

APPEAL	Non-NABC+ One
Subject	Unauthorized Information (UI) - Tempo
DIC	Doug Grove
Event	Flight A/X Pairs
Session	First Session
Date	March 10, 2007

BD#	22
VUL	E/W
DLR	East

Janet Burke	
♠	7
♥	9 8 3
♦	7
♣	A Q T 9 7 5 3 2

John McLaughlin		Spring 2007 St. Louis, Missouri	Lloyd Arvedon	
♠	J 8 6 5 4		♠	A K Q T 3 2
♥	Q 5		♥	6
♦	9 6 5 3 2		♦	A K J 8
♣	8		♣	6 4

Frank Burke	
♠	9
♥	A K J T 7 4 2
♦	Q T 4
♣	K J

West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♥
Pass	3♣	3♠	4♥
4♠	5♥	5♠	Dbl ¹
Pass	6♥	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Final Contract	6♥ by South, doubled
Opening Lead	♣8
Table Result	6♥ doubled, +1, N/S +1310
Director Ruling	5♠ doubled, -1 N/S +200
Panel Ruling	5♠ doubled, -1 N/S +200

(1) 15 second hesitation

The Facts: The director was called after the 6♥ bid. North agreed with East's estimate of the tempo break at 15 seconds before South doubled East's 5♠ bid.

The Ruling:

- 1) Passing 5♠ doubled is a logical alternative that could have been demonstrably suggested by the break in tempo, Laws 16 A2 and 73. F. 1.
- 2) The lead which led to the contract's success was not an instance where the causal connection between the infraction and the result was broken. In accordance with law 12 C2, the ruling was N/S plus 200, E/W minus 200.

The Appeal: North agreed to a tempo break by partner of 10-15 seconds. She stated that partner needed time to make a decision in such an auction. She has played with her partner for 30+ years, and she would never consider passing in an auction such as this. She stated that she had no defense and that she was bidding 6♥ as a sacrifice against 5♠, which she expected would make. She stated that the break in tempo suggested nothing specifically. North had 2445 masterpoints, South 4193.

E/W stated there was a clear break in tempo, which suggested that South was expressing doubt as to the proper action. North, therefore, had acted upon the unauthorized information by pulling the double. East had 18,840 masterpoints, West 1980.

The Decision: Seven players were consulted to determine whether North had chosen from logical alternatives an action that was suggested by the break in tempo. Two expert players both passed based on the fact they had a defensive trick and that partner had made the decision on the hand with his double. Five players with between 2000 and 4000 masterpoints were also asked to bid over 5♠ doubled and four of the five chose to pass. Based on West's original pass, it was likely that South had two or three spades from the auction. Logically, when West chooses to pass, North could infer additional spade length in the South hand; another reason partner's double should be passed.

These facts clearly indicate that pass was a logical alternative to bidding, and that the break in tempo suggested doubt about the intent of partner's double. The doubt suggested by the break in tempo made the action of pulling the double more attractive to North.

West's opening club lead was a reasonable action. This did not sever the link and should not be held against E/W in determining whether E/W should benefit from the adjustment. The panel upheld the table director's decision and assigned a result of 5♠ doubled, N/S plus 200.

Players Consulted: Arnie Fisher and Harold Feldheim

The Panel: Harry Falk (Reviewer), Candy Kushner and Jean Molnar.

Commentary:

Polisner Simple ruling and decision. I don't see any mention of an AWMW which should have been given.

Rigal I'm not sure I agree with the argument about subsequent and consequent damage – the diamond lead with the West cards looks clear (where does a club loser go?). But having said that, South's slow double makes a pass by North – with an ace yet – forced. I'd like to penalize N/S more but adjusting the score achieved that I suppose.

Smith Good job by the directors, and also by the panel (except for the failure to assess an AWMW).

Wildavsky Good work all around. I'd have considered a procedural penalty against North for her call. I might not have thought of it, but her claim that she held "no defense" while looking at an ace made me check twice.

Wolff This decision is contrary to the best interest of the future of our process. N/S should receive plus 200 and E/W minus 1310. The playing of the game should always enter into our decision; and, when West went for the "greedy" lead of the singleton club, he deserved the result he got. While it is true that N/S were guilty of taking advantage of UI and consequently should lose their plus 1310, it should not enable E/W to avoid responsibility for their bridge actions. This case is a fairly frequent occurrence and when you add its simplicity it would make a marvelous precedent for the future, but I don't recommend it since I don't agree with the decision.

As a precedent the following three "Masters" should be served:

1. N/S loses their windfall because of the UI.
2. E/W is stuck with their bridge action.
3. The matchpoint field is protected.