

APPEAL	NABC+ ELEVEN
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Blue Ribbon Pairs
Session	Second Semi-Final
Date	November 28, 2007

BD#	<b>21</b>
VUL	<b>N/S</b>
DLR	<b>North</b>

<b>Vince Oddy</b>	
♠	A T 6
♥	A Q 9 8 6 4
♦	6 3
♣	K T

<b>Andrew Robson</b>		<b>Fall 2007 San Francisco, CA</b>	<b>Ishmael Delmonte</b>	
♠	K J 9 8		♠	7 3 2
♥	K		♥	J 7 3 2
♦	Q T 7 2		♦	A K J 4
♣	8 4 3 2		♣	7 5

<b>Roy Dalton</b>	
♠	Q 5 4
♥	T 5
♦	9 8 5
♣	A Q J 9 6

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	1NT <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass <sup>2</sup>
Dbl	Rdbl	2♠	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Final Contract	<b>2♠ doubled by E</b>
Opening Lead	<b>♠4</b>
Table Result	<b>Down 3, N/S -500</b>
Director Ruling	<b>3♥ N, making 3, N/S +140</b>
Committee Ruling	<b>2♠ dbld by E, -3, N/S -500</b>

(1)	Forcing.
(2)	Alleged break in tempo (BIT).

**The Facts:** The director was called after the play of the hand. East estimated the BIT as 5 seconds. West did not quantify the BIT but stated that there was a clear indication that South was contemplating additional action. South stated that this was his normal tempo.

**The Ruling:** It was decided that there was a BIT sufficient to convey UI and that pass by North was a logical alternative (LA) to redoubling. Since various logical actions are available to South without a redouble by North, in accordance with laws 73F1 and 12C2, the score was adjusted to 3♥ by North making three, N/S +140.

**The Appeal:** South is a deliberate player and his pass of 2♥ was made in his normal tempo. His hand was clearly too weak to try for game. He was not considering raising to 3♥. North had a sound opening bid with good hearts and good quick-trick structure, prompting his redouble. He did not notice a BIT by South.

E/W did not attend the hearing. They had told the director that South took about five seconds to pass. Consequently, they said, North made a very aggressive redouble, which led to a favorable result for N/S.

**The Decision:** The expected amount of time for a player to make a call is about three to five seconds. South's pass was likely to be the last call for his side; so, it was entirely reasonable that his pass was deliberate. Additionally, the South hand was not strong enough for any player to seriously consider raising to 3♥, so his hand did not suggest that he was thinking of bidding.

The committee judged that the time South took to pass did not constitute a BIT.

Therefore, the table result of 2♠ doubled, down three, N/S plus 500 was reinstated.

**The Committee:** Doug Doub (Chair), Shannon Cappelletti, Robb Gordon, Ellen Kent and Bob Schwartz.

**Commentary:**

**Goldsmith** I think there's conflicting evidence. South has an obvious pass of 2♥. But North has an obvious pass of 2♥ doubled. What does he have that he didn't already announce? His sixth heart or thirteenth HCP? Redoubling seems only slightly more likely to me than bidding with the South hand, so on balance, it looks as if there were a BIT, but it's a close enough call that I'd want to be there to judge. Given that the director judged that there was a BIT, I'd go with his opinion, but the appeals committee has more information than I do.

**Polisner** Excellent appeals committee decision and a somewhat dubious director ruling. Again, perhaps influenced by the celebrity of the E/W pair.

**Rigal** Strongly disagree with the rationale of the decision. Tournament directors got this exactly right, and North's redouble makes no sense unless influenced by partner's tempo! And yes, South's hand IS strong enough to consider a game-try for hearts (a 3♣ fit-showing call if available, using 2♠ as the way to sign-off in a minor for example) would not be unreasonable. All this guff about slow thinkers is absurd. The committee bought the Brooklyn Bridge here, and when E/W called the director that should have been enough to establish there was a BIT.

**Smith** Is it clear that South considered his pass automatic and that he wasn't considering further action? Not to me. I would have been more comfortable with E/W's version of the facts had they called the director before the end of the hand to report the alleged hesitation, but as it is I think this case is close. Five seconds is more than normal tempo for this kind of auction in my experience. But that fact was not agreed. It would have been nice if the committee could have interviewed E/W, but in their absence the committee made a reasonable decision. In close cases where facts are in dispute, the side that doesn't show up to committee usually loses.

**Wildavsky** I am not convinced that five seconds is a reasonable amount of time for a player with no problem to hesitate before passing. As Barry points out, North's double with a 13 count when his range was 11-16 or so was unusual enough to give me reason to believe that South's pass was out of tempo and that North took notice, consciously or subconsciously. The tournament director (TD) who was at the table immediately after the deal was played found that UI existed. I would hate to overrule him on this point -- he was better placed than the committee to judge the facts. E/W may have felt that the TD's determination on the appeal form that UI existed meant that they did not need to appear, and, if so, I have great sympathy for their decision. Perhaps, it's close, but I prefer the TD's ruling to the appeal committee's.

**Wolff** OK ruling.