

APPEAL	Non-NABC+ Fourteen
Subject	Misinformation (MI)
DIC	Bob Leonard
Event	Open Pairs
Session	First
Date	July 28, 2007

BD#	24
VUL	None
DLR	West

883 Masterpoints	
♠	6 5
♥	3
♦	A K Q J 6 3
♣	K 5 3 2

4,800 Masterpoints		Summer 2007 Nashville, Tennessee	3,400 Masterpoints	
♠	A T 7 3 2		♠	K
♥	Q 8 5		♥	A K T 7 4 2
♦	T 5		♦	9 8 4 2
♣	A T 8		♣	6 4

151 Masterpoints	
♠	Q J 9 8 4
♥	J 9 6
♦	7
♣	Q J 9 7

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	2♥	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♥	4♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Final Contract	4♦ by North
Opening Lead	♥A
Table Result	4♦ N, made 4, N/S + 130
Director Ruling	4♦ N, made 4, N/S + 130
Panel Ruling	4♦ N, made 4, N/S + 130

The Facts: The director was called to the table after the opening lead. West claimed that South had made a “negative free bid” and it was not Alerted. The convention card was not marked for negative free bids.

The Ruling: No evidence as to a partnership agreement of the meaning of the 2♠ bid. Table result of 4♦ by North, making four, N/S plus 130 stands. (law 40A1).

The Appeal: West said that, if he knew that South had a non-forcing 2♠ hand, he would have bid 3♦ (invitational heart raise). He felt that if South had the 10+ points his bid indicated, his partner’s weak jump overcall would have been at the bottom of their range – i.e. five or six points.

When North was asked what she expected from South’s 2♠ bid, she said, “I thought he had five or six spades.” She said she could have passed if she had not had such a good suit of her own. Neither North nor South knew the expression “negative free bid.” South said they play negative doubles, but he wanted to show the fifth spade.

The Decision: Eleven people with 2000 plus masterpoints were polled. None passed over 2♠. Calls ranged from double, 3♦, 3♥ and 4♥. When asked whether the meaning of the 2♠ bid was important to their bidding decision, the answer was “No.” The panel felt that West had the experience to show his hand and failed to play bridge when he passed over 2♠. The panel wasn’t certain that any misinformation had occurred so law 40 might not have applied at all. The director’s decision of the table result of 4♦ by North, making four, N/S plus 130 was upheld.

The panel saw no merit to the appeal and issued an appeal without merit warning (AWMW) to E/W.

The Panel: Candy Kushner (Reviewer), Jean Molnar and Gary Zeiger.

Players Consulted: Eleven players with 2,000 or more masterpoints.

Commentary:

Polisner Any player with 4,800 masterpoints who wouldn’t bid something over 2♠ and then complain about the opponents bidding, should have half of his masterpoints removed.

Rigal Close to a miserable and pettifogging appeal (MAPA) but I understand why West passed; of course it does look normal to raise at once -- but why would that result in anything but the same 4♦ contract? OK, I’ll give it an award! MAPA six.

Smith This was a very distasteful appeal that received a well-deserved AWMW.

Wildavsky This appeal had merit. Just look at the testimony. "She (North) said she could have passed if she had not had such a good suit of her own." So 2♠ was not forcing. Non-forcing free bids require an Alert, so E/W were misinformed. West may have done something foolish, but there's no chance he'd have done it had he been correctly informed. It's not clear to me what the poll was intended to accomplish. E/W do not need to play perfectly to receive redress. At a minimum, the N/S score ought to have been adjusted, per Law 72B1.

Wolff My first inclination is to agree with the panel, but if so I, like the panel, would have been dead wrong. Many players are natural players and the thought of not immediately acting with the West hand would not occur to a natural player. But, some either lack natural skills, or prefer scientific, so consequently, like West here, look at bridge differently and reason that if South is making a normal forcing bid of 2♠, East must be extremely weak. In addition, West may like the opponents bidding spades and hopes they find a home there later.

The upshot of all this is that West is entitled to an Alert (Negative free bid) and even though the majority of players do not reason as he does (West has 4,800 master points) our hats should be off to that type of player where bridge may not come naturally. At the very least, N/S's good result should be taken away, either by a procedural penalty or allowing E/W to bid and make plus 420 or plus 450. N/S were wrong, but came out of this committee squeaky clean and prosperous.

Since the appeal had merit, the panel made an egregious error by issuing an AWMW.