imposed a PP for the 7♠ bid. With an alert, there is no reason why West cannot have Jxx AQx xxx Qxxx when 7♠ is almost no play. (1% on a simulation). Of course, East knows that West does not have that, as he volunteered 4♠.

TR :

I'm surprised that the AC needed to discuss this for long. It seems clear that the 7♠ bid was suggested by the UI, as East now knew (illegally) that West had a spade suit of his own.

AW :

I have no reason to disagree with either the TD or the AC, both of whom seem to have done a professional job....

APPEAL No: 16.025

Tournament Director: James Vickers

Appeals Committee: Malcolm Pryor (C), Brian Senior, David Gold

<p>♠ 97643 ♥ AJ643 ♦ A ♣ Q9</p> <p>♠ AJ2 ♠ Q ♥ 975 ♥ KQ82 ♦ K10873 ♦ 952 ♣ A2 ♣ K10653</p> <p>♠ K1085 ♥ 10 ♦ QJ64 ♣ J874</p>	<p>Board 16: Dealer West: EW vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1NT (1)</td><td>2♣ (2)</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♦ (3)</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl (4)</td><td>Rdbl (5)</td><td>Pass</td><td>3♠ (6)</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>4♠</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) Weak (2) Alerted, both majors (3) Alerted. Explained as asking partner to choose a major (4) Showing diamonds (5) Showing extra values (6) Alerted, showing invitation in spades</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1NT (1)	2♣ (2)	Pass	2♦ (3)	Dbl (4)	Rdbl (5)	Pass	3♠ (6)	Dbl	4♠	All Pass	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
1NT (1)	2♣ (2)	Pass	2♦ (3)														
Dbl (4)	Rdbl (5)	Pass	3♠ (6)														
Dbl	4♠	All Pass															

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – not recorded

Form of Scoring: IMPs to VPs

Result at table: 4♠ - 1 by South; NS -50

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

West called me at the end of the hand and said the explanation of 2♦ led him to believe that South had equal length in the majors. South confirmed that his bidding was according to their methods; if he overrides partner's choice he is showing interest in only one major.

West said he had led a diamond to try to 'punch the dummy', but with the correct information he would have led ♣A and might have got another trick. I don't see a clear connection between the misinformation and the lead, but West claims he would have made a different lead.

Director's ruling:

Weighted ruling: 70% of 4♠ - 1 by South; NS -50 and 30% of 4♠ - 2 by South; NS -100.

Details of ruling:

NS methods were not adequately explained. It is not clear what the outcome might be on a different lead, but eight tricks is a possible result. Laws 40A1(b), 12A, 12C1(c)

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal:

4♠ will not go two off.

Director's comments:

APPEAL No: 16.025

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended. Table result reinstated.
Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We asked about the actual explanations provided during the several questions at various points in the auction. Although the explanation of 2 ♦ was accurate* it was not complete, however we found that by the time the lead was made sufficient clarification of the methods had been provided. We were (as the TD [see TD statement of facts]) also not convinced on damage or why the lead would have been different even if there had been misinformation.

* See TD's explanation of the auction, not different from that statements made by players in appeal, 'asking partner to choose a major' – no explicit incorrect commitment by North on major length held by South.

L&E Comment:

[none]

APPEAL No: 16.025

Commentators :

JA :

I agree with the AC. When players claim that they would have made a different opening lead (or would have bid differently) with a different explanation the TD should ask the player to explain their reasoning and assess whether this reasoning is at least plausible, before deciding whether to adjust the score.

HD :

I also don't see the connection between getting the complete information and the choice of opening lead, and if West failed to provide a reason at the appeal then I agree with the AC.

JD :

Nothing to add to the Appeals Committee's statements.

RF :

In my view, West was "trying it on".

PL :

I think "asking partner to bid his longer major" might have been a better explanation, but I cannot see how this made the slightest difference to the opening lead, or subsequent defence. And I don't think any lead beats it two, so I agree with the ruling of the AC. A poor decision by the original TD.

TR :

The methods used by N/S are relatively standard. The 2♦ bid is often equal length in the majors, but doesn't have to be. Describing it as equal length would be MI, but saying it's asking for the longer major is accurate (although not full disclosure). 3♠ was correctly alerted as invitational in spades. So I agree with the AC (including wondering why the potential UI affected West's lead).

AW :

It does appear that the explanation of 2♦ was incomplete, and therefore there was MI. But the AC appear to have established that a sufficient explanation had been given by the time of the opening lead, and in any case I share everybody's doubts that a fuller explanation would have made an alternative lead more attractive.

APPEAL No: 16.030

Tournament Director: Barrie Partridge

Appeals Committee: Nick Woolven (C), James Thrower, Barbara Hackett.

<p>♠ AK96 ♥ AJ942 ♦ AJ52 ♣ -</p> <p>♠ 10754 ♠ Q2 ♥ K105 ♥ Q873 ♦ 96 ♦ 103 ♣ KQ92 ♣ KJ6543</p> <p>♠ J83 ♥ 6 ♦ KQ874 ♣ A1087</p>	<p>Board 2: Dealer East: NS vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>2♣ (A1)</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♥</td><td>All Pass</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) 2♣ shows <u>either</u> specified strong hands or weak with both majors</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			Pass	Pass	2♣ (A1)	Pass	2♥	All Pass
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>										
		Pass	Pass										
2♣ (A1)	Pass	2♥	All Pass										

Basic systems:

North-South system – not recorded

East-West system – Strong NT, 5cM, 2/1, transfers over 1♣

Form of Scoring: MPs to VPs

Result at table: 2♥ – 5 by East

Director first called: after dummy showed hand.

Director's statement of facts:

Blue Book 7C1(b)(iii) states "any meaning that shows at least 4-4 in the same two specified suits".

Although E-W stated that they have never held fewer than 4-4 in their limited experience, West drew my attention to him being in 3rd seat at favourable vulnerability.

Director's ruling:

Score adjusted to average + / average –

Details of ruling:

I ruled that there had not been a deviation from partnership agreements, but that this board provided evidence of a non-permitted agreement, and I assigned artificial adjusted scores accordingly.

Note by editor:

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal: (see E/W comments)

Director's comments:

Comments by North-South: None

APPEAL No: 16.030

Comments by East-West:

East & West play this 2♣ opener only in pairs events. EW have not played many pairs events recently, and thus there is no long history of us playing this convention.

There is no recorded or unrecorded history of EW having ever opened this with less than 4-4.

East's response shows that she was expecting a 4-4 hand

West's deviation was encouraged by position and vulnerability.

East & West have no agreement that 2♣ could be less than 4-4.

West deviated, but this was not part of an illegal agreement, and one instance cannot show that they had an agreement.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We all believe that West has psyched but without prior evidence according to rule 8.40.3 then we feel obliged to go with the director. Our sympathies are with EW and feel that perhaps NS did not cover themselves in glory and are unable to change NS score. Consider rule amendments here where NS have a 'double shot' opportunity.

L&E Comment:

The committee felt that the TD and/or the AC were misinterpreting this paragraph [WB 8.40.3], and some members admitted that they hadn't been sure of the intended meaning.

[it appears that they interpreted the paragraph as meaning that there was no need to find any other instances of misuse in order to determine that there was an illegal agreement. The committee confirmed that the intended meaning was that, having determined that an illegal system was in use, the TD is not expected to examine previous hands in order to make further adjustments].

The committee considered this to be a deviation, and that the hand should be reclassified as such in our records. It was too late for any retrospective rescoring of the tournament.

Commentators :

JA :

This case shows the advantage of the TD and AC quoting the Laws under which they are ruling.

The AC members all believe that West had psyched; the TD called it a deviation, but the same law applies. (2007) Law 40B states:

"A player may deviate from his side's announced understandings always provided that his partner has no more reason to be aware of the deviation than have the opponents. Repeated deviations lead to implicit understandings which then form part of the partnership's methods and must be disclosed in accordance with the regulations governing disclosure of system"

The AC has not disputed E/W's assertion that this had never happened before. There was nothing unusual about East's subsequent actions and there was no evidence to suggest that East had any prior knowledge of a potential psyche or deviation. Hence this Law had not been broken and there was no reason to adjust the table result.

The only action available to the TD/AC under EBU procedures should have been to record the psyche deviation, classify it as 'green' and then send it to the EBU for filing. Then, in the event of subsequent deviations of the same type from this partnership, there would be evidence of the repeated deviations to which Law 40C refers. Only then on this repeat occurrence would it be appropriate to conclude that an illegal agreement was in existence, when an artificial score adjustment might be appropriate.

APPEAL No: 16.030

HD :

I would allow the table result to stand. There is no history of this pair having an illicit agreement so why have the TD and AC chosen to believe there is one?

JD :

Since the deviation from the 4-4 agreement is not gross, it is not a psyche.

Cases like these are impossible to decide. Being third-in-hand at green is hardly exceptional. How is the TD to decide whether the E-W agreement is “although one should bid aggressively in this position, we always have 4-4” (i.e., West deviated) or “explicit generic agreements should not be taken too seriously in this position” (i.e., the agreement was “could perhaps be 4-3”)?

I would prefer if the system regulations deemed such a deviation equivalent to having an illegal agreement unless the hand is exceptional (which this one is clearly not). But I am not sure that the laws allow such system regulations.

RF :

No Comment

PL :

The TD made an illegal ruling, and it was correctly overturned. The White Book is wrong that a single instance can be evidence of an illegal agreement. 40C1 states, and RAs are not allowed to overrule specific laws:

A player may deviate from his side’s announced understandings, provided that his partner has no more reason than the opponents to be aware of the deviation [but see B2(a)(v) above]. **Repeated** deviations lead to implicit understandings which then form part of the partnership’s methods and must be disclosed in accordance with the regulations governing disclosure of system.

Note the word “repeated”. There was no repeated deviation here as this was the first occasion, and the TD and AC acted illegally. The latter should be examining the laws, not the White Book which is only a guide.

TR :

I would have asked West what he would do in a similar situation in the future, and also ask his partner what he’d have done. If they say they agree with the bid, or suggest it’s normal, then that would indicate an agreement. If they thought it a psyche, or a one-off deviation, then it’s allowed. If they thought it was a deviation, but that they’d do it next time, then that would also suggest an agreement.

I don’t agree with the AC’s comments about a double shot by N/S – for a double shot, the opposition need to know during the hand (usually during the bidding, and certainly before the possible double shot action) that they could get a ruling in their favour. That wasn’t the case here – they had no reason during the bidding to suppose that anything untoward had happened.

AW :

It is not always easy for TDs or ACs to establish previous history that might guide them as to whether there is an illegal agreement or simply a psyche since some players, at least, do seem to have a tendency to forget previous occurrences when questioned.

APPEAL No: 16.031

Tournament Director: Adrian Goulding

Appeals Committee: Brian Senior (C), (others not known).

<p>♠ J9876 ♥ AK42 ♦ K43 ♣ J7</p> <p>♠ K ♠ AQ10543 ♥ JT ♥ AQ8 ♦ J8765 ♦ A ♣ QT652 ♣ A83</p> <p>♠ 2 ♥ 97653 ♦ Q1092 ♣ K94</p>	<p>Board 25: Dealer North: EW vulnerable Contract: 3NT by East Auction not supplied.</p> <p>On right is the position at the point of the claim:</p> <p>Declarer conceded the last two tricks after saying she would cash the two clubs in dummy.</p>	<p>♠ J98 ♥ ♦ 4 ♣</p> <p>♠ ♠ Q105 ♥ ♥ Q ♦ J8 ♦ ♣ Q6 ♣</p> <p>♠ ♥ 976 ♦ Q ♣ -</p>
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Basic systems:

North-South system – not supplied

East-West system – not supplied

Form of Scoring: "Swiss Pairs"

Result at table: 3NT – 1 by East

Director first called: After trick nine

Director's statement of facts:

North called the director saying East (declarer) had made an incorrect concession.

I ruled that although it might be careless to discard the queen of hearts this may happen and therefore ruled that EW would lose the last two tricks.

No statement was made about who may have the queen of diamonds.

Director's ruling:

Concession stands

Details of ruling:

There was no stated line of play other than to cash the clubs first, under law 70E1 the director shall not accept from claimer any unstated line of play the success of which depends upon finding one opponent rather than the other with a particular card... or unless failure to adopt that line of play would be irrational.

Note by editor:

[There were various deficiencies in the completion of the form, which came from an event run by a County Bridge Association]

Appeal lodged by: East/West

Basis of appeal:

They would not have lost 2 tricks as originally conceded

APPEAL No: 16.031

Director's comments:

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

East said South had shown out of spades and therefore she would keep the queen of hearts which would win trick 13.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling stands.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Declarer conceded because she thought she had to lose the last two tricks. When North follows to trick 12 with ♦4, this is insufficient to wake her up and she could carelessly toss the wrong queen away. She clearly did not notice that both ♦9 and ♦10 had gone.

L&E Comment:

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

Under Law 68B declarer has made a claim for tricks 10 & 11 and a concession of tricks 12 & 13. The TD refers to Law 70E1, but it seems to me that the relevant Law here is Law 71 "Concession Cancelled". This states:

"A concession must stand, once made, except that within the Correction Period established under Law 79C the Director shall cancel a concession:

- 1. if a player conceded a trick his side had, in fact, won; or*
- 2. if a player has conceded a trick that could not be lost by any normal²² play of the remaining cards. The board is rescored with such trick awarded to his side."*

22 For the purposes of Laws 70 and 71, "normal" includes play that would be careless or inferior for the class of player involved

Declarer must lose trick 12 to DQ. There is a legal play of the cards in which he loses trick 13 too; so the question is whether discarding HQ to retain SQ is a "normal" play at trick 12. Ultimately this is a matter of judgement and I have no quibble with the conclusion of the TD and the AC.

HD :

In my opinion the TD and AC ruling is obvious. There is no possible way to lose the last two tricks if you have been keeping track of what is going on so clearly declarer had not. Why would she remember that South had shown out of spades when she hadn't remembered anything else? The question in my mind would be whether to keep the deposit.

JD :

Agree with the director and the Appeals Committee. Sorry, the laws on claims and concessions are quite harsh, and even though declarer was probably aware that South had shown out in spades, it is possible that she had temporarily forgotten. Which is enough to deny her the last trick. If declarer thinks something is obvious, she should spend three seconds of her life making sure that everybody else feels the same.

APPEAL No: 16.031

RF :

I agree with the TD and AC. I fail to see why someone who was careless in making a concession should be less careless if playing out the hand.

PL :

The fact that South has shown out of spades is the silver bullet, and East is therefore allowed to keep the queen of hearts. Assuming that she stated this at the time rather than as an afterthought. The principle is that you are allowed to notice that someone shows out of a suit, but not use any other deductive powers. Indeed, the laws state that you are allowed to play that South does not have a spade left when she has shown out.

70E1 states: The Director shall not accept from claimer any unstated line of play the success of which depends upon finding one opponent rather than the other with a particular card, unless an opponent failed to follow to the suit of that card before the claim was made, or would subsequently fail to follow to that suit on any normal line of play.

So, when the eight of diamonds is led, and North does not play a higher diamond, East is allowed by law to discard a spade, as, if South wins the trick, South does not have a spade left as he has "failed to follow to the suit of that card before the claim was made", exactly as prescribed by Law 70E1, so this was an error by both the TD and AC.

TR :

Declarer at the time thought it didn't matter what she threw. The TD and AC have to decide on a single result (weighting following a claim is not permitted), so losing two tricks looks correct.

AW :

The ruling seems so clear that I'm not sure I understand what EW were hoping for when they appealed. If declarer did not think of the possibility of getting an extra trick when she conceded, it is hard to see why she would necessarily have woken up to this as the play proceeded.

APPEAL No: 16.037

Tournament Director: Peter Randall

Appeals Committee: Frances Hinden (C), Joe Fawcett, Ian Payn

<p>♠ K10864 ♥ K832 ♦ 2 ♣ J87</p> <p>♠ QJ32 ♠ A975 ♥ A ♥ Q9 ♦ QJ8654 ♦ K9 ♣ Q10 ♣ A9642</p> <p>♠ - ♥ JT7654 ♦ A1073 ♣ K53</p>	<p>Board 5: Dealer North: NS vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♣</td><td>1♥</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl</td><td>2♠ (A1)</td><td>3♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>4♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>Dbl</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>(1) East asked before 3♠ bid; explained as "Fit Jump"</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		Pass	1♣	1♥	Dbl	2♠ (A1)	3♠	Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>																		
	Pass	1♣	1♥																		
Dbl	2♠ (A1)	3♠	Pass																		
4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass																		
Pass	Dbl	All Pass																			

Basic systems:

North-South system –

East-West system –

Form of Scoring: Teams of 8 XIMPs

Result at table: 4♠x – 2 by East.

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called by East at the end of the hand. He said that the 2♠ bid by North had not been properly disclosed, and had he realised that it showed a substantial spade holding he would not have bid 3♠ or 4♠. The explanation given by South was just "Fit Jump" without any further elaboration. When asked (1) what he then took 2♠ to mean and (2) why he did not seek further clarification, East declined to answer, preferring to assert that it's N/S's responsibility to give proper full disclosure.

Director's ruling:

5♦ - 1 by West.

Details of ruling:

I consulted the chief TD and another national TD (Robin Barker). The conclusions were:

(1) 'Fit Jump' without any further elaboration was insufficient disclosure.

(2) It is clear that East was misled, evidenced by his 3♠ and 4♠ bids.

I asked E and the other players how the auction would have proceeded with full disclosure. East said he would have passed; South would bid 3♥; West would then call a game-forcing (her description) 4♦. North would then pass; East said he would also pass; we concluded that at the table, and with 4♠ out of the question, he would respond to his partner's game force with 5♦, but that this would not be doubled. We decided that North was unlikely to lead away from his ♠K, which would be likely to be necessary for the contract to be -2 (we consider that after the auction West would not misplay either ♦ or ♠. Result -1.

NB East made no attempt to suggest to me that his line of play in 4♠x was affected by the lack of full disclosure.

APPEAL No: 16.037

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal:

Director's comments:

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended. Table result reinstated.
Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Very difficult decision. In a national event of this standard East, an experienced tournament player, is expected to know a very common term or failing that ask for clarification.
North should give a fuller description in future.

Note by editor:

To put the AC's comments into context: this appeal is from the Tollemache Qualifying Round – the premier inter-county Teams-of-Eight event; East represents a relatively 'minor' county, but has played other tournament bridge.

APPEAL No: 16.037

L&E Comment:

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

On balance, I prefer the AC's decision to the TD's ruling. It should be recognised that North may not have understood the term "fit jump" in the same way that it is commonly used, but it is clear from paragraph 2A2 of the Blue Book players that players are expected to protect themselves by asking for clarification when they receive potentially unclear explanations.

HD :

I agree with the AC. If the term "fit jump" meant nothing to him why didn't he seek clarification?

JD :

To me this is an easy decision – score stands. It is obvious to everybody at the table that "fit jump" may not be not a complete description but a good summary – "heart support and something in spades". Asking for elaboration should have been easy, and the fact that North has four or five decent spades can hardly be surprising.

RF :

In a representative National event, "fit jump" ought to be an adequate explanation. East could have sought further details if unsure.

PL :

Sounds like East should not have been selected for his county, and there must be an assumption that someone playing in the "Tolly Qualify" has heard of a fit jump. I think East was trying it on, and there is absolutely no need for elaboration of the expression. If East wants to ask how many spades and hearts it shows, that is fine. I don't think this was a difficult decision, and I agree with the AC. At a North London club, I would expect the Rueful Rabbit to know what a fit jump was – a startled involuntary movement when you have just gone for 1100!

TR :

When playing at a decent standard, players should be expected to protect themselves by asking subsidiary questions if necessary. Here, East was clearly a sufficiently good player to know the term "fit jump", and even if he didn't, he should have asked for clarification.

AW :

Players are instructed that naming a convention is not adequate disclosure. However, I have every sympathy with NS thinking that in an event like the Tollemache the term "fit bid" will be understood, or that a player not understanding it will ask for further explanation. I think, therefore, that the AC got this one right.

APPEAL No: 16.038

Tournament Director: Kathy Williams

Appeals Committee: Frances Hinden (C), David Burn, Simon Cope

<p>♠ J1093 ♥ QJ8643 ♦ 3 ♣ 73</p> <p>♠ AK5 ♠ 8 ♥ - ♥ K752 ♦ AK9754 ♦ QJ1082 ♣ K1085 ♣ QJ6</p> <p>♠ Q7642 ♥ A109 ♦ 6 ♣ A942</p>	<p>Board 4: Dealer West: Both vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♦ (1)</td><td>Dbl</td></tr><tr><td>3♣</td><td>(2) 4♥</td><td>5♦</td><td>Dbl</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>(1) S asked if inverted – didn't know (2) N asked if inverted – told to look at convention card</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1♦	Pass	2♦ (1)	Dbl	3♣	(2) 4♥	5♦	Dbl
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>										
1♦	Pass	2♦ (1)	Dbl										
3♣	(2) 4♥	5♦	Dbl										

Basic systems:

North-South system –

East-West system –

Form of Scoring: MPs to VP

Result at table: 5♦ x + 1 by West

Director first called: At the end of hand.

Director's statement of facts:

I was called at the end of the hand by N/S. When N/S looked at opp. convention card against 1 openers there was no endorsement of any kind. However, hidden away on back of card showed inverted minor raises. South said he would not have doubled had he known it was inverted.

E/W were told to add the inverted minors to convention card in the correct place.

West came to me away from the table & said that I should know that if South does not double he would bid 6♦.

I also mentioned that perhaps a director should have been called earlier.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands.

Details of ruling:

I considered West's statement & agreed he may bid 6♦. So table result stands.

Note by editor:

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal: Disagree with 6♦ bid

Director's comments:

APPEAL No: 16.038

Comments by North-South: None

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended:

30% of 6 ♦ =

70% of 5 ♦ + 1 undoubled.

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Don't agree that West would bid 6 ♦ 100% of the time.

Agreed South would not double, do not think double is WoG.

Polling the West hand would have been a good idea but admittedly difficult given everybody knows the hands.

L&E Comment:

[none]

APPEAL No: 16.038

Commentators :

JA :

Unless the write-up is incomplete, the AC missed an important point: any score adjustment cannot be allowed to improve the offending side's score on the board. The assigned weighting may or may not have done so, depending on the percentage of the field which had bid and made slam.

Therefore the scorers should be asked to compare:

- (a) 30% of the matchpoint score of 6♦ making plus 70% of the matchpoint score of 5♦+1; and
- (b) 100% of the matchpoint score of 5♦x +1.

If (a) gives the offending side more matchpoints than (b) then there is deemed to be no damage from the MI and so the table result would be allowed to stand.

HD :

I would amend the result to 5♦+1 undoubled. If West didn't know whether 2♦ was inverted, he wouldn't know whether six was a good contract. The opponents had agreed hearts, not spades so partner could easily have xxx in spades. Besides they are the offending side, why would we give them the benefit of bidding a speculative slam?

JD :

Difficult to judge, so polling is necessary for a good ruling. Polls should be taken regarding both South's problem over 5♦ and West's problem over 5♦ undoubled. South might decide to double even if 2♦ is forcing, especially if 2♦ could be invitational only (we need to ask E-W about this).

Nobody available at the venue to poll? I find Facebook very useful for making polls, as I can almost always find players from any level who are happy to help.

RF :

On the basis of his responses to the questions, West appeared not to know that 2♦ was inverted. I think allowing him to bid 6♦ was over-generous, particularly since he did not mention this possibility when the TD was called to the table.

PL :

I agree that there is a duty to complete the card correctly. Also agree with the AC, and West's statement that he would have bid 6♦ was obviously self-serving, especially as West seemed unsure if 2♦ was inverted. I would have adjusted to 100% of 5♦+1. West did not know what 2♦ was, yet he indicates that he would now have bid 6♦. If that were the case, he would have redoubled 5♦.

TR :

The weighted ruling given by the AC reflects the uncertainty of whether West might have bid 6♦, I assume that the AC adjustment gave a better score overall to N/S than the table result, otherwise the score would not be changed.

AW :

A tricky story to sort through, but I agree with the AC's apparent view that there was MI, and I'm happy accept their judgement that this affected South's decision to double. It then becomes a question of deciding what would have happened without the double, and whether this would have been a better or worse outcome for NS, which the AC have done.

APPEAL No: 16.039

Tournament Director: Daniel Cardnell

Appeals Committee: Frances Hinden (C), Brian Callaghan, Neil Rosen

<p>♠ QJT853 ♥ 84 ♦ - ♣ Q10854</p> <p>♠ A76 ♠ 92 ♥ J3 ♥ 975 ♦ AKQ82 ♦ J9754 ♣ AK6 ♣ J72</p> <p>♠ K4 ♥ AKQ1062 ♦ 1063 ♣ 93</p>	<p>Board 32: Dealer West: EW vulnerable</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2NT</td><td>3♠ (1)</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>Dbl (2)</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass*</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>*4♦</td><td>4♥</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>All Pass</p> <p>(1) Spades & minor 5-5 at least (2) West asked about (1) before doubling.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	2NT	3♠ (1)	Pass	Pass	Dbl (2)	Pass	Pass*	Pass			*4♦	4♥
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>														
2NT	3♠ (1)	Pass	Pass														
Dbl (2)	Pass	Pass*	Pass														
		*4♦	4♥														

Basic systems:

North-South system – Defence to 2NT not on card

East-West system – 2NT = 20-22

Form of Scoring: not specified [presumed to be IMPs => VPs – Ed]

Result at table: 4♥ – 1 by South

Director first called: At the end of the auction [after 3♠x passed out – Ed]

Director's statement of facts:

I was called to the table at the end of the auction. When asked in the auction, South described 3♠ as above. After the auction had ended, North volunteered that over 2NT this was probably 6-5. When I got to the table this was repeated. North also mentioned that they had double as two-suited making this more likely. North-South are an experienced partnership.

The auction had ended at 3♠ doubled.

South said that North was an aggressive player, so she thought their agreement was 5-5

Director's ruling:

East allowed to take back final pass.

Details of ruling:

I ruled that the original "at least 5-5" was insufficient given the likelihood of 6-5 and relevant agreements.

I thought the high probability of the extra spade might affect whether East would run. I ruled misinformation and offered East his pass back. He bid 4♦.

Note by editor:

APPEAL No: 16.039

Appeal lodged by: North/South

Basis of appeal:

Director's comments:

Comments by North-South:

- ⇒ "X over 2N = longer minor" is what I stated as our alternative methods, so cannot be 5-6
- ⇒ Explanation Correct
- ⇒ System File available to prove defence to 2NT
- ⇒ UI / AI meant South couldn't bid 4♠

Comments by East-West: None

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling amended:

Result adjusted to 3♠x + 1 by North, +630

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Although North was trying to be helpful, we do not see that there was any real MI.

L&E Comment:

[none]

Commentators :

JA :

I welcome clarifications before the opening lead of the declaring side's agreements and the potential negative inferences available from the declaring side's agreements. This ensures that the defenders have the same information available as the declaring side had in the bidding; one of the basic principles of Law 40.

The legal justification for the director allowing East to change his call his Law 21B:

B. Call Based on Misinformation from an Opponent

1. (a) Until the end of the auction period and provided that his partner has not subsequently called, a player may change a call without other rectification for his side when the Director judges that the decision to make the call could well have been influenced by misinformation given to the player by an opponent

So to allow a change of call, the director has to answer two questions in the affirmative:

- (i) Was there misinformation?
- (ii) Is it likely that the difference in explanation could have made a difference to East's decision making process for East's last call in the auction?

In answer to (i), yes there is a difference between "at least 5-5" and "at least 5-5, but should not be 5 spades and a 6-card minor" so technically there was misinformation.

My answer to (ii) is a resounding no. It is difficult to understand why the additional information about not being 5-6 would affect East's decision.

APPEAL No: 16.039

In such cases it is important to distinguish between cases where the misinformation could make a difference to the considerations the player might have in his bidding problem, from ones where the player regrets his original call and has just changed his mind on further reflection. This case falls firmly in to the latter camp, so I agree with the AC that the change of call should not have been allowed. Although there are some lines of play in which declarer has to be careful, it is reasonable to conclude that 3♠ would make 10 tricks sufficiently often to not worry about weighting the number of tricks.

HD :

I would think it is obvious that for someone to enter into an auction over 2NT they will be pretty distributional. I agree with the AC.

JD :

If the agreement is "5-5 or better", it is implied by common bridge knowledge that it will often be better than 5-5 over a 2NT opening, so I agree with the Appeals Committee that East was correctly informed and thus should not have had the option of changing the pass.

N-S must volunteer "but the minor suit is never longer than the major" because the opponents cannot infer that without being told about the agreement, but this should not influence East's decision this time.

RF :

I agree with the AC and fail to see why "at least 5-5" is insufficient as an explanation.

PL :

I agree that there was no MI, at all, as "at least 5-5" was more than adequate. Routine adjustment back to 3♠x+1 by North, and a hopeless effort by the TD. And what was East doing floating 3♠x? However, I think East-West get the benefit of the TD error, and their table result of 4♥-1 by South stands for them.

TR :

It appears that the agreement was at least 5/5, but that judgement is needed about what is suitable. Obviously, not all 5/5 hands would bid. The bad score has arisen from East choosing to pass West's double, possibly after a misunderstanding of the meaning of the double. It's not clear what the double was supposed to be – takeout, penalties, or a Walrus "I've got 21 points"?

AW :

I would have been tempted to take the AC's view that there was no real MI, but North's comment at the end of the first version of the auction implies that they thought the information given was incomplete or possibly misleading, so I cannot fault the TD's decision to allow East to reconsider his final bid.

Epilogue:

PL:

Overall the ACs were very good, but some of the original decisions poor. However, there were almost certainly about ten times as many decisions that were not appealed, so it is difficult to judge the standard of directing from this document alone.

Note by editor:

Thanks for the additional comment, Paul. Agreed, we see the worst TD decisions here, and not the vast majority of rulings that are not appealed. Since records began, the number of appeals per year has been steadily decreasing; there could be a variety of reasons for this.