

APPEAL	NABC+ ELEVEN
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	North American Fast Open Pairs
Session	Second Qualifying
Date	July 26, 2007

BD#	30
VUL	None
DLR	East

Greg Michaels	
♠	A J 9
♥	A J 7 4
♦	J 8 6 5
♣	T 6

Eldad Ginossar		Summer 2007 Nashville, Tennessee	Ron Pachtmann	
♠	T 8		♠	Q 5 4
♥			♥	Q 9
♦	A K Q T 9 4 3		♦	7
♣	8 5 4 3		♣	A K Q J 9 7 2

Jon Wright	
♠	K 7 6 3 2
♥	K T 8 6 5 3 2
♦	2
♣	

West	North	East	South
		1♣	2♣
2♥ ¹	4♥	5♣	5♥
6♣	Pass ²	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Final Contract	6♥ doubled by North
Opening Lead	♦7
Table Result	Down 1, N/S -100
Director Ruling	6♣, E, making 7, E/W +940
Committee Ruling	6♥ dbld, N, down 1, N/S -100

(1)	Club raise.
(2)	Break in Tempo (BIT). N/S estimate the BIT to be 13-15 seconds, East 15-20 seconds

The Facts: The director was called during the auction and after play had concluded. The BIT was acknowledged as above.

The Ruling: The director judged that a pass to 6♣ was a logical alternative (LA) call that would have been less successful and that bidding was demonstrably suggested by the BIT. In accordance with laws 16A and 12C2, the director adjusted the result to 6♣ by East making seven, E/W plus 940, because it was the most favorable result likely had there been no BIT.

The Appeal: North stated that after his 4♥ bid, the subsequent bids of 5♣, 5♥ and 6♣ were very fast. He did not feel that his pass of 6♣ was different from his normal tempo. South said that he had wild distribution and that his seven-card suit had been vigorously supported by partner when he had only promised five of the suit. 6♥ was unlikely to cost more than the value of E/W's game and might even make on a good day. Had South been on lead against 6♣ he would not have expected a heart lead to do any good and would have tried a spade as the best chance to build or take a trick. East said that North's hesitation suggested South's 6♥ bid. As to the opening lead, although a spade lead is logical, it could be the only lead to give away the contract.

The Decision: North had to make a high-level decision after three bids had been thrown at him in a very short time. In a "normal" game the time it took North to pass might not be considered a BIT, but in a fast pairs it probably was. Further, although North might have been considering a double with his actual hand, he might also have been thinking about bidding 6♥, which is the normal assumption. So, the committee did determine that the BIT demonstrably suggested that South bid 6♥.

However, the South hand has freakish distribution with a void in the opponent's suit and two additional cards in the suit that partner had jumped to game in. Although it need not work out best to bid 6♥, it would be difficult to find a player who would not bid 6♥ on the given auction. The committee did not consider pass to be a LA. Therefore, the committee restored the table result of 6♥ doubled by North, down one, N/S minus 100.

The Committee: Doug Doub (Chair), Tom Carmichael, Jeff Goldsmith, Scott Stearns and Jim Thurtell.

Commentary:

Goldsmith As South, I wouldn't allow E/W to play seven, and don't think that decision is remotely close. I did a small poll and pretty much everyone agreed with that assessment. Several said that they'd bid at the nine-level.

Polisner I agree that it would be hard to find a significant number of peers who would pass this hand.

Rigal Sensible decision by both directors and committee, though this is one of the rare cases where as a director even in a case of doubt I might just rule with the offenders. South won't be defending 6♣ -- even defending 7♣ might be wrong!

Smith We have committees to apply bridge judgment to situations like this. The committee recognized all the issues properly and dealt with them thoroughly. I defer to its judgment on whether pass was a LA or not. If the director had conducted a poll that led to his decision I would be less inclined to agree with the committee. I assume that such a poll was not taken since there is no mention of it in the write-up.

- Wildavsky** This deal shows how the ACBL Laws Commission's definition of a LA as one that some players would actually choose can lead appeals committees (AC) astray. Yes, if no one would take an action, then we shouldn't consider it logical. Sometimes an AC can misjudge because they believe that they personally would not have taken the action. If an action would be right quite often then it must be logical, and we'll always be able to find players who would choose it.
South's argument that the save was unlikely to cost more than the opposing game would be relevant at IMPs. It is not at matchpoints where the question is the frequency of gain or loss, not the amount.
I prefer the tournament director's ruling to the AC's.
- Wolff** A good practical decision which honored what really did happen in a case where no one was really advantaged or disadvantaged.
- Zeiger** I hate to disagree with my directing brethren on basic bridge judgment questions, but I can't imagine any good player passing with the South hand. Further, if I were on lead, I wouldn't expect much difference in my matchpoints if I were minus 940 instead of 920, so a spade lead is a standout.
The committee was perfect.