



**SUMMER MEETING 2005
SCHAPIRO SPRING
FOURSOMES 2005
CROCKFORD'S FINAL 2005**

APPEALS

Edited by David Stevenson

ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION

SUMMER MEETING 2005 SCHAPIRO SPRING FOURSOMES 2005 CROCKFORD'S FINAL 2005

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All the appeals from the EBU Summer Meeting at Brighton, the Schapiro Spring Foursomes, and the EBU Crockford's Cup Final have been included herein. It is hoped that they will provide interest and an insight into the way that people in England are ruling the game.

After the success of the earlier editions it was decided to repeat this publication. This publication has been put on the EBU website in the L&EC section. The feedback from this will be used to decide whether to repeat this in future years. Also consideration will be given as to whether to publish it as a booklet (as is happening in other countries in similar situations). So, whether you liked this publication or not, if you can see how you would improve it, if you would like to purchase a paper copy, or if you have any other comments, please tell the L&EC Secretary, John Pain. If you wish to comment on the actual appeals, the layout, the editing or the Commentary please tell the Editor, David Stevenson. The way to contact the L&EC Secretary or the Editor is detailed on the next page.

Comments have been made on the appeals by an international group of people who have donated their time, for which we thank them. Also thanks are due to Peter Eidt of Germany and Jeffrey Allerton of England for doing the proof-reading.

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Commentators

There are comments on each Appeal by various commentators. Their comments here reflect their personal views.

David Stevenson (b. 1947), the Editor, is an International Tournament Director from Liverpool, England. He has served as a member of the Tournament Appeals Committee of the World Bridge Federation, and on Appeals Committees in the ACBL, Scotland, Ireland and Sweden. He is a member of the Laws & Ethics Committees in England and Wales. He was formerly the Secretary of the European Bridge League Tournament Directors' Committee, a commentator in the ACBL appeals books and Chief Tournament Director of the WBU. He hosts forums for Bridge Rulings and Appeals Committees.

Adam Wildavsky (b. 1960) of New York City is a software engineer for Google, Inc. He has been interested in the laws since he became the director of the MIT Bridge Club in 1979. Adam is a member of the ACBL Laws Commission and NABC Appeals Committee, an ACBL casebook commentator, and is a regular contributor to the Bridge Laws Mailing List. He won a Bronze Medal in the 2003 Bermuda Bowl in Monaco. His interest in the laws is informed by his study of Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand. His web site is www.tameware.com.

Alain Gottcheiner is a Belgian, occasional TD, has had some successes in national championships, has written about conventions and systems and is known as a "systems freak". His main appointments as an AC member are as an expert about strange conventions. His other fields of interest include mathematical anthropology, the sociology of games and dolichotrichotomy.

He has a general tendency towards severity to UI and MI, but dislikes lawyering attitude more than anything else.

Barry Rigal (b. 1957) lives in Manhattan with his wife Sue Picus. He is chairman of National Appeals for the ACBL and a full time bridge player, writer and commentator. His tournament record includes most of the major UK National titles and two US National titles.

He is currently working on an exposé of top-level bridge (after which he expects he will never eat lunch in this town again).

Bob Schwartz (b. 1945) is a computer consultant. Member of the ACBL Board of Governors, ACBL National Appeals Committee and the ACBL Competition and Conventions Committee. Married (over 30 years) with 3 children. Likes golf and poker--tolerates bridge.

Eric Landau is an American. He was a successful tournament player in the ACBL and Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, but has been semi-retired from competition since the late 80s and currently plays only once in a while. He is the author of the book "Every Hand An Adventure", and his writings have also appeared in The Bridge World, the Bulletin of the ACBL and various lesser-known publications. He directs at the club and local levels occasionally, and managed a bridge club for several years.

Fearghal O'Boyle is a European Tournament Director from Sligo, Ireland. He is heavily involved in Bridge administration in Ireland and writes a regular 'Rulings' article in the Irish Bridge Journal.

Frances Hinden and **Jeffrey Allerton** are tournament players from Surrey, England. Recent successes include winning the 2003 Gold Cup, while Jeffrey is a past European and World junior champion. They both used to direct club and county competitions, and Frances is a member of the EBU panel of referees.

Mike Amos (b. 1949) recently remarried and lives in rural Shropshire on the Welsh Borders. He is a National Director for the EBU and has wide experience of directing a range of events in England and in Wales. He is particularly interested in training others to be TDs. Mike enjoys his bridge both playing and directing and hopefully encourages others to enjoy it too. He even plays once a month or so with David Stevenson.

Richard Hills is a former President of the Bridge Federation of the Australian Capital Territory. Inspired by the editorial example of David Stevenson, he has edited three unofficial ACBL appeals casebooks, which are available for download from the following websites (which also contain other interesting directorial information):

Australian Bridge Directors Association website
<http://www.abf.com.au/directors/appeals.html>

David Stevenson's Bridge Laws website
<http://www.blakjak.org/appeals.htm>

Richard's competitive successes include winning five Australian Youth Bridge Championships, being Chess Champion of both Tasmania and Canberra and winning his school's Spaghetti Eating Championship.

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Abbreviations

There are some abbreviations, and they are listed here:

EBU	English Bridge Union
L&E	Laws & Ethics Committee
L&EC	Laws & Ethics Committee
WB	EBU White book, containing regulations for TDs and ACs
OB	EBU Orange book, containing regulations for players
WBF	World Bridge Federation
TD	Tournament Director
Director	Tournament Director
AC	Appeals Committee
Committee	Appeals Committee
LA	Logical alternative
AI	Authorised information
MI	Misinformation
UI	Unauthorised information
BIT	Break in Tempo [a hesitation, or over-fast call]
PP	Procedural penalty [a fine]
NOs	Non-offenders
N/S	North-South
E/W	East-West
!	Alerted
...	Hesitation [agreed]
(1), (2) etc	References to notes below
P	Pass
♠♥♦♣	Spades hearts diamonds clubs
Dbl	Double
Redbl	Redouble
NT	No-trumps
Benji	Benjamin: a popular name for a form of Acol where 2♣/♦ openings are strong and artificial, 2♥/♠ openings are weak

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General

From the 1st August 2000 Tournament Directors are permitted to give “weighted” scores when assigning, for example if they adjust a score because of misinformation they might give a score of 50% of 6♠ making and 50% of 4♠ +2. Previously only Appeals Committees were permitted to do this. The World Bridge Federation hopes that this will reduce the number of Appeals.

The format used to show such results is based on the “Maastricht protocol” whereby higher N/S scores are shown first. It helps scorers and TDs if a consistent style is used. Example:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

- 10% 6♣ -1 by West, NS +100
- +60% 6♠ doubled -3 by N/S, NS -800
- +30% 6♣ making by West, NS -920

Unlike most other publications of this sort around the world, we have named the Tournament Director in each case. He or she is the man or woman who attended the table, took the evidence, told the players the ruling, and presented the case to the Committee. But the ruling will only be given after he or she has consulted with at least one other Director and probably at least one experienced player. Thus he or she is not solely responsible for the ruling – on rare occasions he or she may not agree with it himself or herself.

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APPEAL No 1: Should I alert?

Tournament Director:

Ian Mitchell

Appeals Committee:

Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) Filip Kurbalija Jon Williams

Swiss Pairs Board no 18 Dealer East NS vulnerable	♠ A4 ♥ A54 ♦ AQT65 ♣ QJ7	
♠ KT75 ♥ JT8763 ♦ - ♣ KT2	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ QJ93 ♥ K2 ♦ KJ32 ♣ 954
	♠ 862 ♥ Q9 ♦ 9874 ♣ A863	

Basic systems:

East-West play Mini NT (10-13 pts), 3-level responses pre-emptive

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1NT (1)	P
2♦! (2)	Dbl	P! (3)	3♦
3♥	3NT	P	P
P			

- (1) 10-13
- (2) Explained simply as ‘transfer’
- (3) Denies 3-card support

Result at table:

3NT -2 by North, NS -200

Director first called:

By telephone to a TD after midnight – over an hour after end of match.

Director's statement of facts:

Phone call was made late on Friday night to register a request for a ruling: details were submitted on Saturday afternoon.

N/S are claiming damage on the grounds that the 3♥ bid should have been alerted, as its meaning was affected by other agreements, and the 'transfer' explanation was insufficient. E/W play that an immediate 3♥ response to 1NT is pre-emptive. North claims that, armed with this knowledge, it is less likely that she would have bid 3NT.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

TD ruled that 3♥ is not alertable – it is competitive in nature, and is scarcely affected by undisclosed agreements. The opponents could reasonably expect that there were other such agreements, and had the opportunity to ask for any further implications about the bid.

3♥ was a free bid, and therefore hardly likely to be made on a weak hand. Even with a correct explanation, TD does not believe that North would have bid any differently. Orange book 5.2.1 (c).

Note by editor:

Orange book 5.2.1 (c) says:

5.2.1 You must alert a call if

(c) it is natural, but its meaning is affected by other agreements which your opponents are unlikely to expect.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Appeals Committee's decision:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

15% of 3♥ –1 by West, NS +50

+ 85% of 3NT –2 by North, NS –200

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Our reading of 5.2.1 (c) indicated 3♥ is alertable.

If North was in full possession of the facts we believe that she might not have bid 3NT but would have done much of the time. Because N/S did not play Lebensohl North would have a guess more often here.

We do not agree that North is required to ask to receive info here. If she asks and then passes South would be under ethical strain.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The TD's ruling was cogent and well reasoned. I prefer it to the AC's.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

One important issue was not covered: is there really an inference from the fact that West didn't bid a pre-emptive 3H here? I answer a firm no. It is reasonable tactics to bid only 2D with a hand weaker than West's and the same pattern (spades!); the fact that you have a pre-emptive toy in your bag doesn't mean you have to use it every time. No inference, no need to alert it, no MI, hence no right to any adjusted score.

To TNT fans, does the sequence 1C 1H p 2H 3C p p 3H show more than a direct 3H bid? For many pairs, it only means you tried to buy it in 2H and regret not having achieved it – no inference.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Pick your choice of words, this was a miserable, pettifogging abuse of process. The AC decision was appalling, ridiculous, absurd. The idea of bringing this appeal was truly miserable, and the notion that a committee would not take their money – and worse, would give them an adjustment – will encourage the litigious to pursue awful cases, hoping that other committees will be as incompetent as this one. Sorry, there are no two ways around this, this might be as bad a ruling as I've ever seen.

The auction spoke for itself; West had shown values -- North knew it, the St John's ambulance man knew it.... oh dear, oh dear, oh dear.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

I do not find any merit to this appeal at all and I would have kept the deposit. I agree entirely with the TD ruling and the reasons for it. Why the committee bought into the NS argument and chose to ignore the TD is beyond me. I predict that other commentators will also not buy the argument.

David Stevenson's comments:

The real question is whether 3♥ is alertable. While a minority of people seem to believe that any call where the opposition know something extra about it is alertable, that is not what the rules say, for the very good reason that just about every call would require an alert. The wording thus is intended only to make players alert their opponents where something totally unexpected may have occurred. Consequently the Committee's decision is surprising.

The final comment by the Committee is strange. If 3♥ had been alerted, North would still have to ask, thus putting South under the same ethical strain if she then passes.

Eric Landau's comments:

I think the Director got this one right. It's arguable whether East's explanation of 2D was adequate; he probably should have indicated that 2D, by virtue of playing 3H pre-emptive, shows some values. But even were 3H over 1NT not preemptive, West's subsequent 3H bid would still have shown essentially the same values that this West showed when he bid 2D. I agree with the TD that there is no reason to suppose that the misinformation in the explanation of 2D affected North's bidding.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

I'm with the TD on this one. I think North thought she had a good shot at making 3NT and didn't care what 3H meant.

Frances Hinden's comments:

I am not going to comment on the AC's final score adjustment, as I was West and so am hardly disinterested. This case did show an interesting point of procedure – that it is within the remit of the AC (rather than Chief TD) to decide whether a call is alertable or not. In spite of this, I note that the new edition of the Orange Book specifically mentions the 3H bid in this sequence as not alertable!

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

I agree with the TD that the 3H bid was not alertable. Although one possible interpretation of OB1998 section 5.2.1 would result in all negative inferences (and hence virtually every bid made by a regular partnership) being alertable, the examples in the Orange Book confirm that this is not the EBU's intention. In particular example 5.4.4(f) tells us not to alert 4H and 4S openers playing South African Texas and the negative inference in this auction is far less valid.

Although the request for a ruling was in time, I attach far less weight to claims made at such a late stage that North would have bid differently. Surely if North might have bid differently, she would have said so at the table.

So for two reasons I feel the table result should have been allowed to stand.

Mike Amos' comments:

My reaction to this now is no different from what it was when I saw the case at Brighton last year. What on earth is going on? I did not think then and do not now think that 3♥ in this sequence is alertable. If it were every single bid or rebid I make would need to be alerted because of other agreements eg if I open 1♥ and rebid 2♥ do I need to alert because I play sound Weak Twos (or for that matter unsound Weak Twos)?

The TD was right – the AC completely off their rockers.

Richard Hills' comments:

I disagree with both the TD and the AC.

The TD was right in asserting that a competitive and natural 3H bid which showed values need not be alerted. Indeed, it would have been a competitive 3H bid which might be made on zero values which would have needed to be alerted.

However, I believe that the AC gave the right ruling for the wrong reason. When North enquired about the previous (alerted) 2D call, the over-succinct explanation of "transfer" was misinformation.

Rather, the explanation should have been, "transfer, promising at least five hearts, but if partner holds six or more hearts then partner is guaranteeing some values, since we play an immediate 3H response as pre-emptive."

If North had been given such a timely explanation of 2D, then some of the time North might have opted to trap-pass the transfer to await developments. And, given West's shape, then some of the time those developments would have been West trying a game-invitational raise to 3H, causing North to pass again.

EBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

It is clear from the large percentage of the table score included in the weighting by the Appeals Committee that there is a plausible argument that N was not damaged. However, the L&E has concluded on balance that no adjustment at all should have been made because the 3♥ bid did not require an alert.

From N's perspective the likely strength for W's 3♥ ranged from merely competitive to positively invitational. The fact that a purely pre-emptive hand was excluded could perhaps have been inferred from W's decision to bid again. The third basic alerting rule in the present Orange Book requires an alert if a call is "natural but its meaning is affected by other agreements which your opponents are unlikely to expect". The degree of unexpectedness of the actual methods in use in this case was not sufficient to require an alert.

Final summary by editor:

No support for the AC whatever speaks for itself.

APPEAL No 2: What's this lead?

Tournament Director:

Robin Barker

Appeals Committee:

Tim Rees (Chairman) Frances Hinden Jason Hackett

Swiss Pairs Board no 7 Dealer South All vulnerable	♠ AJ76 ♥ 73 ♦ 8764 ♣ 972	
♠ KQT2 ♥ T94 ♦ J92 ♣ KT4	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ 943 ♥ AQJ5 ♦ KT5 ♣ QJ5
	♠ 85 ♥ K862 ♦ AQ3 ♣ A863	

Basic systems:

North-South play Benji, 5-card majors, weak NT

East-West play Acol, weak twos in three suits

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
			1NT
P	P	P	

Result at table:

1NT -2 by South, NS -200, lead ♠Q

Director first called:

At start of next hand

Director's statement of facts:

The ♠Q lead was ducked in dummy, East played ♠4. West led ♠2 at trick 2, declarer won with the ace and went two light. At the end of the hand dummy (North) asked about the ♠Q lead and was told it asked for count. North asked if it was Roman: the answer was "Yes, it's on the card." The convention card is not so marked, being unchanged from the basic card, ie shows KQx, KQ10.

E/W said West was unlikely to lead from ♠Qx on this auction so South knew to ask about the lead. South said he knew from the card that the Q denied the K and did not need to ask.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

1NT making by South, NS +90

Details of ruling:

N/S were misinformed by the convention card as to E/W's lead agreements. If dummy wins trick two with the ♠J, South is likely to come to seven tricks: 2x♠, ♥K, ♦AQ, ♣A + small. Laws 47E2B, 40C, 12C2.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Director's comments:

What was said about the ♠Q lead was disputed. The TD ruled on the basis that N/S understood that the Q denied the K and that E/W's agreements allowed for the Q to be led when holding the K.

Comments by East-West:

I do agree that the CC was incomplete, but in my knowledge in case of misinformation, players are still required to play bridge. In an auction 1N-p-p-p a lead of a Q without K or J is quite unusual, so South should have been suspicious and asked.

If declarer finesses at trick two he makes six instead of five tricks but never seven. Before he establishes the K of hearts and the thirteenth club we will have seven tricks via 1 ♠, 3 ♥, 1 ♦ + 2 ♣.

When declarer won the second ♠ he finessed in diamonds, cashed the ace, and played a third diamond. After that he can't make both the ♥K and the extra club without us having seven. The director didn't ask about the play and the line declarer chose is not affected by the ♠ suit.

I don't understand why the director has stated we play Roman leads. I have never played them or agreed that the ♠Q was Roman. The director never asked me what I said which was Q asks for reverse attitude.

Appeals Committee's decision:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

50% of 1NT making by South, NS +90

+ 50% of 1NT –1 by South, NS –100

Procedural penalty awarded:

0.5 VP to E/W

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

E/W had an improperly completed convention card. N/S were damaged by this.

E/W had already played three matches the previous evening so they had no excuse for not having a convention card. Therefore we have assessed a procedural penalty against them.

With the correct information, declarer would make either 6 or 7 tricks so we have awarded a weighted score.

Richard Hills' comments:

East-West were lucky that the TD did not apply a procedural penalty, and the AC merely applied a slap-on-wrist 0.5 vp procedural penalty. Asserting that it was South's fault for failing to guess that the East-West convention card was incorrect???

Mike Amos' comments:

I was consulted about this hand. In my opinion the TD was correct to rule MI and the AC upheld this. I think the AC probably got the number of tricks correct in 1NT – there are some lines to let 1NT make – mostly involving the defence playing a third round of ♠s at some time but best defence can always defeat 1NT – so the TD's original ruling (with which I agreed at the time) is probably overgenerous to the NOs. The additional PP is interesting – I shall be looking forward to seeing other comments. I personally think it is inappropriate when a score adjustment has been made.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

A good ruling by the AC here. The fine is the best way of persuading E-W to complete proper convention cards in future. Maybe the weighting is a bit too generous towards the non-offenders, but it is not unreasonable and E-W can hardly complain given that they caused the need for a ruling in the first place.

Frances Hinden's comments:

We might have been a little too kind to the NOs with 50% of 1NT making.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

The AC hit the nail on the head with their 12C3 ruling and procedural penalty.

David Stevenson's comments:

Should declarer get it right? Should he suspect something strange is happening? Should he be asking further questions?

Whatever you think of these questions, there seems little excuse for a long-standing partnership not to have properly completed convention cards, and the procedural penalty seems well-earned.

As for the weighted score, this seems entirely suitable in a play situation where it is not clear how many tricks would be made without the misinformation.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Question 1: What was the EW actual agreement? North (dummy-as is proper) asked after the hand was completed and was told it asked for count. He then asked if it was Roman and was told yes.

Question 2: Did South actually look at the card and NOT ask any questions at all?

The argument that the Q had to be from Qx is bogus. Quite a few "expert" players when deciding to lead a suit of Qxx or QTx will lead the Q—therefore failure to play the J at trick 2 is a possible error.

Clearly the card was not properly filled out—and not on day 1—so the PP is appropriate. I would not have let NS off entirely depending on the answers to the above questions, and might well have adjusted (12C3) on the likely 3 results. Table result of -2, -1, +1.

Barry Rigal's comments:

While the offenders probably deserved their penalty, it is not clear to me that South's play makes any sense at all. How could it be wrong to ask about leads here? I'm inclined to leave the table result for both sides and give E/W a PP only if their card really was improperly completed.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Agree with the AC. Apparently South looked at the CC, which is similar to enquiring. So he did enough to protect himself. MI ensued.

If the Queen asks for some specific signal, while the King asks for some other (kind of an extension of AK leads as played by many), both cards should be highlighted, and an explanation offered, on the CC. I agree that "a lead of a Q without K or J is quite unusual" but South is allowed to believe his opponents' announced conventions. If he decided West had KQ and it didn't work, I bet EW would have pointed a finger to their CC, which "proves" the lead was short.

As 7 tricks are only barely come-at-able, the AC has it better than the TD in its score assignment.

There is a contradiction in E/W's statements, and one would be inclined to believe the spontaneous statement "we play some sort of Roman leads, and it's on the card, or at least it should be". For this reason I'd keep the deposit, because I've some reason to believe E/W's arguments in front of the AC were created out of nothing.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

In applying 12C2 the TD might have considered ruling EW -90, NS -100. That doesn't seem manifestly inequitable to me, and the AC might have chosen to uphold that ruling without recourse to 12C3.

Final summary by editor:

While there seems to be an element of generosity in the actual ruling and decision it is clear that the commentators have little sympathy for a pair that cannot be bothered to provide an adequate CC.

In England it is the norm to apply Law 12C3 when there is any doubt about what the outcome would have been without the infraction, and rulings of the sort suggested by Adam where the two sides are assessed on different bases via Law 12C2 have effectively died out.

APPEAL No 3: Push them one higher

Tournament Director:

Jim Proctor

Appeals Committee:

Tim Rees (Chairman) Martin Jones Jeffrey Allerton

Swiss Pairs Board no 18 Dealer East N/S vulnerable	♠ JT932 ♥ 985 ♦ K73 ♣ K3	
♠ AK87 ♥ J632 ♦ 864 ♣ QJ	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ Q54 ♥ KQT74 ♦ A ♣ T984
	♠ 6 ♥ A ♦ QJT952 ♣ A7652	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♥	2NT! (1)
3♦! (2)	Dbl (3)	Redbl! (4)	4♦
4♥	... Pass	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass	5♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

- (1) Minors
- (2) Forcing, artificial, asks for more information
- (3) North asked about 3♦
- (4) First round diamond control, non-minimum

Result at table:

5♥ -1 by East, NS +50

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

TD was called by East at end of auction. East said that North's first pass was out of tempo. TD then asked the other players.

North wasn't sure. South said there wasn't much of one but he would pass the TD on to ask West next. West said it was not long, but it was a tempo break in the context of the auction.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

4♥ making by East, NS -420

Details of ruling:

TD decided that there was a hesitation.

South has unauthorised information from North's out of tempo pass and 5♦ is suggested over pass by this information. Laws 16A, 12C.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Appeals Committee decision:

Table score re-instated

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

There was a hesitation (even if it was short).

South has a maximum for a 2NT bid with extra shape. She judged that 10 tricks would be the limit so bid 4♦. Over 4♥, which she expected to make, it is consistent to now bid 5♦, even with no hesitation from partner.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The AC ruling gives no evidence that they followed the laws. The question is not whether 5D was consistent, but whether Pass was a logical alternative. The double suggested a lead, not a save, and there are many deals where 9 tricks would be the limit for EW.

As for the evidence, North doubled 3D with a hand where he ought to have bid 4D or 5D -- his hand is certainly consistent with a hesitation over 4H.

I prefer the TD's ruling to the AC's.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

I don't agree that "South has a maximum for a 2NT bid", because few play it as severely limited. But I agree in all other considerations with the AC. North's double of 3D (presumably showing medium length in D, with an honour, and C shortness) makes South's hand very offensive-oriented. 5D could very well make (it can, by the way, if East doesn't guess which Ace West holds, or West leads a spade). Bidding 5D stands out. Perhaps one should ask South why she didn't bid them directly? Perhaps she "knew" W was about to bid 4H and decided to bid 5D unless partner doubled? Also, the hesitation doesn't specifically suggest anything. North could hold 5431 pattern and be thinking of doubling 4H. And in fierce competitive battles, a short hesitation perhaps tells less than a very quick bid.

I fail to see anything wrong in South's attitude, and that's an uncommon event in tempo cases. ☺

Barry Rigal's comments:

I am reluctant to rule against the non-offenders, but here, proper procedure if followed [and which should certainly have been stated in the write-up] leads to letting the table result stand. There WAS a hesitation (brief or otherwise is irrelevant – see 'slightly pregnant') and it pointed toward bidding. But was there an LA to bidding? Given East's announcement of diamond control, partner's double suggests his hand type and that 5D will be a good save – if 4H is making, which the auction certainly suggests.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

There is a great deal not to like about NS's auction. Unfavorable vulnerability and knowing that EW has 1st round control of diamonds, South should know that 4D will not be the final contract. I would have bid 5D immediately. I would have bid 4D immediately with the North hand rather than double and would certainly not hesitate, however brief, subsequently. Was there in fact a hesitation? North must not act TOO quickly!!

I don't have any problems with the EW auction (would like more info as to the meaning of 3D). If West had bid 5H looking at the horrid QJ of clubs I might rule a double shot and a failure to continue playing bridge, but E is the one who bid it.

I can live with both rulings. The TD did right to make the offending side appeal. The committee ruling is OK, but I could agree with the reverse if the BIT was extreme.

David Stevenson's comments:

By bidding 4♦ South appears to have bid the limit of her hand. To bid 5♦ seems somewhat dubious. Therefore, once it is accepted that there was a hesitation by North, it is routine to disallow the 5♦ bid.

Eric Landau's comments:

Again, I think the Director got this one right. I disagree with the committee's finding that South's 5D bid was consistent with her previous 4D bid. The normal meaning of 4D, on an auction in which it is likely that the opponents will continue to 4H (here, after East's redouble, it was virtually certain), is to suggest that partner take the sacrifice, but leaves the final decision in partner's hands. If South, vul vs. not, were genuinely convinced that the hand would play for 10 tricks, and thus was prepared to commit to the five-level on her own, she would have bid 5D over the redouble. It looks to me like South's 4D passed the decision whether to save to North, and then North's huddle over 4H passed it back to South.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Is the 5D bid suggested over pass by North's slow pass? The TD says yes, the AC says no. Do we know what South's peers said?

Frances Hinden's comments:

Just because it is 'consistent' to bid 5♦ doesn't mean that it is legal (i.e. pass may still be a LA, and the UI from partner's hesitation may suggest bidding on). However, if the AC decided after hearing the arguments that there was no LA to 5♦ for South then I see no reason to disbelieve them.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

The AC felt that, after North's double of the 3♦ bid, passing out 4♥ was not a logical alternative for South. It is also not clear that the short hesitation demonstrably suggested bidding 5♦. If North was thinking of doubling 4♥ then competing to 5♦ is less likely to be the successful action.

Mike Amos' comments:

OK a judgement ruling – I didn't feel very strongly about it at the time although I prefer the TD's ruling. The TD did well to state clearly that there was a hesitation and rightly the AC accepted this. I'm not sure that South's action is 70%. All North has done is double 3♦ - presumably a cheap way of showing ♦ support. Is this really enough to suggest at this vulnerability that 5♦ is a good save? Surely not. I think the only good excuse for bidding 5♦ would be if you expected it to make and if you expected that you could have bid it the previous round.

Richard Hills' comments:

The TD's ruling was correct.

The AC said "South has a maximum for 2NT with extra shape." Yes, but that evidence points both ways.

South's maximum of two aces means that South holds two defensive tricks against 4H. South's singletons in the majors suggest that the majors are breaking badly in 4H. Ergo, South's maximum increases the likelihood that 5D could be a phantom sacrifice against 4H.

But North's hesitation demonstrably suggests that 5D is not a phantom save, as North's hesitation demonstrably suggests useful values in the minors, perhaps both minor suit kings. (By gum, North does hold both minor suit kings!)

The quality of the AC membership may be too high, since they would be well aware of the teams' maxim, "When in doubt, bid one more." At teams bridge, one off in a phantom save (costing 3 to 6 imps) is good bridge, as it is insurance against a game swing or double-game swing (costing 10 to 17 imps).

But in this appeal the form of scoring is matchpointed pairs, in which a phantom save could convert a top to a bottom.

Final summary by editor:

As is often the case with judgement rulings, the analysis of the hand is seen differently by different commentators.

APPEAL No 4: You play the mini?

Tournament Director:

Roland Bolton

Appeals Committee:

Frances Hinden (Chairman) Heather Dhondy Paula Leslie

Swiss Pairs Board no 3 Dealer South EW vulnerable	♠ J76 ♥ Q75 ♦ J72 ♣ JT74										
♠ T3 ♥ KJ8 ♦ 9853 ♣ AK53	<table style="margin: auto; border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><i>W</i></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>E</i></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr> </table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ K9854 ♥ A92 ♦ AQT4 ♣ 9
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ AQ2 ♥ T643 ♦ K6 ♣ Q862										

Basic systems:

North-South play mini no-trump 1st + 2nd position n/v

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1NT
P (1)	P	Dbl	P
P	Redbl (2)	P	2♣
P	P	Dbl (3)	P
P	P		

- (1) West stated to South “you are playing mini no-trump?”
- (2) Transfer to clubs
- (3) Takeout or showing extra values

Result at table:

2♣ doubled –3 by South, NS –500

Director first called:

After East doubled 1NT bid

Director's statement of facts:

West agreed that he stated to South "You are playing a mini no-trump" (3rd board of match). TD was recalled at end of play.

TD asked East value of the double over a 12-14 1NT. He was told 15+, but shaded down over a mini no-trump. East also stated that he had the option on the hand of using Astro.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

67% of 2♠ +1 by East, NS -140
+ 33% of 2♠ +2 by East, NS -170

Details of ruling:

TD ruled that East had options of doubling or bidding Astro. The statement by West suggested that doubling would be the correct decision. TD replaced double of 1NT with an Astro-type bid. Law 16.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by East-West:

West asked if it was a mini – did not state it. West had only just pulled cards out of board when asking. East stated (when asked by TD) that double of mini virtually mandatory with 13+ (ie stronger Milton count than max mini).

East did not receive unauthorised information: he was aware of the NT range.

Appeals Committee's decision:

Table score re-instated
Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Discussion at appeal convinced us that West asked without having sorted his hand and no UI was given.

Please tell E/W not to do this – find out the range of 1NT at the start of the match and then shut up. Next time you may not be so lucky!

Note by editor:

At the time there was a regulation that players were expected to find out the opponents' no-trump range at the start of the round. By the time this booklet is published, partner will announce the range automatically whenever a natural 1NT is opened hopefully eliminating many of these types of problems.

Richard Hills' comments:

Both the TD and AC were correct, because facts undiscovered by the TD were unearthed by the AC.

This shows one of the advantages of the appeal process, since an AC has more time than a TD to discover subtleties of fact.

Mike Amos' comments:

All TD's have been embarrassed in front of an AC when a new piece of information emerges that we failed to ask about or the players forgot to tell us when the ruling was originally made. If a player asks a question about an opponent's bid before he looks at and sorts his hand then there is no UI. Well done AC. (Hooray for announcements)

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

A good ruling by the AC. It is a shame that the full facts were not made apparent to the TD at the table, else he would surely have ruled the same way.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Why do we have different facts on appeal? If West had not seen his cards when he made the statement then there is no UI and no case. But was West really that late taking his cards from the board?

David Stevenson's comments:

So was there UI (unauthorised information)? The Committee thought not. Unfortunately many players always used to ask the NT range only when they had enough points to consider action. This practice happens far less often these days, and the Committee felt this was not the case here.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

If the question was asked before West had even sorted the hand (as the committee seemed to have validated) then I would revert to the table result. As stated regarding the existing regulation that it was incumbent upon the opponents to determine the range prior to the start of the match—I realize that in reality this rarely happens.

Barry Rigal's comments:

If West really asked the range without looking at his hand there can be no UI. I shall be interested to see how the announcing procedure works in UK – in the US my belief is that announcing the NT range has worked well. Of course the 'question defence' works best against a weak-NT, more common in UK than US, so maybe this change in procedure will actually be more critical in UK!

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

A strange case: everybody is right ☺

The TD is right: while East didn't get extra information about the range, he did get information about West's interest about it. His decisions could have been (and seem to have been) influenced by this. Therefore, adjust the score. Obvious.

Now the AC establishes West hadn't been able to see any card in his hand, things change, of course. To warn E/W and nothing more is the right reaction. West's question couldn't transmit any information about West's hand.

The case where E/W could be declared at fault would be that of a "pro question", but there is nothing in the case as it is presented to suggest it.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Both the TD and the AC rulings were reasonable. The AC had more time to bring the facts out. If West asked before looking at his hand then no UI was possible. A procedural penalty would have been appropriate, though.

EBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

Although it is unusual for an Appeals Committee to overrule the TD on a question of fact, it does appear that further facts came to light at the hearing of the appeal. It is a question of judgement for an Appeals Committee as to whether to rule on the basis of new facts.

The TD seems to have considered that the statement or question by W automatically passed unauthorised information. This is not correct. It is likely to do so, but if the Appeals Committee decided that W spoke before he had looked at his hand, and that E realised this, then the conclusion that there was no unauthorised information on this occasion seems right.

Final summary by editor:

While I am not a great believer in the appeals process, this seems one of those hands where the ability of an AC to take their time and carefully elicit the full facts has stopped a miscarriage of justice. Unusually in EBU events there was an all-female AC.

APPEAL No 5: Yet another Hesitation Blackwood!

Tournament Director:

Robin Barker

Appeals Committee:

Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) Graham Osborne Liz McGowan

Swiss Pairs Board no 8 Dealer West Nil vulnerable	♠ AQ7 ♥ AQJ98 ♦ AQT ♣ AK										
♠ T65432 ♥ T6 ♦ 9 ♣ Q654	<table style="margin: auto; border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><i>W</i></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>E</i></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr> </table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ KJ98 ♥ 2 ♦ K32 ♣ J9872
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ -- ♥ K7543 ♦ J87654 ♣ T3										

Basic systems:

North-South play Benji Acol

East-West play 2/1, Weak 2s

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♠! (1)	... Dbl	3♥! (2)	Pass
3♠	Dbl	Pass	4♦
Pass	... 4NT! (3)	Pass	5♣! (4)
Pass 5♦	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- (1) Weak (asked)
- (2) Raise to 3♠ with a spade honour (asked)
- (3) RKCB
- (4) 0 or 3

Result at table:

6♦ making by South, NS +920

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

TD established that North had been slow during the auction. "We know he has a good hand but doesn't how to bid." Specifically, the first double and 4NT were slow, and 5♦ was very slow.

TD was recalled when 6♦ had made. South said he bid 6♦ because he was maximum for his (first) pass, his hand has improved considerably, and he has a void; he could have had the same hand without as many diamonds, with some spades and no ♥K.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

5♦ +1 by South, NS +420

Details of ruling:

Pass is a logical alternative to 6♦ despite South's extra assets. The slow 5♦ suggests partner (South) might go on, so 6♦ is disallowed. Laws 16A, 12C2.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Pass was a logical alternative and the TD was correct to adjust.

Although the South hand contained some useful additional features, he had not chosen to show this earlier and North would have done better to decide how to proceed after a Blackwood response earlier than he did.

We considered retaining the deposit but decided not to do so as N/S were inexperienced.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

I don't understand why the deposit was returned. NS were experienced enough to file an appeal. The AC denied them the important and useful experience of losing their deposit, one they apparently needed. Why bother requiring a deposit of inexperienced pairs at all?

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Obvious. NS could be lacking two cashable high cards (Axx – AQJx – Qxxx – AKQ); North's hand is not so defined that one can bet on its honour trick count (contrast with e.g. a 2C opening). Pass is more than a LA. Keeping the deposit is, too.

Barry Rigal's comments:

This is a tough one; the facts indicate N/S are very inexperienced so we cannot use our bridge judgment to say South has an unbelievable hand on the auction and more like a grand slam try than a pass of 5D. Personally I'd feel the non-offenders were not entitled to anything here even if I left the offenders with the adjusted result. Certainly no withholding of deposit.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Keep the deposit!!!!!!!!!!!!

David Stevenson's comments:

South's pass over 3♥ was poor: his 4♦ was very poor. He has considerably underbid his hand. Now when partner considers before signing off he finally realises this is his moment. What can one say? It is not legal! If he is inexperienced then he should have it explained to him what is wrong.

I am getting less sure about this method of returning deposits where the appellants are inexperienced especially in completely blatant cases like this one. The EBU provides Appeals Consultants at major tournaments, including Brighton where this appeal comes from. No doubt an Appeals Consultant (affectionately known as a "Cuddly") would tell this pair not to appeal, so either they ignored the Appeals Consultant, or they did not bother to see one – and the TD will probably have suggested it. So perhaps the time has come to start keeping deposits in blatant cases even when the appellants are inexperienced.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Perfect performance by TD and AC. When will players learn to avoid using UI in these auctions?

Frances Hinden's comments:

I agree with the TD and AC, but I think this is a closer decision than many similar rulings as South does have quite a bit to spare for the auction to date. The spade void might be as good as a key card, but there might still be two aces missing. There is a good lesson here: when using Blackwood, decide what you are going to do after any possible response *before* you bid 4NT.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

A good ruling by the TD and confirmed by the AC. The only question for the AC was whether or not to keep the deposit.

Mike Amos' comments:

Old, old ground. TD 10/10 AC 9½/10. I'd just like that last sentence to be, "We would have kept the deposit, but decided not to" It's difficult to imagine Jeremy Dhondy as Father Christmas.

Richard Hills' comments:

I presume that the experienced TD informed the inexperienced North-South of the Appeals Advisor option at the time North-South notified the TD of their intention to appeal.

So, if the inexperienced North-South deliberately eschewed using an Appeals Advisor to mitigate their inexperience, then the deposit should have been retained as an incentive for them to use an Appeals Advisor in future.

Note by editor:

EBU policy is that the Appeals Committee should not be told nor seek to find out whether an Appeals Advisor has been consulted.

Final summary by editor:

Most thought the question was whether to keep the deposit. It is clear that there is quite a lot of feeling that deposits should be kept even from inexperienced players.

APPEAL No 6: Is that weak?

Tournament Director:

Eddie Williams

Appeals Committee:

David Burn (Chairman) Paul Lamford Peter Czerniewski

Swiss Pairs Board no 29 Dealer North All vulnerable	♠ Q872 ♥ 2 ♦ K943 ♣ 9754	
♠ A3 ♥ AQ74 ♦ QJT2 ♣ AT3	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ K64 ♥ 65 ♦ 765 ♣ KQJ62
	♠ JT95 ♥ KJT983 ♦ A8 ♣ 8	

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
	P	P	2♥! (1)
... P	P	3♣	P
3NT	P	P	P

(1) Weak

Result at table:

3NT +2 by West, NS -660

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

After the 2♥ opening from South, West asked the question of North "Is that weak?" and then passed.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

2♥ -1 by South, NS -100

Details of ruling:

TD ruled that pass was a logical alternative to 3♣. Law 16A.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Basis of appeal:

Pass was not a logical alternative.

Appeals Committee's decision:

Table score re-instated

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

East's 3♣ is a call to which there is no logical alternative suggested by the (normal) question "Is 2♥ weak?".

Richard Hills' comments:

Why did the TD and AC come to a different conclusion on whether 3C was the only logical alternative? If both the TD and AC were merely relying on their "gut feeling", then both were wrong. Rather, if peers of East had been polled, then the TD and AC could have come to an identical and legal conclusion.

For what my opinion is worth, since I do not know if I am a peer of East, I would have passed at teams, but have bid 3C in the actual matchpointed Swiss Pairs setting.

Mike Amos' comments:

I prefer the AC's ruling but not their explanation. The meaning of the TD's ruling is clear. He has decided that there is UI and so has applied 16A and furthermore states clearly that in his opinion Pass is a LA and so has adjusted.

The AC has overturned this, but it's not 100% clear why. Did they decide there was no UI? (*"the (normal) question"*) or did they decide Pass was not as logical alternative as is suggested by the first part of their comments?

If they have decided Pass is not an LA then fair enough, but then some information from the TD about the level of the players and East's arguments for bidding 3♣ would have been helpful. West's Pass over 2♥ seems incredible. How do they show balanced 17 counts? Ask a question and pass? I can see how East could persuade an AC that Pass was not an LA, but I don't have enough information to decide if I agree.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

This one is close. Quite a few players would pass out 2♥ at game all but would it be as many as 3 in 10, the test used in England? I suspect that the answer is yes when restricting the question to players of West's standard (the AC will assume that East is a similar standard to West unless they have evidence to the contrary), in which case the TD ruling is correct. I don't understand the AC comment about the question being "normal". In England, asking any question is assumed to indicate an interest in bidding.

Frances Hinden's comments:

I think I agree with the AC's ruling (double is also a LA, but I don't think any UI particularly suggests one action over another). This is however just the sort of hand where I would be interested in a player poll restricted to those who think that passing in second seat on that West hand is the correct action.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Another case where we might all have ruled differently a few years ago? If I understand the AC correctly, they are saying that if West cannot bid over a weak 2H bid then 3C is not being suggested. I agree. Nice case.

Eric Landau's comments:

I am confused by the writeup of this one. The bidding diagram indicates "hesitation (agreed)" prior to West's pass, but there is no mention of a hesitation in the accompanying text. I agree with the committee that West's "Is that weak?" is a "normal" question that does not by itself carry a strong enough suggestion of strength for them to presume that East's bidding may have been affected by it. But the same question followed by a noticeable huddle does. If there in fact was no huddle, the committee's ruling looks right, but if there was, the Director's ruling should have been upheld.

David Stevenson's comments:

This is an example of might be called a "standard unauthorised information (UI) ruling." The questions to be asked are

1. Was there UI? The question about 2♥ might be considered to show an interest in the auction: would West have asked with a valueless hand?
2. Was there a logical alternative (LA) to the call chosen? For example, was Pass instead of 3♣ an action that three in ten people might find? The TD thought Yes, the Committee thought No.
3. Was the action taken suggested over an LA by the UI? Did West's question suggest 3♣ might be more successful than Pass?

So long as the action chosen benefited the side with the UI, and so long as the answer to all three of the above questions is Yes, then an adjustment is in order.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Hmmmm! West has a standard 2NT overcall yet asks an irrelevant (by that I mean-what difference would it have made if it wasn't weak?) question and passes. East has an extremely dubious action of any kind vulnerable and chooses to bid 3C (not at all my choice by the way—I'm a doubler if you hold a gun to my head and force me to not pass.) Pass is not a logical alternative???? TD makes the correct ruling and EW appeal. Keep the deposit!!!! Oops they can't—the committee overruled the director???????????????????? I'll be kind as instructed-since words fail me.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Words rarely fail me; they do here. There is no LA to acting on a 5332 nine-count vulnerable? The AC is encouraging partnerships like E/W to take advantage of tempo infractions, questions etc when they make adjustments like this. I'm shocked, shocked...

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

I must have missed something here. The AC says there is no alternative. I asked some good players whether they would reopen 3C, vulnerable, and got 3 firm noes out of 6, two uncertain answers, and only one unequivocal aye. There goes the "no logical alternative to 3C" position. Try constructing hands: E/W will be -200 more often than not.

West erred in two ways: in asking a specific question rather than "please explain", therefore transmitting the UI that his cards were compatible with South having a weak hand, then in passing after his question and tempo, while he had a perfect 2NT bid which would have kept his partner out of trouble.

East probably used this UI. As East, I wouldn't even have thought about reopening after receiving it.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

There was nothing normal about West's question, and EBU regulations make it clear that asking about a call which is not alerted may make UI available to partner. West knew from his hand that 2H was weak, and in any case if he was going to pass over a weak 2 then he had no need to ask -- he was going to pass over anything stronger.

Passing out 2H would not have been abnormal with the East had.

Vulnerable with an aceless nine count and no singleton heart Pass would be right quite often.

I much prefer the TD's ruling to the AC's.

Final summary by editor:

There was UI, even though the 2♥ opening was alerted – Adam please note: we alerted weak twos when this hand occurred – but the commentators are not all sure whether 3♣ should be disallowed.

This is another problem position which will hopefully disappear now, since from 1st August 2006 weak twos are announced not alerted.

APPEAL No 7: 4♠? Oh, no, not 4♠!

Tournament Director:

Marilyn Jones

Appeals Committee:

Frances Hinden (Chairman) Eddie Lucioni Malcolm Harris

Swiss Pairs Board no 11 Dealer South Nil vulnerable	♠ KJ873 ♥ JT ♦ 964 ♣ K85										
♠ 4 ♥ A976 ♦ AQJ ♣ QJT93	<table style="margin: auto; border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><i>W</i></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>E</i></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr> </table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ A95 ♥ K3 ♦ KT732 ♣ 642
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ QT62 ♥ Q8542 ♦ 85 ♣ A7										

Basic systems:

North-South play 2/1 Game force (modified)

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♦! (1)
2♠ (2)	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦ (3)	Pass
Pass	Pass		

- (1) Weak, both majors, 4:4 at least
- (2) Intended as a takeout double
- (3) Cue bid agreeing spades

Result at table:

5♦ making by East, NS -400, lead ♦5

Director first called:

At beginning of play

Director's statement of facts:

2♠ bid: there was no agreement between East and West.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

No logical alternative to 5♣ bid. Law 16A.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Director's comments:

N/S in explaining how they had been damaged spoke very forcefully to me.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

E/W know they have no agreement on the sequence – with no agreement there is no UI from the lack of alert. West had to decide if partner had long spades with nothing else, or if partner would have bid 3♠ then 4♠ with that holding.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

No alert implies natural. How do we know that EW have no agreement here? What would East do with seven good spades and out? It seems to me that EW may well have benefited from the alert procedure. West has exactly the hand he intended to show. I would have adjusted the score to 4S-4, NS +200.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Of course E/W have every right to try and reach their best contract. West is allowed to guess a wheel has come loose. East's cue is logical, and for some reason it happens to be a good contract. Colour them lucky. BTW, I would even allow East to pass over 5C, because he knows they don't know (*this* is AI), and who's going to cue after a non-forcing 2S bid and a game raise?

It seems N/S did only appeal out of frustration, and keeping the deposit should have taught them.

NB: in my style, 4S over the T/O bid would have been a splinter with both minors, so West's passing it is absurd.

Barry Rigal's comments:

A very weak write-up. What were the grounds for appeal, where was the damage? What I believe the TD established was that with no alert of 2S, West knew East had taken his 2S call as natural, not take-out. That seems a very sound basis of appeal, but it should have been stated.

That said, did West have an LA to bidding? Yes I think he did. I would certainly have expected the initial ruling to go in favour of the non-offenders, and unless West could demonstrate a good case as to why 4S (as opposed to eg 3H) was take-out I'd leave it in 4S down a bunch.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

No agreement-no MI- no UI- No harm-no problem. I'm in a rut—keep the deposit.

David Stevenson's comments:

One of the problems of using little known defensive-type conventions is that opponents do not have agreements and misunderstand what they are doing. Ok, that's not usually a problem: usually that is an advantage of using them! But when opponents get into a guessing game as a result they will sometimes land on their feet, and it seems harsh to expect them not to know what they are doing and to get ruled against if they are lucky.

In this case we know in our hearts that whether there is UI or not, West is never going to play in spades, so the ruling is reasonable.

The TD felt that the attitude of N/S was sufficiently threatening to mention it: a pity she did not go further and issue a disciplinary penalty. Being upset by a ruling is not a good enough reason for discourtesy.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

East's failure to alert tells West that East does not think the 2S is take-out. This is UI. If East alerts 2S as take-out and then bids 4S, passing 4S is a logical alternative for West. What am I missing here?

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

I quite like the AC's reasoning but one thing worries me. If West thought that he had no agreement, why did he bid 2♠? This seems a very risky bid to make unless you are fairly sure that partner will interpret it the way you intend. Still considering the relative probabilities of (i) East having good enough spades to jump to 4♠ when South has 4 or 5 of them and West has 1 himself and (ii) East having treated 2♠ as natural and holding at least 3 spades, I think (ii) is sufficiently more likely to warrant catering for (i) not to be a logical alternative.

Mike Amos' comments:

This and Case 9 clearly make a pair. Case 7 occurred at the end of the first weekend and we spent most of the week being told by a vociferous group of players and some TDs, that we and the AC were off our heads to rule in this way.

West has UI because East has failed to alert 2♠. Is pass an LA?

I thought then and still think now that both the TD and the AC got this right. I shall be very interested to see what other commentators think.

Richard Hills' comments:

"With no agreement there is no UI from lack of alert."

Therefore, no infraction by East-West, no adjustment for the rub-of-the-green "damage" to North-South.

The TD's comment that North-South "spoke very forcefully to me" makes me wonder if the TD was using traditional English understatement with the word "forcefully".

Law 74B5 prohibits players "addressing the Director in a manner discourteous to him." If this did in fact occur, further action from the English Laws and Ethics Committee would seem to be appropriate.

Final summary by editor:

There was some idea with some of the commentators that E/W might have had an agreement even though they say they did not. Unlike in some places, in England a 2♦ opening to show the majors (called Ekrens or Norwegian) is still rare enough that, apart from top class partnerships, few opponents will have any agreements.

Jeffrey was worried about why he bid 2♠ if he did not have an agreement. Surely, bidding a suit shown by the opponent as a takeout manoeuvre is quite common, and seems a reasonable gamble.

APPEAL No 8: Surely 4♠ is going off!

Tournament Director:

Roland Bolton

Appeals Committee:

Frances Hinden (Chairman) Richard Bowdery Liz McGowan

Pivot Teams Board no 9 Dealer North EW vulnerable	♠ KJT2 ♥ T87 ♦ KQT52 ♣ T										
♠ Q84 ♥ K632 ♦ AJ94 ♣ K2	<table style="margin: auto; border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><i>W</i></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>E</i></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr> </table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ A9653 ♥ AJ9 ♦ 83 ♣ A75
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ 7 ♥ Q54 ♦ 76 ♣ QJ98643										

Basic systems:

North-South play Acol, 12-14 NT

East-West play Acol, 12-14 NT, weak 2s in three suits

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	P	1♠	P
2♦	P	2♠	P (1)
4♠	Dbl	P	P
P			

(1) Alleged hesitation

Result at table:

4♠ doubled -1 by East, NS +200

Director first called:

After double by North of 4♠ bid.

Director's statement of facts:

E/W called TD after double of 4♠ by North. TD asked North if he was aware for pause by South over 2♠: told No.

TD asked South if he had given consideration over 2♠ by East: told Yes.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

TD ruled hesitation had occurred over 2♠ bid by East. Result stands. Double not suggested by UI (unauthorised information). Law 16A.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Appeals Committee's decision:

Score assigned for both sides:

4♠ -1 by East, NS +100

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

The hesitation suggests South is thinking of bidding over 2♠ so we deem the UI suggest double would be more successful.

It was clear at the appeal that South had been thinking of bidding so we agree with the TD that there was a hesitation.

If South is thinking of bidding he is likely to have some values (in spite of what he actually had!) which suggests double would be a good choice.

Although we agree that this North would likely double anyway, the AC have enough evidence from other tables that pass is an LA on this auction.

Richard Hills' comments:

Poor reasoning by the TD. South's hesitation demonstrably suggested to North that South held values, thus making a penalty double more attractive and therefore illegal under Law 16.

The fact that South actually did not hold values is irrelevant to what was demonstrably suggested to North.

Mike Amos' comments:

TD 100% AC 90% - keep deposit

North has no reason to be sure 4♠ is going off on his own hand. Double may give the trump position away and allow the contract to be made. Pass is a clear LA.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

What would an immediate 3♣ overcall by South have meant? Given North's hand and the auction up to 4♠ the most likely reason for South considering positive action would be a weak hand with clubs or possibly hearts, but lacking the values to overcall on the first round. In neither case does this UI demonstrably suggest that the defensive prospects against 4♠ will be enhanced so I would have allowed the table result to stand.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

AC did a good job. North's double is made easier by the fact that South was thinking of doing something over 2S.

Eric Landau's comments:

This case touches on an interesting and unsettled area of bridge law. When we say, "South's huddle suggested that North bid" (or, in this particular case, double), we speak in a common shorthand; what we mean is, "South's huddle suggested that South held values, and South's holding values made it more attractive for North to bid." But if North's bid was based on his assumption that South held some values, and South was in fact dead broke, can we rule that his bid was "demonstrably suggested", or was based on "unauthorized information"? Can you "demonstrate" a "suggestion" that is demonstrably false? If South's values are illusory, North's presumption that South holds them is "unauthorized", but is it "information"? If you're a computer scientist, it is. If you're an epistemologist, it isn't. If you're a TD, the bridge laws don't provide an answer. In this particular case, we can finesse this deep philosophical issue because South was not, in fact, dead broke -- had he not held the HQ, 4SX would have been cold. That's enough to justify the committee's adjusting the score. But it would surely be nice to get answers to all those tricky questions.

David Stevenson's comments:

Most UI rulings are about whether there was a hesitation or whether there was a logical alternative to the action chosen. Here it seems clear that South hesitated and that some number of players, certainly more than three out of ten, would pass rather than double 4♠.

But to adjust for UI it is also required for the UI to suggest the chosen action over a logical alternative: did the pause over 2♠ suggest the double would be successful? This is less clear, and the TD and Committee came to different conclusions.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

It seems strange that at favorable vulnerability South had a problem over 2S and not 1S. Given that an agreed upon BIT had occurred (kudos to South for honesty) I reluctantly agree with not allowing the double. Had the BIT occurred over 1S, I might still be thinking about this one.

Barry Rigal's comments:

A surprising initial ruling – had it gone the other way and been appealed the committee would then have had the pleasure of keeping a deposit and giving a Procedural Penalty.

To my mind the AC's decision as to why a slow pass did suggest values makes the reason for taking away the double clear-cut. As I say, I am surprised at the initial ruling.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

While E/W's sequence (DGR) suggests genuine diamonds in West's hand, and North's double is good strategy, if only on lead-directing merits, pass is a LA. Enough said. Agree with the AC.

If a ♦ lead was produced, consider it has been suggested by the (disallowed) double, too, and adjust the score if necessary.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The AC ruling looks right. South's values, such as they were, did indeed help set 4S.

Final summary by editor:

Another judgement ruling, another hand with different views. But on balance the view is the AC was right to adjust.

APPEAL No 9: Not that pesky 2♣ opening again!

Tournament Director:

Mike Amos

Appeals Committee:

Glyn Liggins (Chairman) Paul Lamford Kath Nelson

Swiss Teams Board no 20 Dealer West All vulnerable	♠ A ♥ AT64 ♦ AK86 ♣ J952	
♠ KQ54 ♥ Q872 ♦ J754 ♣ K	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ 983 ♥ KJ93 ♦ T932 ♣ A4
	♠ JT762 ♥ 5 ♦ Q ♣ QT8763	

Basic systems:

East-West play Artificial Multiway Club

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
2♣! (1)	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣!
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) 8-13, at least 4-4 in the majors (5-4 if minimum)

Result at table:

5♣ making by South, NS +600

Director first called:

While teams were scoring up

Director's statement of facts:

E/W called the TD to assess if there had been UI and to investigate N/S's failure to alert 2♠.

TD asked North what she had intended by her 2♠ bid. She said she thought it would ask for a stop. South said he thought it was natural.

TD asked North why she bid 4NT. She said she did not want to play 4♠. South thought this was Blackwood. TD asked North why she passed 5♣. She said she preferred that to 4♠.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

N/S had no clearly agreed defence to 2♣ convention.

In view of the vulnerability and West's opening bid, it seems very unlikely that South holds ♠ KQJxxxx. Therefore the TD decided that from the bidding North was entitled to infer that South had misinterpreted her 2♠ call.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We do not feel it was percentage to pass 4♠. Thereafter North was lucky to land in the best spot. Rub of the green.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

A rerun of case 7, and again I see no reason the 2S bidder should be allowed to keep his score. He knows his partner treated 2S as natural because of the failure to alert. This information is unauthorized, so he must bend over backward not to take advantage. Instead he acted exactly as he would have had he been taking full advantage. The a priori unlikelihood of partner holding long strong spades must be balanced against the fact that partner contracted to take 10 tricks with spades as trump.

Neither the TD nor the AC seem to have applied the proper law. The question is not what North was allowed to infer, nor whether Pass was the percentage action, but whether Pass was a Logical Alternative to 4NT.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Twin to case 7 and same conclusion. South merely answered the "question", so N/S end up 100% spotless, and keeping the deposit is automatic.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Rub of the green is not part of the laws or appeals process. North committed an infraction when he bid on over 4S. His partner's failure to alert told him that he had taken the 2S call as natural. What would North have done had he been told that 2S was artificial and shortage, and then South had bid 4S... he would have passed of course and argued that this auction shows self-supporting S.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

I agree with "rub of the green." When will people who play disruptive conventions stop complaining about their opponents getting lucky and landing on their feet? See my comment for case #7 – I don't feel up to rewriting it.

David Stevenson's comments:

Similar to case #7, except that 2♣ openings to show the majors are considerably rarer: in fact unheard of with the given range. So no-one should expect a pair to have a defence to it. As in that case I am happy with the TD and AC.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

There is UI from the failure to alert the 2S bid but I agree with the AC that there is authorised information that can be used to rule out a single suited Spade hand with South – just about!

Frances Hinden's comments:

I agree with the TD and the AC.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

This is very similar to appeal number 7 and I agree with the TD and AC reasoning. This is an interesting situation so well done to the TD for finding three different AC members for this appeal.

Mike Amos' comments:

See comments on 7 above. This was at the start of Weekend 2 so at least I had the precedent of 7 to rely on. I even showed the players the ruling from the week before. I'm not sure why the deposit was returned.

Richard Hills' comments:

The 2C gadget is **theoretically** unsound; against experienced opponents it will lose more imps than it gains. Its major flaw is that, on those 50% of deals when the gadgeteers have the balance of power, the 2C gadget often preempts the gadgeteers out of their own best contract (especially when that best contract is 1NT on a misfitting deal).

But the 2C gadget is **practically** effective against bunny opposition, purely because of its unfair surprise value against those inexperienced opponents. For example, on this appeal N/S had no clearly agreed defence to the 2C gadget, so N/S were lucky to break even when they stumbled into the best contract via a Rueful Rabbit bidding sequence.

I believe that a better application of the Law 75 principle of full and free disclosure would have been for the EBU to use its powers pursuant to the footnote to Law 40E2 (which states that ".....sponsoring organisations may designate unusual methods and allow written defences against opponents' unusual methods to be referred to at the table") to require the 2C gadgeteers to announce to their opponents at the beginning of the match:

"We play this 2C gadget. Here are written notes on how to best defend against it, which you can both refer to during the auction if the 2C gadget should occur."

Final summary by editor:

Another mixed bag, similar to the arguments that went on at Brighton. It clearly is not the most obvious case.

No doubt there are many solutions to strange conventions, but written defences was suggested in England and found no support. Of course, English players are required to exchange CCs and these gadgets should be clearly apparent on the front of the card, so careful opponents will work out a defence. But it is not our job to tell players how to enjoy themselves, and many do not think that working out defences to odd things that usually do not turn up is a good idea.

APPEAL No 10: I must go on

Tournament Director:

Ian Spoons

Appeals Committee:

Alan Mould (Chairman) Ed Levy Ed Hoogenkamp

K/o teams Board no 42 Dealer East All vulnerable	♠ AJ52 ♥ KQ85 ♦ AKQ76 ♣ --										
♠ K7 ♥ 76 ♦ JT4 ♣ QT6543	<table style="margin: auto; border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><i>W</i></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>E</i></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr> </table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ 943 ♥ T94 ♦ 9853 ♣ AJ7
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ QT86 ♥ AJ32 ♦ 2 ♣ K982										

Basic systems:

North-South play Acol

East-West play 5 card majors, strong NT

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♣! (1)	Pass	... 4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Splinter – singleton or void plus heart support

Result at table:

6♥ making by South, NS +1430

Director first called:

When North bid 4♠

Director's statement of facts:

North-South agreed the hesitation before the 4♥ bid. At the conclusion of play, West said there were many hands where 11 tricks could not be underwritten, and the hesitation has removed much of that risk. North said once he had embarked on the splinter bid route, knowing partner cannot bid 4♦, he is committed to a try over 4♥.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

To an extent, the N/S methods commit them to the 5-level. North does have a very good hand and few players would think they had done enough if they passed 4♥.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Basis of appeal:

Pass is a logical alternative.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

The Committee felt that 4♠ was made very safe by the hesitation. However, all members thought that North was so large that they would bid 4♠. They weren't uninfluenced by the fact that the TD had asked three players all of whom bid on. N/S should take note that hesitations put partner under great pressure.

Richard Hills' comments:

Pocket Oxford Dictionary:

"obiter dictum, n. (pl. -ta). Casual remark, esp. judge's opinion expressed incidentally & without binding force. [L, = thing said by the way]

Appeals Committee obiter dicta comments:

"The Committee felt that 4S was made very safe by the hesitation. N/S should take note that hesitations put partner under great pressure."

In my opinion, these two obiter dicta sentences give the misleading impression that South's hesitation was somehow unethical. Not so. The WBF Code of Practice (which has been adopted as an EBU regulation, with the exception of a few minor details) states:

"A player who, without design, makes unauthorized information available to his partner does not commit an infraction of law or propriety; it is the use of that information that is a breach of the laws."

And of course South's hesitation was not "designed", since South had a genuine bridge problem over North's 4C splinter on whether or not to make a slam try with a maximum passed hand but a wasted king of clubs.

Mike Amos' comments:

I think this was good work all round by TD and AC. I think that North's arguments are persuasive. He bid 4♣ with the clear plan of making a further slam try. Pass was not an option. I'm surprised East-West appealed and surprised more that the AC did not consider retaining the deposit in a high level competition which I believe this was.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

From North's point of view (i) partner can still have enough to make slam good but also (ii) opposite a near useless collection with 4 hearts 5♥ will often be a poor contract and even 4♥ could be in jeopardy. Apart from the potential for severe club wastage opposite, partner might have responded very lightly to the 4th seat 1♦ opener. Without the benefit of a simulation I am not sure which is more likely out of (i) and (ii) so it is not obvious whether to bid on over 4♥ or not. With the UI North should pass 4♥ in accordance with Law 16A and I would adjust to 4♥ by South.

Frances Hinden's comments:

Moving over 4♥ was certainly made easier by the hesitation, but I do see the logic that says opener was committing himself to bidding on anyway. If the AC and a group of players consulted all see pass as not a LA then I suppose the ruling is correct. However, before ruling that the table result stands we truly have to believe that had South signed off quickly North would still have bid on and I am slightly dubious. I would not disagree with a ruling either way on this hand.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

I don't like the 4S bid - but if I poll players and they all bid 4S without the hesitation then I rule score stands. Did the AC really say they weren't interested in such a poll?

Note by editor:

No, they said "They weren't uninfluenced by the fact...". These double negatives can be very confusing!

David Stevenson's comments:

There was a recent thread on rec.games.bridge on how you showed a splinter that was stronger (or weaker) than other splinters. Of course, there may be artificial methods, but they would lose something somewhere else. In general, if you have an enormous hand, you have to make two tries and hope no disaster ensues. In this case, passing 4♥ was demonstrated not to be an LA by asking various people, and also looking at some other sequences on the same cards.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Hooray!! A case with merit. My own preference is not to splinter with a stiff ace or a void. This one might be hard not to do just that. If North felt he had safety at the 5 level-why not an immediate exclusion 5C bid? To be good on evaluating this case I would have needed to be there and heard both sides' arguments. My gut feeling is I would allow the 4S bid, but that is all it is. I could easily be convinced the other way-the key word being 'convinced'. I need to listen to the arguments by the players and the other committee members.

Barry Rigal's comments:

My flabber has rarely been so ghastrated. Yet again, an abysmal TD ruling and worse AC decision. How, prey, would South bid with xxx/10xxx/xxx/AKJ?

On the likely spade lead I'll be impressed if you can find a sequence of plays to make even 4H; it is unlikely in the extreme. This was a shockingly bad TD decision – where there was a clear infraction and doubt. The quality of the players consulted and AC decision makes me shudder. Essentially the trend of these decisions seems to be heading towards 'anything goes!' not bridge.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Disagree, albeit mildly. One consideration is that a splinter is a fairly descriptive, and somewhat limited, bid. If North thought he had too much for a splinterbid, he should have taken another way (2S then 4H perhaps). He is allowed to change his mind as to his hand valuation, but not after the variation in tempo.

I don't like the director's argument that "North was going to bid 4S anyway, as he knew South wouldn't bid 4D". In modern bidding, 4D would not show a diamond honour, but rather be a general slam try ("last train") and incidentally the right bid. 4H therefore shows a much weaker or more unsuited hand, so pass is more than just a LA.

"3 bidders out of 3 is not" a correct approximation of "at least 3/4 of the player's peers". Proving it is left as an exercise (hint: use χ^2). I wonder what a large bidding panel would have done.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

A tough decision. I'd have liked to have given the North hand to more than three of North's peers.

Final summary by editor:

More disagreements about judgement rulings, but that is the way it is! At least the methodology was good: before ruling various players were polled. Of course some commentators think not enough were polled, and one doubts the abilities of the players polled, which might come as a surprise to some of Europe's best players.

Critical to the decision is not just whether players might bid 4♠ over 4♥, but whether players who would bid 4♣ the previous round would bid that way. It is not good enough legally to argue that the player who made the bid was always going to bid 4♠: if his peers would not then it becomes illegal once he has UI suggesting it over pass. But if enough of the player's peers would bid 4♣ and then 4♠ over 4♥ then pass is no longer an LA.

APPEAL No 11: Language problems?

Tournament Director:

Mike Amos

Appeals Committee:

Neil Rosen (Chairman) Richard Bowdery Pat Denning

K/o teams Board no 1 Dealer North Nil vulnerable	♠ KQJ4 ♥ -- ♦ QT932 ♣ J974										
♠ AT9862 ♥ AQ ♦ K76 ♣ T2	<table style="margin: auto; border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;"><i>W</i></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>E</i></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;"><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr> </table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ -- ♥ JT832 ♦ A54 ♣ AKQ53
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ 753 ♥ K97654 ♦ J8 ♣ 86										

Basic systems:

East-West play Strong Club (Relay)

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT!	Dbl (1)	Redbl	2♠
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) North asked what 1NT was and believed he was told “Forcing”.

Result at table:

2♠ doubled -5 by South, NS -1100

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

TD was called at end of play by North. He argued that he was told "Forcing" and that this was not a normal "1NT forcing" response to 1M. East replied that he had said "Game forcing". South said he only heard "Forcing". West agreed with East.

North said that when E/W's 1NT bid was so unusual that they had a duty to carry out full disclosure. East pointed to their system card which said game forcing relay.

Note by editor:

E/W were Norwegian who spoke excellent English: N/S were Bulgarian whose English was poor.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

3NT making by West, NS -400

Details of ruling:

TD does not believe E/W have disclosed their methods adequately. North is less likely to double given "game forcing relay" description.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We believe firstly that English is the universal language of bridge. E/W are vastly experienced and as such, in our view, have a CLEAR duty to make absolutely certain that an unusual treatment was not only fully explained but also definitely understood by opponents without English as their first language.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Fair enough -- I won't second-guess the AC and TD who were on the spot.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

This is a difficult case, as facts are not firmly established, but several considerations point towards the decision made by the AC:

- The absolute duty to disclose unfamiliar methods; E/W knew there could be a misunderstanding, since 1RF 1NT is so common ("double alerts" would solve many such problems);
- The formulation: I'm used to saying and hearing "game force" rather than "game forcing", which would also be a way to avoid the problem;
- I guess it was obvious, at that time, that N/S's English was poor, and E/W should indeed take that into account.

However, the word "forcing" is sometimes taken as meaning "strong relay"; I've heard it more than once in Flanders; they could have explained in a shortened way in good faith; so I wouldn't be harsh on E/W, just adjust the score. *Traviviu la lingvo.*

Barry Rigal's comments:

With a dispute of facts such as this, it seems to me that the AC and TD were far closer to the action than we could be from here. If they thought there was a failure to explain properly, I can't see any reason to disagree.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Good director ruling. Good Appeals Committee ruling. I would also return the deposit, but if E/W were as experienced as the committee implied-I would include a private lecture as well.

David Stevenson's comments:

Players are often casual in their descriptions of their methods. But if they are misunderstood after an inadequate explanation then they are at fault, even if the explanation was correct. The AC explained the decision perfectly.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

I am happy with E/W getting 400 but I wonder about the bridge wisdom of South's 2S bid. Maybe it's not as bad a bid as it looks in which case TD and AC got it right. But if the 2S is adjudged to be wild or gambling then the N/S score needs to reflect that.

Frances Hinden's comments:

I believe that East said "game forcing" and North heard "forcing" and it is indeed E/W's responsibility to ensure that their opponents understand the explanation whatever the convention card said. However, there is a fairly subtle difference between a "game forcing" 1NT response and a "forcing" 1NT response (both may conceal either a spade suit or a heart fit or both) so I'm not necessarily convinced that North would pass with the correct explanation. As a passed hand, North has a hugely suitable hand to suggest a possible save and what looks like a normal take-out double. Perhaps he could convince me that he would always pass, but I would inclined to believe only "more likely" to pass and award a significant percentage of -1100 in a weighted ruling.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

N-S might not know what double of a 1NT game forcing relay would mean (would it be interpreted as showing a take-out double of hearts?), so their argument about being damaged by the MI might well be correct.

Mike Amos' comments:

Well I was the TD here too. I said what I thought at the time and still agree with myself. Full disclosure means that and especially if your methods are unusual you have an extra responsibility to make clear your agreements. This didn't happen here.

Richard Hills' comments:

"A CLEAR duty to make absolutely certain that an unusual treatment was definitely understood"??? Not so. This part of the Appeals Committee ruling is illegal.

Law 21A states:

"A player has no recourse if he has made a call on the basis of his own misunderstanding."

It is not East's fault that North did not hear the syllable "game" out of the explanation "game forcing".

However, I agree that "game forcing" was an incomplete description (best would have been "artificial game force relay"), so therefore misinformation. I also agree that if correct information had been given, North would have been less likely to mishear **multiple** extra syllables, so therefore the adjusted score remains legal even if part of the reasoning by the AC is not legal.

Final summary by editor:

It was generally believed to be a good ruling and decision. The underlying principle is that people must disclose properly and fully, and such things as language difficulties and conventions that are not commonly known affect this.

Richard quotes Law 21A but that only covers the second half of the transmission of information: its receipt. The sender does have a duty, embodied in Law 75A:

“Special partnership agreements, whether explicit or implicit, must be fully and freely available to the opponents (see Law 40).”

APPEAL No 12: Shall we try 2♥ now?

Tournament Director:

Darren Evetts

Referee:

Richard Fleet

Notes by editor:

A Referee is an Appeals Committee comprising one person.

Multiple teams is also called Round Robin teams (imps converted to VPs)

Multiple teams Board no 28 Dealer West N/S vulnerable	♠ A1042 ♥ AQ102 ♦ KQ109 ♣ 7	
♠ Q8753 ♥ K ♦ A63 ♣ Q932	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ KJ9 ♥ J986 ♦ 2 ♣ AK865
	♠ 6 ♥ 7543 ♦ J8754 ♣ J104	

Basic systems:

North-South play natural, 5 card majors

East-West play 4 card majors, 14-16 NT, 15-17 NT 3rd + 4th

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
1♠	1NT	Dbl	2♣ (1)
Dbl (2)	Redbl (3)	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

(1) Natural

(2) Shows three clubs or more: double under shows four

(3) Rescue

Result at table:

2♥ doubled +1 by South, NS +870, lead ♥K

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

TD was called to the table by East who was concerned that South's bid of 2♣ was not as explained (Natural).

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

N/S were playing a natural system, North's explanation was an accurate description of their agreed system. Laws 40C, 75A.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Basis of appeal:

E/W felt that explanation was incorrect

Comments by North-South:

We do not play any system after the double of our 1NT overcall, and correctly gave that explanation. South is clearly not prepared to stand 1NT doubled and tries 2♣ knowing that it is ostensibly natural. Clearly he plans to worm his way out (perhaps via a redouble) if doubled. The partnership have not had this sequence before.

Comments by East-West:

We were not informed properly of the nature of the N/S system – South hand inconsistent with explanation. Very odd to bid 2♣ (planning to redouble) when short in spades, which could easily be best fit. Think that they have agreement that 2♣, if not natural, shows reds. South knew perfectly well that he would not be faced with a 2♠ rebid from North (ie after redouble).

Comments by North-South:

No such agreement - never had that sequence before. Have the general agreement that they do not play in the opponents' suit, unless completely unambiguous. Had not decided at that point how to get out of 2♣. When West doubles 2♣, East knows that both sides have double fit.

Comments by East-West:

West could have been balanced or 4=1=5=3 in their methods.

Note by editor:

4=1=5=3 means the suit lengths in that order, ie four spades, one heart, five diamonds and three clubs.

Questions by Referee and answers by N/S:

Q: What was agreed range of 1NT?

A: 15-18(19).

Q: Do N/S have any agreed “wriggle” mechanism after 1NT (opening) double?

A: No.

Q: How did South know redouble was rescue?

A: Play all redoubles as rescue.

Q: Why did South choose to bid 2♥?

A: Things had taken turn for better – looks as though North is 4441; wanted to get doubled (unlikely in nine card diamond fit).

Referee’s decision:

Director’s ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Referee’s comments:

Explanation correct.

Accepted that N/S had no agreement as to the 2♣ bid.

South’s reasons for bidding 2♥ are cogent and persuasive.

Richard Hills’ comments:

The Referee missed an obvious point. South stated that North-South "play all redoubles as rescue". Therefore, North's explanation of South's 2C as "natural" was misinformation. Rather, North should have explained:

"2C is initially notionally natural, but if South subsequently redoubles, then South actually holds both red suits."

Mike Amos’ comments:

The only thing I don’t like about this case is the East-West pair’s attitude. It’s fine to appeal a ruling but they essentially seem to be accusing the North-South pair of lying.

The TD’s ruling seems to be fine to me and the Referee’s care and questioning seem to be a model of how it should be done.

Jeffrey Allerton’s comments:

A strange auction but the TD and Referee have asked all the relevant questions and there is no evidence of an undisclosed agreement. N/S were lucky here, but there is no reason to adjust the score.

Frances Hinden’s comments:

I agree with the referee.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Maybe N/S have an undisclosed agreement? I'm not too keen on South's claim that he wanted to get doubled in 2H either. Do we know why North decided to SOS from 2CX which could after all be N/S best spot? The case needs more investigation. But the TD and AC did a good job and did ask plenty of questions so maybe N/S are innocent?

David Stevenson's comments:

It looks a bit strange, but there is no direct evidence that anything is wrong so no reason to assume so.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

EW need to get a life. Keep the deposit. To paraphrase an American movie called "A League of Their Own" --There is no crying in bridge.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Just because E/W got a result they did not like is no reason to come to committee and expect them to buy the Brooklyn Bridge. The referee dealt cogently with all the issues under discussion, and might have considered keeping the deposit, although I can see why he did not.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

I've never heard of 2C showing reds here (and it would be silly too). Transfer, perhaps, but that's not consistent with the ensuing bidding. North would not have redoubled.

N/S's sequence is consistent with South inventing a solo-flight wriggle to 2 of a red suit by redoubling in a situation where it would be easy to understand.

With no indications as to methods (which translates into "no agreement", whence "natural if at all possible"), North's Rdbl and South's explanation of his actions, everything points to a "natural" meaning for 2C, and I find no reason to tell N/S they committed any infraction.

I guess N/S didn't mean "all Rdbls for T/O", perhaps "all Rdbls of possibly weak bids" or the like, but the spirit of the explanation is clear.

In a way, E/W were unlucky: had North held a more classical pattern, he would have passed, South would have redoubled, and everything would have been clear to everyone. But there is no redress for bad luck.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Good work all around. No infraction so no adjustment. I'd have considered keeping the deposit.

Final summary by editor:

No sympathy for E/W at all.

FINAL COMMENTS

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Many of those cases were quite obvious and shouldn't ever have come in front of an AC; or else please keep the deposit. Appeals #7, 9 and 11, at least, pertain to this category. I'm a bit shocked by appeal #6, which made me investigate a bit and find the AC should have investigated, too. In #10, however, the AC's decision isn't badly wrong, just that my personal scales turn the other side.

One case gives me a problem: #4. It is so strange that West asked before seeing his cards...

- East's bidding is very strange and so much consistent with getting UI;
- Who would wait till his opponent picked one's cards to have a look at one's own?

I'm wondering whether and how it was firmly established that West didn't see his cards, not even a quick glance.

But, in general, I agree with many decisions, and especially with comments on cases #2, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 12.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

We have just concluded our Summer Nationals in Chicago-and had the astonishing number of 4 appeals cases TOTAL for the entire tournament.

I am amazed at the number of cases that had no merit that were submitted for commentary. I am at a loss to figure out the requirements for keeping deposits—there were far too few being kept. I would like to see more commentary by the committees as to what testimony was heard and why the committee reasoned as they did.

David Stevenson's comments:

Overall, I think a good job was done, especially by the TDs. I only feel the AC was definitely wrong in two cases (#1 and #3), though there were several judgement rulings which could go either way. However, we must keep more deposits.

Some of the UI situations are ones that should now not recur because of Announcements. But no doubt they will bring their won crop of interesting appeals for future years.

Eric Landau's comments:

Most of the rulings, IMO, were correctly handled and required no comment, specifically #2, #4, #5, #7, #9, #10, #11 & #12.

As in previous years, I, who play exclusively in North America, was impressed with the levels of competence and knowledgeability of both the English directors and the English appeals committees. I'm not a shy guy, and when I can find nothing significant to comment about in two thirds of the appeals cases reported, I consider it to be an outstanding performance.

Frances Hinden's comments:

It's good to see the number of appeals down on previous years. Every appeal was on the sticky subjects of UI or MI, which can be taken as a positive thing – it should mean that the TDs are getting all the more straightforward rulings right.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

First of all, well done to the EBU tournament directors this year. I consider that all of their rulings were reasonable even on those cases where I have come to a different conclusion. I also assume that most of their unappealed rulings were correct!

The appeals committees have also done a reasonable job; of the 12 hands, I agree with the AC on 7, consider their decision to be reasonable on 3 more, and disagree strongly on only 2 of them. Often the AC comments do not explain the reasons for their rulings in enough detail and to aid this I would prefer to see more of the players' comments recorded on the appeals forms.

Mike Amos' comments:

Case	TD	AC	Comment
1	✓	X	Mad
2	OK	Improved	
3	✓	X	Poor judgement
4	X	✓	Extra information
5	✓	✓	Deposit?
6	Poor write-up	Improved	Need more information
7	✓	✓	cf 9
8	✓	✓	Deposit?
9	✓	✓	cf 7
10	✓	✓	Deposit?
11	✓	✓	
12	✓	✓	Excellent work by Referee

It's important to remember that I had seen most of these rulings before and apart from those where I was the TD had been consulted on most. It's likely therefore that I shall tend to agree with the TD's ruling. I think the AC got Appeal 1 wrong and in Appeal 3 I disagree with their judgment. Appeals 2 and 4 were improved by the ACs and on Appeal 6 they probably improved the ruling although there is insufficient information to be sure. The other seven cases find me in agreement with both the TDs and the AC although it is noticeable that there was not one single retained deposit. What happened to that new "Get Tough" policy?

Richard Hills' comments:

After writing my comments to Appeal number 7, I was advised by the Editor that:

"English TDs generally brush off rudeness to themselves as part of the job."

This worries me. It is not so much that paid officials get flack, but a player who is rude to a TD without any consequence might be encouraged to commit the ultimate crime, to be rude to another player.

In my opinion, the most important Law in the Lawbook is Law 74A2:

"A player should carefully avoid any remark or action that might cause annoyance or embarrassment to another player or might interfere with the enjoyment of the game."

The whole point of bridge is that it is an **enjoyable game**. If TDs start winking at rudeness, then players might prefer a trip to the dentist. ☺

Final summary by editor:

The general feelings of the commentators is favourable, though, as in earlier years, there is a feeling that not enough deposits are kept.