

APPEAL	NABC+ SEVENTEEN
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI)
DIC	Chris Patrias
Event	North American Swiss
Session	First Semi-Final
Date	December 1, 2007

BD#	14
VUL	None
DLR	East

Larry Mori	
♠	A K 3 2
♥	K 9 4
♦	K 9 6
♣	K Q 7

Katrin Litwin		Fall 2007 San Francisco, CA	Aidan Ballantyne	
♠	T 8 5		♠	J 9
♥	A T 8 3		♥	Q 7 5 2
♦	A 2		♦	8 7
♣	A J 6 2		♣	9 8 5 4 3

Leonard Melander, Jr	
♠	Q 7 6 4
♥	J 6
♦	Q J T 5 4 3
♣	T

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♣	1NT	Pass	2♦ ¹
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Final Contract	3NT by North
Opening Lead	♣4
Table Result	Made 3, N/S +400
Director Ruling	3NT N, +3, N/S +400
Committee Ruling	3NT N, +3, N/S +400

(1) Announced as transfer.

The Facts: The director was called at the end of the auction. N/S had had differing information on their convention cards about whether systems were on after a one notrump overcall. E/W questioned South's further actions since he had UI from hearing the Announcement "Transfer." There also was concern that North had three hearts yet didn't bid 4♥.

The Ruling: While there was UI, the 3♦ bid was deemed to not be demonstrably suggested by the UI. The table result of 3NT by North, making three, N/S +400 was allowed to stand because:

1. If the 2♥ bid is taken as positive for diamonds, South could bid 2♠ and get N/S to a contract of 4♠.
2. It doesn't seem likely at IMPs to advance to a different partscore.

The Appeal: N/S did not attend the hearing. E/W said that South's pull of 2♥ to 3♦ was demonstrably suggested by the announcement that 2♦ was a transfer and some Souths would pass 2♥ without that UI. E/W also thought it was peculiar that North would bid 3NT rather than 4♥ in this sequence.

The Decision: Clearly the transfer Announcement was UI to South. It also strongly suggests that South not pass. Therefore, bidding (as a line of action under law 16) was demonstrably suggested. No particular bid (2♠, 2NT or 3♦) was suggested over any other, though. The committee found that passing was not a logical alternative (LA) since it was unlikely that North had a good five-card heart suit and if the 2♥ bid was in favor of diamonds, passing could be disastrous. Of all the alternatives available to South, South chose one (of two) that led to the defeatable 3NT contract. The 3NT contract was lower scoring than the 4♠ contract, which might otherwise have been bid.

The committee noted that North's choice of bids was entirely unconstrained as he was in possession of no UI.

Ultimately, the committee agreed with the entirety of the director's ruling, although the committee pigeon-holed some of the director's rationale into different parts of law 16 than the director did. The committee sustained the director's decision to allow the table result of 3NT by North making three, N/S plus 400, to stand.

The Committee: Michael Huston (Chair), Bruce Ferguson, Chris Moll, Jacob Morgan and Eddie Wold.

Commentary:

- Goldsmith** "The director was called at the end of the auction," suggests to me that before the opening lead South explained that there was MI. Given that, MI isn't a problem. (In fact, I think the explanation strongly suggests the winning heart lead; if South doesn't have hearts and North chose 3NT over 4♥, it's a good bet that West has hearts. Moreover, the UI means that if South does have hearts, 3♦ is likely to be illegal, so a losing heart lead may just lead to an adjusted score anyway.)
How about UI? South chose 3♦, which surely is not suggested by the UI; he knows that 3♦ is game forcing after a transfer, so his only real shots at staying low are 2♠ and 2NT, which are therefore illegal. 3♦ isn't.
I wonder at what point we ought to just agree that there is no UI here. 2♥ is prima facie evidence that North thought 2♦ was a transfer. Super-accepts of 2♦ are much rarer (has anyone ever seen a 2H super-accept of 2♦?) than "I thought 2♦ was a transfer." So much so that just about everyone will figure out what has happened. Perhaps the whole world should agree that if playing natural responses to notrump bids, the next step is impossible, not a super-accept, and therefore there's no UI from partner's Alert or Announcement---you know he thinks it is a transfer.
How about an appeal without merit warning (AWMW)? I think it's close. N/S didn't do anything wrong, and E/W should know that. Is this a complicated enough ruling that no AWMW ought to be considered? Probably not. At least the appeals committee (AC) ought to tell us they considered and rejected an AWMW and why.
- Polisner** I agree that it is unlikely that North would have a good five-card heart suit for a 1NT overcall - however, not impossible. I would like to have seen the results of a peer poll with the South hand absent an Alert to the 2♦ bid. Once you get past this, the decision is to allow the 3♦ bid, and the table result stands.
- Rigal** The best argument for letting the score stand was 'No damage' since West could and should have set 3NT and indeed had far more than enough information to do so. But I'm still not happy N/S did not exploit the UI, though maybe (since South would never pass 2♥) any action he took was going to lead to a better result than plus 400? I'm unconvinced.
- Smith** Good job all around.
- Wildavsky** A close call. I hate to allow a pair to appear to profit through the Alert system, but I don't fault the tournament director and AC rulings.
- Wolff** OK ruling.