

APPEAL	Non NABC+ One
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Mike Flader
Event	Sunday Evening BAM Teams
Session	Only
Date	November 29, 2009

BD#	11
VUL	None
DLR	South

3,000 Masterpoints	
♠	A 9 7 5
♥	Q 7 5
♦	A J T 8
♣	9 3

2,600 Masterpoints		Fall 2009 San Diego, CA	2,300 Masterpoints	
♠	J 8 4		♠	Q T 6 3 2
♥	K 9 6 4		♥	3 2
♦	K 7 2		♦	9 6 5 4
♣	8 7 4		♣	6 2

1,000 Masterpoints	
♠	K
♥	A J T 8
♦	Q 3
♣	A K Q J T 5

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	5♣ ¹
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Final Contract	6♣ by South
Opening Lead	♣4
Table Result	Made 6, N/S + 920
Director Ruling	5♣ S made 6, N/S + 420
Panel Ruling	6♣ S made 6, N/S + 920

(1) Break in Tempo (BIT)

The Facts: The director was called after the 6♣ call and again after the play of the hand was completed. As above the director determined that there was a BIT.

The Ruling: The director determined that the BIT demonstrably suggested bidding and that passing 5♣ was a logical alternative. Therefore, the score was adjusted to 5♣ by South making 6 for both sides, 920.

The Appeal: N/S appealed the director's decision and all four players were present at the hearing.

North said he could not possibly hold a better hand to bid 6♣. - two aces and honor third of partner's second suit. He felt 6♣ was automatic regardless of the BIT.

E/W thought the BIT demonstrably suggested bidding 6♣.

The Decision: Seven players were polled with masterpoint holdings between 1,500 and 4,000 points. Given the North hand and the auction: one player passed 5♣, two players bid 5♦two players bid 6♣one player bid 5♥and one bid 6♥All seven were asked what the BIT suggested and all said they didn't know – possibly:

- passing 3NT
- asking for aces
- signing off.

All said they would make the calls they made with or without the hesitation.

Therefore, the panel determined that bidding was not demonstrably suggested by the BIT and reinstated the table result of six clubs making six for both sides.

The Panel: Tom Marsh (Reviewer), Jay Albright, Bernie Gorkin and Bill Michael.

Commentary:

Polisner This hand represents a good reason for conducting polls. As without one, I would have gone with the director. However, since the poll was so conclusive, the panel did the right thing.

Rigal Excellent decision – and I'm happy with the director's decision although I think he might have followed the polled players' route and decided that the slow 5♣ bid did not demonstrably suggest bidding on. It just suggested doubt as to what to do – the direction was unclear.

Smith I agree with the panel's conclusion that a slow 5♣ call in this sequence does not demonstrably suggest one course of action over another. The write-up is a bit fuzzy in explaining how that conclusion was arrived at from what the polled players said. The fact that the polled players said they would do what they did regardless of the hesitation makes me wonder if they were asked the correct questions. Their opinion on that matter should be irrelevant to the panel. All the panel needed to discover was if there was UI (was there a hesitation?), were there logical alternatives to the 6♣ bid made, and did any UI demonstrably suggest any one course of action over another? Since the answer to the last question in this case is no, the panel made the right decision.

Wildavsky I don't like the panel's ruling, though I don't know how they could have done better. It seems clear to me that a slow 5♣ suggests interest in slam. If partner were thinking about passing 3NT he could have tried 4♣, leaving the possibility of playing 4NT open. He must have been thinking about slam. The panel is bound by the results of its poll, though. Perhaps they could have asked their question more clearly. The respondents who answered that partner might have been thinking about signing off doesn't seem to have understood the question. Since he did sign off, the question is what other actions he was considering, and why.

Wolff I agree with the ruling, but here is a case when polling peers (particularly non-expert ones) does not satisfy the puzzle. All the peers determined was that, in their collective opinion, 5♣ was some kind of asking bid and so naturally they would be afraid to pass for fear of not being in the proper trump suit. Better to resort to asking the North and South players tricky questions to help determine the only question of whether North was guilty of acting because of UI.