

APPEAL	NABC+ ELEVEN
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI)
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Edgar Kaplan Blue Ribbon Pairs
Session	Second Semifinal
Date	December 2, 2009

BD#	26
VUL	Both
DLR	East

Clement Jackson	
♠	A K 9 6
♥	5 2
♦	J 4 3 2
♣	9 4 3

Jill Meyers		Fall 2009 San Diego, CA	Jill Levin	
♠	8 7 5 4		♠	J T
♥	J T 6 4		♥	K Q 9 3
♦	K 9		♦	A 8 7 6 5
♣	A J 5		♣	8 6

David Caprera	
♠	Q 3 2
♥	A 8 7
♦	Q T
♣	K Q T 7 2

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠	Dbl	ReDbl ¹
2♥	Pass	Pass	2♠
3♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Final Contract	3♥ by West
Opening Lead	♥2
Table Result	Down 1, E/W -100
Director Ruling	2♥ W making 2, E/W +110
Committee Ruling	2♥ W making 2, E/W +110

(1) Support redouble, not Alerted.

The Facts: The director was called at West's turn to bid over 2♠. Just prior to the director call, West had asked about the meaning of the redouble. North said, " Oh sorry, I failed to Alert."

The Ruling: The failure to Alert was determined to be UI for South. The UI demonstrably suggests balancing with 2♠ and pass was judged to be a less successful logical alternative. Therefore, the result for both sides was adjusted to 2♥ by West making two, E/W plus 110, per laws 16B1 and 12C1e.

The Appeal: N/S appealed the director's decision. East was the only player not to attend the hearing.

N/S contended that:

- 1) There was no information conveyed by North's failure to Alert (they are an established partnership and they have never before forgotten a support double or redouble).
- 2) The failure to Alert did not demonstrably suggest that South bid 2♠.
- 3) There's no logical alternative to bidding 2♠ at matchpoints since it is likely that defending 2♥ will lead to a poor score.

E/W believed that pass is clearly a logical alternative.

The Decision: Per Laws 16 and 73, a failure to Alert an Alertable call is extraneous information that is unauthorized if it demonstrably suggests a line of action. Although South said that N/S is an established partnership who have never forgotten the support double/redouble convention, he also said that they have never before forgotten to Alert it. So, while it is clear that North has forgotten either the convention or its Alertability, it is not clear which North has forgotten. This lack of clarity demonstrably suggests that South bid 2♠ in order to assure that his partner understands that he does have support. This is not to say that such was South's intention; merely that South was in a position to use the information if he did have such intent.

South's claim that he would "always" bid 2♠ at matchpoints is irrelevant. The question of logical alternative does not derive from South's proclivities or bidding style, it depends on what a group of South's peers would do. The committee decided that a group of South's peers would contain a substantial number of players who would pass rather than bid 2♠. Hence pass is a logical alternative.

The committee considered the bridge merit of West's 3♥ bid and decided that it was not a serious enough error to break the chain of causality, per law 12C1(b).

Eight tricks were taken in 3♥ at the table and E/W did not suggest more would be taken if the contract were 2♥, so the committee adjusted the score for both sides to 2♥ by West making two, 110 for E/W.

The appeal was judged to have substantial merit.

The Committee: Michael Huston (Chair), Ellen Kent, Bob Schwartz, David Stevenson and Jim Thurtell.

Commentary:

- Goldsmith** The scribe's claim, "South's claim that he would 'always' bid 2♠," is inconsistent with the description of the appeal. There, he stated that N/S claimed that pass was not a logical alternative, which is an entirely different statement.
The core of the appeal is whether or not pass is a logical alternative to 2♠. It seems pretty automatic to me to bid 2♠; there's even a reasonable argument that pass is forcing. After all, the opening side has committed to playing at least 2♠ unless responder can bid a lower suit at the two-level. It's not obvious to me that it is best to play that passing turns that off. I suspect most have not discussed it, or at least few have reached that conclusion. Given that pass is an option, I suspect that some would take it, but not many. I'd guess that the decision is at the borderline of the guideline, so either ruling is okay. I hate ruling that a non-ridiculous action isn't a logical alternative, so I'd go with the committee.
- Polisner** I agree that South should not be allowed to bid 2♠ after he had already told his story that he had exactly three spades. He also has a minimum hand and is vulnerable. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the failure to Alert "could" have meant that North forgot support doubles and might have then not bid 2♠ with 5+ Spades. Good ruling and decision.
- Rigal** Not sure where the merit lies here. South's decision may not have been influenced by the UI – but to the naked eye the argument that it was is overwhelming. Certainly not appropriate to appeal this – closer to a procedural penalty.
- Smith** Like the previous case, I see no merit at all here. This was clear.
- Wildavsky** The committee's reasoning seems especially clear. It's not clear to me that this appeal had merit.
- Wolff** A good decision by this committee since the combination of no Alert and then a further bid by his partner suggests the use of UI. While E/W certainly do not deserve more than plus 110 in 2♥ making it is possible that N/S deserve an additional procedural penalty, but since it is close I'll be satisfied with this, in all other respects, well thought out and explained ruling.