

APPEAL	NABC+ TWO
Subject	Disputed Claim
DIC	Henry Cukoff
Event	Von Zedtwitz LM Pairs
Session	First Qualifying
Date	July 20, 2007

BD#	1
VUL	None
DLR	North

Steve Grogg	
♠	9 8 5 4 2
♥	K
♦	A J 7 5
♣	J T 8

Rich Regan		Summer 2007 Nashville, Tennessee	Jim Hawkes	
♠	7 6 3		♠	A K Q J T
♥	Q J T 9 7		♥	8 6 5
♦	Q 3		♦	4 2
♣	A 9 6		♣	7 5 2

Ann Baum	
♠	
♥	A 4 3 2
♦	K T 9 8 6
♣	K Q 4 3

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	Dbl
2♥ ¹	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Final Contract	5♦, doubled by North
Opening Lead	♠A
Table Result	Made 5, N/S +550
Director Ruling	5♦ dbl made 5, N/S +550
Committee Ruling	5♦ dbl down 1, N/S -100

(1)	Constructive spade raise.
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The Facts: After East ruffed a club at trick ten, North claimed and said, “High cross-ruff.” The director was called. The director discovered that during the previous play declarer had ruffed a fourth heart in the North hand. East had failed to over-ruff.

The position after trick 10:

♠	9
♦	A J

♥	7
♦	Q 3

♠	Q J
♦	4

♦	K T
♣	Q

The Ruling: In accordance with law 70E, the director judged that, in the absence of an over-ruff, it would have been irrational for declarer to play East for the trump queen. Therefore, the claim of the last three tricks was allowed and the table result of 5♦ doubled making five, N/S plus 550 was allowed to stand.

The Appeal: Only one member of each side attended the hearing. E/W contended that declarer was rattled having lost an unnecessary club trick and that he had lost track of the trump queen and the number of trump outstanding. This contention was supported by declarer’s line of play.

North said he knew East did not have the trump queen when he did not over-ruff the fourth heart.

The Decision: North misspoke when he claimed on a high cross-ruff. The queen of trump, although most likely in the West hand, had not appeared. The committee felt declarer, when East did not over-ruff, forgot the ♦Q was still out. Most likely he was annoyed with himself for losing an unnecessary trick by allowing East to trump a club. In a Life Master’s Pairs declarer should know better than to claim with an incomplete explanation.

The chair’s explanation to declarer was that a Life Master Pair declarer should know how to make a proper claim. Therefore, the inadequacy of the claim cannot be attributed to not knowing the rules governing claims but rather to a temporary mental block.

The committee disallowed the claim of the last three tricks (awarding E/W one of the last three tricks) and adjusted the result to 5♦ doubled down one, N/S minus 100.

The Committee: Gail Greenberg (Chair), E.J.D. Kales, Ellen Kent, Chris Moll and Tom Peters.

Commentary:

- Goldsmith** I'd like to see the rest of the play listed, but if South wasn't making 12 tricks, there's a pretty good inference that he was confused, so I like the appeals committee's judgment.
- Polisner** Correct ruling - horrible decision and defies an understanding of Law 70E.
- Rigal** I understand the logic of the statement made by the committee but not its application of it in practice. The words 'high-crossruff' require declarer to ruff the spade HIGH -- don't they? Now how can declarer lose another trick by inferior as opposed to irrational play? I don't get it! As I say, if there were a sequence of plays based on an incomplete claim that could result in E/W getting a trick, you'd want to give it to them; but not here.
- Smith** This seems a bit harsh to me, but maybe seeing the entire line of play might persuade me that the committee got this one right. I find the fact that East did not overruff a heart earlier strong evidence that this declarer knew what was going on but simply verbalized it badly. I expect that he meant that he would ruff a spade return high and play West for the "marked" diamond queen. Although it is of course possible, I doubt he forgot about the existence of the diamond queen. So I would allow the claim on the basis that not playing West for the diamond queen (an "unstated line of play") would be irrational (Law 70E).
- Wildavsky** Good work by the appeals committee. The tournament director got this one wrong.
- Wolff** During my long career in bridge I've seen players, who have lost track of the play, try and recoup by claiming, hoping for the best. Against that is the distasteful nature of what can happen and this hand is a good example. Because of the kind defensive distribution N/S can easily make 12 tricks with diamonds as trump. West has made what almost every good player would say, "A truly terrible double with the opponent's voluntarily bidding it and West not having anything of difference making to double with." While N/S might deserve minus 100 on this hand because of North's rather hopeless play and claim why in the world in a matchpoint event should E/W convert a bottom to a top merely because of unusual circumstances. Many will not agree with me, but this is a game where winners emerge while losers gather together at the bottom. N/S will be one of the latter, but why should E/W emerge and get a windfall? Protect the field (PTF)- NS minus 100, EW minus 550.
- Zeiger** I was the table director for this one. I'm not convinced we were wrong, but the committee addressed the right issues, and came to a very reasonable conclusion.

