

APPEAL	Non NABC+ Three
Subject	Misinformation (MI)
DIC	Tom Marsh
Event	0-5000 Blue Ribbon Pairs
Session	First Qualifying
Date	December 1, 2009

BD#	24
VUL	None
DLR	West

2,500 Masterpoints	
♠	T 8 6 5 3
♥	4 2
♦	Q 6 5
♣	T 9 4

3,500 Masterpoints		Fall 2009 San Diego, CA	2,000 Masterpoints	
♠	A K Q 2		♠	J
♥	A Q J T 5		♥	9 8 7 3
♦	J 9		♦	8 4 3 2
♣	Q 8		♣	K 6 5 2

2,000 Masterpoints	
♠	9 7 4
♥	K 6
♦	A K T 7
♣	A J 7 3

West	North	East	South
1♣ ¹	Pass	1♦ ²	Dbl ³
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Final Contract	4♥ by West
Opening Lead	♦5
Table Result	Made 5, E/W + 450
Director Ruling	4♥ W made 4, E/W + 420
Panel Ruling	4♥ W made 5, E/W + 450

(1)	Precision – strong, forcing and artificial.
(2)	0-7 HCP or 8 balanced.
(3)	Lead directing.

The Facts: The director was called after the play of the hand was completed. The 3♣ bid (help suit game try) on a doubleton was not Alerted. South won the opening ♦5 lead and asked about the 3♣ bid. She was told it was a suit and should be at least three cards in length. She played the ♣A. When she saw partner's ♣4 she believed it had to be a singleton and tried to give him a ruff. The second diamond went away. The Director specifically asked East if West's hand was a surprise on the bidding and was told "no."

The Ruling: Law 20F6 ["If the Director judges that a player has based an action on misinformation given to him by an opponent, see ... Law 47E2(b)"], which says "When it is too late to correct a play ... the Director may award an adjusted score."] was abridged so E/W was assigned plus 420. With the information that West could have a doubleton South would have cashed her second diamond.

The Appeal: E/W appealed the director's decision and all four players attended the review.

E/W both said their agreement is that their help suit game tries show at least three, usually to an honor, but what bid other than 3♣ was available on this hand? It would have been unproductive to make a help suit game try in spades and 3♦ would have shown something else. They said they had made help suit game tries with a doubleton only two or three times in the last 15 years.

South said that if West had had at least three clubs her partner's ♣4 had to be a singleton [*Reviewer's note: North might have had Q4 of clubs and not shown count.*] so she tried to give him a ruff. When she was asked what she thought declarer's whole hand was on this bidding she admitted she had not given it much thought.

The Decision: Six players with 1,700 – 3,000 masterpoints who play help suit game tries were consulted. Two said they would bid 2♠ even though they needed no help in that suit. The other four bid 3♣ even though their agreement was that this try showed three, usually to an honor. Two said that sometimes you have to manufacture a bid because you are not dealt a hand that fits your agreement.

There is an apparent conflict between East's answer to the director's question and what he said in the review. The director was asking specifically about the club suit but East's answer was made looking at the whole hand. A better answer would have been 'I am surprised that he has only two clubs, but what other bid is there on this hand?'

Based on the above the panel decided that Law 20F had not been violated and restored the table result of 4♥ by West making five for both sides.

The Panel: Charles MacCracken (Reviewer), Jay Albright and Nancy Boyd.

Commentary:

Polisner Good work by the panel.

Rigal I'm sure if East had answered the question by listening more carefully this case would not have got past the tournament director to appeal. A sensible panel decision. I agree 3♣ is unusual but West's explanation made perfect sense.

- Smith** This is an exceptionally good panel decision. It is correct on the law and extremely well reasoned and presented.
- Wildavsky** How long has it been since I quoted Kaplan? "Having an agreement with one's partner does not create an ironclad contract with one's opponents." The panel corrected an injustice.
- Wolff** Unfortunately, so many players, more than anyone could know, have no idea what help suit means or are aware of the different versions, rendering that convention unplayable. We need continuous education on that and other subjects otherwise many more cases than just this one should be penalized. Obviously at matchpoints there is a huge (probably 1/2 a board) difference between making four and five and deserves our attention. However, for South to stake 1/2 a board on playing partner for a singleton club when he didn't lead it is hard to accept. Whatever, we have a long way to go to both fairly determine these disputes and even more importantly, educate the bridge players on what the conventions they play are about.