

APPEAL	NABC+ THREE
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Von Zedtwitz Life Master Pairs
Session	First Qualifying
Date	July 24, 2009

BD#	11
VUL	None
DLR	South

Brenda Bryant	
♠	8 6 5
♥	K Q J 9 3 2
♦	J T 5
♣	7

Gene Kuehuneman		Summer 2009 Washington D.C.	Barry Goulding	
♠	A K		♠	T 2
♥	7 5		♥	A T 8 6 4
♦	K 6 3		♦	A 8 4
♣	J 9 8 6 4 3		♣	K T 5

Susan Wexler	
♠	Q J 9 7 4 3
♥	
♦	Q 9 7 2
♣	A Q 2

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

Final Contract	4♠ doubled by South
Opening Lead	♣8
Table Result	Down 1, N/S minus 100
Director Ruling	3♠ S made 3, N/S + 140
Committee Ruling	4♠ dbld S down 1, N/S - 100

(1)	N/S alleged a break in tempo (BIT) about 10 seconds followed by a shrug before passing.
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The Facts: The director was called after the 4♣ call and again after the play of the hand. The facts are as above. E/W though there was no shrug and that the hesitation was between 5 and 10 seconds.

The Ruling: The director determined that there was an infraction of Law 16B1(b) and in accordance with Law 12C1(e) adjusted the score to 3♠ by South making three, N/S plus 140 for both sides.

The Appeal: E/W appealed. All four players attended the hearing.

E/W thought there was no shrug and that the hesitation was 5-10 seconds. West said he was counting total trumps. East felt that he had too much to pass; give partner ♣AQxxxx and ♣KJx and 4♣ was a favorite.

E/W had no special agreement about the double of 2♥.

The Decision: The committee judged that there was a BIT sufficient to provide UI. West had a sixth trump and only a few seconds ago learned his partner had club support, which greatly improved his hand. His claim that he was counting total trumps further suggests that the hesitation was present and not very short.

What were the logical alternatives to 4♣? After reflection, the committee judged that with three key cards and primary support for a two-level overcall, selling out to 3♠ was not an option. 3NT was out without a spade stopper. So the choices were to double or bid 4♣.

We felt that an overwhelming fraction of West's peers would bid 4♣; very few would double; nearly zero would pass. Thus, there are no logical alternatives to 4♣.

Once pass was determined not to be a logical alternative, the ruling had to be that the table result of 4♠ doubled by South down one, N/S minus 100 stands for both sides.

The Committee: Jeff Goldsmith (Chair), Dick Budd, Ellen Kent, John Lusky and Jim Thurtell.

Commentary:

Goldsmith Another close call, but they almost always are when it is decided that there was no logical alternative to a call suggested by UI. It takes so little to make something a logical alternative that committee has to feel overwhelmingly that it is not. This time the committee did. I'd be okay too if they ruled that pass was a logical alternative. A poll might have been helpful, but how would we find players who would start with a double of 2♥?

Polisner Here again (as in the previous appeal) there should have been a poll. Why should the committee be put in a position of guessing what peers would consider and do? A poll would likely reveal if there were alternatives to bidding 4♣ in a normal-tempo auction.

Rigal I think E/W got lucky here; double by East was still available as an option and is indeed what I would have bid as East. West might then sit for it with bad clubs and two trump tricks. After the infraction by West I might well have needed persuading not to give both sides 3♠ doubled.

Smith The committee's choice of wording makes me wonder if some of the members found this closer than the scribe indicates. Maybe they were a bit uncomfortable predicting with certainty what a player would do when he started with an undiscussed double and followed it up with only 3♣. I wish the director had conducted a poll since this case seems suited to it, but ultimately we rely on the bridge judgment of committees so I can't disagree with this decision.

Wildavsky It seems clear to me that pass is a logical alternative for any level of East player. The fact that East started with a double that many players would not find only makes his future actions less predictable, thus making it even more difficult to rule out a pass or double over 3♠. I wish the director had taken a poll and made it available to the committee. It either would have helped them make a decision I'd like better or it would help them explain their decision to me and to others who read these cases. Looking at things another way, the committee judged that few of West's peers would double. If "few" means "at least one or two" then the double was logical and the correct adjustment was to N/S plus 730.

Wolff Good ruling, except in a perfect world, West would wait 5 to 10 seconds before acting regardless of his hand.