

APPEAL	NABC+ TWELVE
Subject	Revoke
DIC	Harry Falk
Event	Wernher Open Pairs
Session	First Qualifying
Date	July 28, 2009

BD#	18
VUL	N/S
DLR	East

Rahn Smith	
♠	A 7 5
♥	K T 6 4 2
♦	J 3
♣	J 8 7

Gary Blauth		Herbert Rogall	
♠	Q 9 3	♠	J T 4 2
♥	Q 8 7 3	♥	A
♦	T 4 2	♦	K 7 6 5
♣	K 9 4	♣	A Q T 5

Sharon Meng-Horton	
♠	K 8 6
♥	J 9 5
♦	A Q 9 8
♣	6 3 2

West	North	East	South
		1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Final Contract	1NT by West
Opening Lead	♥4
Table Result	Down 1, E/W - 50
Director Ruling	1NT W down 2, E/W -100
Committee Ruling	1NT W down 4, E/W -200

The Facts: The director was called after the play of the hand was concluded. There was an established revoke by declarer from the closed hand (West) at trick 6. The final unadjusted result was down one. Per Law 64A2, one trick was transferred to N/S resulting in E/W down two minus 100. N/S felt that this was not equitable and asked that this be reviewed in accordance with Law 64C since the one trick rectification did not sufficiently compensate N/S

The play (leads to a trick underlined)

Trick	North	East	South	West
1.	<u>♥4</u>	♥A	♥9	♥3
2.	♠5	<u>♠2</u>	♠8	♠Q
3.	♠7	♠4	♠K	<u>♠9</u>
4.	♥2	♦5	<u>♥J</u>	♥7
5.	♥T	♦6	<u>♥5</u>	♥8
6.	<u>♥K</u>	♠T	♣6	♠3 (Revoke)
7.	<u>♠A</u>	♠J	♠6	♦2
8.	<u>♥6</u>	♣5	♣2	♥Q
9.	♣7	♣A	♣3	<u>♣4</u>
10.	♣8	<u>♣Q</u>	♦8	♣9
11.	♣J	<u>♣7</u>	♦9	♣K
12.	♦J	♦7	♦Q	<u>♦4</u>
13.	♦3	♦K	<u>♦A</u>	♦T

The position prior to North's leading the spade ace was:

BD#	18	Rahn Smith			
VUL	N/S	♠	A		
DLR	East	♥	6		
		♦	J 3		
		♣	J 8 7		
Gary Blauth		Summer 2009 Washington D.C.		Herbert Rogall	
♠				♠	J
♥	Q			♥	
♦	T 4 2			♦	K 7
♣	K 9 4	♣	A Q T 5		
		Sharon Meng-Horton			
		♠	6		
		♥			
		♦	A Q 9 8		
		♣	3 2		

The Ruling: In order for N/S to score any additional diamond tricks, declarer must pitch a diamond from Txx opposite Kx, when a much more rational discard (the club four) exists. Therefore, the one trick rectification is sufficient compensation. The result is adjusted to 1NT by West down two, E/W minus 100.

The Appeal: N/S appealed the director's decision. Only South attended the hearing. She said she thought the director summed up the case well.

The Decision: Law 64C, Director Responsible for Equity, reads, “When, after any established revoke, including those not subject to rectification, the Director deems that the non-offending side is insufficiently compensated by this law {Law 64A and B} for the damage caused, he shall assign an adjusted score.”

In order to determine whether N/S were damaged we have to judge whether they would have been likely to get a better result absent the irregularity.

In this case, as usual, it’s impossible to tell what would have happened absent the revoke, but since West discarded a diamond on the spade ace, we judged it likely that had he followed suit to the heart king, he would have discarded a diamond on the last heart or he would have discarded a spade on the last heart, and then a diamond on the spade ace, and N/S would have taken ten tricks. The revoke prevented that, so N/S get the result they likely would have received absent the revoke.

It’s important to note that the non-offending side was not getting a great result because of the revoke; it did not help them at all. They were in the process of getting a great result when the revoke happened.

If the revoke was what caused their good result, then they already had equity and no more is to be granted. That is not what happened here. Hence, the committee judged to award N/S an adjusted score in accordance with Law 12. Since ten tricks for N/S were likely and eleven were not at all probable, reciprocal 200s were awarded. The one trick revoke rectification (penalty) is not awarded when an adjusted score is given.

Was North’s play of the 12th heart so bad that it severed the connection between the revoke and the damage? No. Thinking a card is a winner when everyone has shown out is not a serious error. How was North to know that West would find the ♥Q at that exact moment?

The Committee: Jeff Goldsmith (Chair), Jeff Aker, Michael Huston, Brian Platnick and Danny Sprung.

Commentary:

Goldsmith This case is actually quite clear; it's a ruling of law, not of judgment. The confusing issue is whether, as often happens, the revoke itself led to the non-offending side's good result. If so, no additional adjustment is needed. Here, the revoke interfered with the non-offending side's getting its good result, so Law 12C is used as normal.

Polisner I concur with the committee's analysis.

Rigal Excellent committee ruling to cover the weak director decision. The obiter dicta about the quality of the defense and the N/S score are also very much in point. A fine decision that was well written.

Smith I think N/S were sufficiently compensated for the damage caused by receiving a one trick rectification. I'm not sure I agree that N/S's equity extends to West making an inexplicably bad play in a scenario that never happened. My sense is that their equity is more what would have happened to them against a rational opponent in the absence of a revoke. But I can't say with certainty that according to current law the committee did the wrong thing here. Maybe this is a good issue for the ACBL Laws Commission to decide.

Wildavsky Nice work by the committee. Trying to cash the 12th heart cannot be considered a serious error, since everyone had shown out on the previous round.

Wolff In this case the play of the 12th heart is a grievous error. I think N/S should be plus 100 and E/W minus 200.