

APPEAL	Non NABC+ TWO
Subject	Unauthorized Information
DIC	Boyd
Event	Bruce 0-5000 LM Pairs
Session	First Qualifying Session
Date	July 23, 2010

BD#	26
VUL	BOTH
DLR	E

1912 Masterpoints	
♠	AQJ5
♥	984
♦	J
♣	AQ872

3021 Masterpoints		Summer 2010 New Orleans, LA	2226 Masterpoints	
♠			♠	T982
♥	A32		♥	KQJ
♦	98652		♦	Q743
♣	KJT96		♣	53

2868 Masterpoints	
♠	K7643
♥	T765
♦	AKT
♣	4

West	North	East	South
		P	P
P	1♣	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	3♦
P	3♠ ¹	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Final Contract	4♠ by South
Opening Lead	♣T
Table Result	Made 5, NS +650
Director Ruling	3♠ made 5, +200 NS
Panel Ruling	3♠ made 5, +200 NS

(1) Alleged break in tempo by North before his 3♠ bid

The Facts: East-West alleged that North, at his third turn to bid, immediately reached for the bidding box and then pulled his hand back and pondered for at least 20 seconds before bidding 3♠. East-West called the Director immediately after South's 4♠ bid and then again at the conclusion of the hand. At the table, North-South did not dispute the above facts to the Director. After the ruling, North-South contended that the break in tempo was ten seconds or less.

The Ruling: The Director ruled that there was a break in tempo, which caused unauthorized information to be available to South. The unauthorized information demonstrably suggested action over inaction to South. The Director also found that pass was a logical alternative to the 4♠ bid selected by South at his final turn to call.

Therefore, the Director ruled that the score be adjusted to 3♠ making 5 for +200 North-South according to Laws 73C and 16B.

The Appeal: North-South appealed asserting that South made a help suit game try in diamonds because he was trying to decide whether to bid 3N or 4♠. North-South claimed that they never planned to stop short of game.

The Decision: The Panel found that while the amount of the break in tempo was disputed, it was clear there was an unmistakable hesitation. North admitted the break in tempo and reported that he was trying to figure out South's bidding.

The Panel gave the South hand to six players in the 1500-3000 point range. Given the 3♦ bid (most would have bid 4♠ at this turn), four of those polled bid 4♠ and two would have honored partner's bid and passed. The Panel felt that the polling results indicated that pass is a logical alternative to bidding 4♠. According to Laws 16B and 12C1, the result must be adjusted to 3♠ making five for +200 North-South. The Panel also ruled that since the majority of those polled bid 4♠, no AWMW was given.

The Panel: Bernie Gorkin (Chairman), Bill Michael, and Peter Marcus.

Commentary:

Bramley: No merit. The choice-of-games argument is not credible. Note that although North should not take too MUCH time, neither can he take too LITTLE time. (See Case One.) At every turn, a bidder must strive to make his call in a tempo that suggests he has something to think about, whether or not he does. Establishing such a tempo in the "no-think" positions frees him to use a little extra time in the positions where he actually does have a problem.

Goldsmith: No Merit.

Rigal: Clearly correct decision...but please be aware TD Panel. If your criteria for not awarding an AWM is a pooled-player majority, look again at Case 4 and many, many others....(By the way I'm shocked four players drove to game but that's life in the non-NABCs, or maybe it puts my game in its proper place.)

Wildavsky: The Panel applied the wrong standard for assessing an AWMW. A player who intended 3D as a game try would always pass 3S, and we have no way of judging whether South intended his bid that way. Given his hand it seems unlikely. Spades will take an extra trick much more often than not and opener will not be well placed to judge whether this is one of the rare exceptions since he will not be able to picture South's singleton. In any case, his actual intent is not relevant. We are not mind readers. Since we have no way to be certain we must adjust his score just as we would that of a player who had made a game try, when a game try is plausible. Certainly it is here.

Wolf: Once, South makes what can only be a game try, he is not allowed to calibrate EFFECTIVELY his partner's lack of acceptance in order to finalize his decision. He must pass and the ruling sent this message.