



2007

APPEALS

Edited by David Stevenson

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

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All the appeals from the WBU events have been included herein. It is hoped that they will provide interest and an insight into the way that people in Wales are ruling the game.

After the success of the earlier editions it was decided to repeat this publication. This publication has been put on David Stevenson's Lawspage, and on the EBU website in the L&EC section. The feedback from this will be used to decide whether to repeat this in future years. Also consideration will be given as to whether to publish it as a booklet (as is happening in other countries in similar situations). So, whether you liked this publication or not, if you can see how you would improve it, if you would like to purchase a paper copy, or if you have any other comments, please tell the L&EC Chairman, Anne Jones. If you wish to comment on the actual appeals, the layout, the editing or the Commentary please tell the Editor, David Stevenson. The way to contact the L&EC Chairman or the Editor is detailed on the next page.

Comments have been made on the appeals by an international group of people who have donated their time, for which we thank them. Also thanks are due to Peter Eidt of Germany and Jeffrey Allerton of England for doing the proof-reading.

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Commentators

There are comments on each Appeal by various commentators. Their comments herein reflect their personal views.

David Stevenson (b. 1947), the Editor, is an International Tournament Director from Liverpool, England. He has served as a member of the Tournament Appeals Committee of the World Bridge Federation, and on Appeals Committees in the ACBL, Scotland, Ireland, South Africa and Sweden. He is a member of the Laws & Ethics Committees in England and Wales. He was formerly the Secretary of the European Bridge League Tournament Directors' Committee, a commentator in the ACBL appeals books and Chief Tournament Director of the WBU. He hosts forums for Bridge Rulings and Appeals Committees.

Alain Gottcheiner is a Belgian, occasional TD, has had some successes in national championships, has written about conventions and systems and is known as a "systems freak". His main appointments as an AC member are as an expert about strange conventions. His other fields of interest include mathematical anthropology, the sociology of games and 'dolichotrichotomy'.

He has a general tendency towards severity to UI and MI, but dislikes lawyering attitudes more than anything else.

Barry Rigal (b. 1958) lives in Manhattan with his wife Sue Picus. He was chairman of National Appeals for the ACBL for three years and is a full time bridge player, writer and commentator. His tournament record includes most of the major UK National titles and two US National titles.

Bob Schwartz (b. 1945) is a computer consultant. Member of the ACBL Board of Governors, ACBL National Appeals Committee and the ACBL Competition and Conventions Committee. Married (over 30 years) with 3 children. Likes golf and poker – tolerates bridge.

Eric Landau is an American. He was a successful tournament player in the ACBL and Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, but has been semi-retired from competition since the late 80s and currently plays only once in a while. He is the author of the book "Every Hand An Adventure", and his writings have also appeared in The Bridge World, the Bulletin of the ACBL and various lesser-known publications. He directs at the club and local levels occasionally, and managed a bridge club for several years.

Frances Hinden and **Jeffrey Allerton** are tournament players from Surrey, England. Recent successes include winning the 4* teams at Brighton, while Jeffrey is a past European and World junior champion. They both used to direct club and county competitions, and are members of the EBU panel of referees.

Heather Dhondy (b. 1966) is a part-time accountant and part-time bridge professional living in North London with husband Jeremy Dhondy (vice-chairman of the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee). She has been a national appeals chairman for a number of years and is on the EBU panel of referees as well as being a member of the EBU Selection Committee. She is also a regular member of the English ladies' team.

Jens Brix Christiansen (b. 1951) lives in Copenhagen, Denmark. He was trained as an international TD in the 1990s and has been chairman of the National Appeals Committee and Laws Commission for the Danish Bridge Federation since 1998. He headed the effort to translate 2007 edition of the Laws into Danish.

Paul Lamford is a Grandmaster and winner of a few national events. He is author of Starting Out in Bridge and 50 Bridge Puzzles and a regular contributor to Bridgetalk and the Bridge Laws Mailing List. He is a former Executive Editor of Bridge magazine and Macmillan bridge books.

Richard Grenside (b. 1938) was born in Harpenden, Herts. He learned to play Bridge when he was 7, his parents played. He played extensively in the UK during the 1960s. His only claim to fame was winning the Faber Cup (Rubber Bridge Event).

On emigrating to Australia in 1971, he took the job of Manager & Chief Tournament Director [CTD] of the Victorian Bridge Association in Melbourne. He moved to Sydney in 1975 as same position to the New South Wales Bridge Association. He is the Honorary Secretary of the Australian Bridge Federation.

He has been CTD of the Australian Bridge Federation for over 20 years, CTD of the Far East Bridge Federation, now PABF, during the 80's and early 90's. He has now retired from directing nationally.

He has directed at every World Championships since Miami 1986 except Estoril in 2005. He has been CTD of WBF Youth championships, NEC Cup, Yeh Bros Cup, Commonwealth Nations Cup.

Richard Hills is primus inter pares of the Bridge Laws Mailing List:

<http://www.amsterdamed.org/pipermail/blml/>

Richard's administrative successes include his current role as Minutes Secretary of the DIAC Social Club (and co-chair of its Film Festival sub-committee), plus his just-completed role as amicus curiae to Grattan Endicott. Richard's past competitive successes include winning five Australian Youth Bridge Championships, plus being Chess Champion of both Tasmania and Canberra, and also winning his school's Spaghetti Eating Championship.

Robin Barker (b. 1961) is a research software engineer at the National Physical Laboratory, near London, and is a TD for the EBU and the European Bridge League. After studying mathematics at Cambridge, he spent a few years in the professional theatre, before getting a proper job. He now lives with his family in Exeter.

Tim Rees has been playing bridge since school, and has won most of the English and Welsh national titles at some stage. The 2008 Schapiro Spring Foursomes completed his set of major titles, the Gold Cup and Crockfords being the others. He has represented Wales at every European, Olympiad and Commonwealth Games since devolution from Great Britain in 2000, with his greatest success being a silver medal at the 2002 Commonwealth Games. Tim works at the Transport Research Laboratory, analysing (and hopefully solving) motorway congestion.

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Abbreviations

There are some abbreviations, and they are listed here:

WBU	Welsh Bridge Union
EBU	English Bridge Union
ACBL	American Contract Bridge League
L&E	Laws & Ethics Committee
L&EC	Laws & Ethics Committee
WB	EBU White Book, containing regulations for TDs and ACs
OB	EBU Orange Book, containing regulations for players
WBF	World Bridge Federation
TD	Tournament Director
Director	Tournament Director
AC	Appeals Committee
Committee	Appeals Committee
LA	Logical alternative
AI	Authorised information
MI	Misinformation
UI	Unauthorised information
BIT	Break in Tempo [a hesitation, or over-fast call]
PP	Procedural penalty [a fine]
NOs	Non-offenders
N/S	North-South
E/W	East-West
!	Alerted
...	Hesitation [agreed]
(1), (2) etc	References to notes below
P	Pass
♠♥♦♣	Spades hearts diamonds clubs
Dbl	Double
Redbl	Redouble
NT	No-trumps
Benji	Benjamin: a popular name for a form of Acol where 2♣/♦ openings are strong and artificial, 2♥/♠ openings are weak

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General

From the 1st August 2006 a new Orange Book applied in Wales. You can download a copy from the EBU L&EC website – see Contacts. There were major changes to the alerting rules. The most important changes were: first the introduction of “Announcements” for the ranges of 1NT openings, for Stayman and simple Transfer responses, and for natural Two level openings; and second that alerting above 3NT was usually stopped.

From the 1st August 2000 Tournament Directors are permitted to give “weighted” scores when assigning, for example if they adjust a score because of misinformation they might give a score of 50% of 6♠ making and 50% of 4♠ +2. Previously only Appeals Committees were permitted to do this. The World Bridge Federation hopes that this will reduce the number of Appeals.

The format used to show such results is based on the “Maastricht protocol” whereby higher N/S scores are shown first. It helps scorers and TDs if a consistent style is used. Example:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

10% 6♣ -1 by West, NS +100
+60% 6♠ doubled –3 by N/S, NS -800
+30% 6♣ making by West, NS -920

Unlike most other publications of this sort around the world, we have named the Tournament Director in each case. He or she is the man or woman who attended the table, took the evidence, told the players the ruling, and presented the case to the Committee. But the ruling will only be given after he or she has consulted with at least one other Director and probably at least one experienced player. Thus he or she is not solely responsible for the ruling – on rare occasions he or she may not agree with it himself or herself.

Note that while the 2007 Laws came into use in Wales before this booklet was published, all the appeals were held under the 1997 Laws.

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APPEAL No 1: I've got a very big hand!

07/001 Spring Congress

Tournament Director:

Mike Amos

Appeals Committee:

Patrick Jourdain (Chairman) Paddy Murphy Bill Niccol

Swiss Teams Board no 20 Dealer West All vulnerable	♠ KQ4 ♥ KQT87 ♦ AK ♣ AK5	
♠ 873 ♥ 953 ♦ JT98532 ♣ --	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ T65 ♥ 4 ♦ Q74 ♣ QJT863
	♠ AJ92 ♥ AJ62 ♦ 6 ♣ 9742	

Basic systems:

North-South play Benjaminised Acol

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
P	2♦ [A1]	P	2♥ [A2]
P	2NT [3]	P	3♣ [A4]
P	3♥	P	4NT
P	5♠	P	6♥
P	7♥	P	P
P			

- (1) Artificial, strongest bid
- (2) Relay
- (3) 23-24, balanced
- (4) 4-card Stayman

Result at table:

7♥ making by South, NS +2210

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

When making her 6♥ bid South had used the Stop card. North suggested he had not noticed but it was agreed that this had happened.

E/W were concerned about North's 7♥ bid. The TD asked that play continue and was recalled at the end of play to consider the matter.

The TD asked North to explain his reasoning. He said that the partnership had the agreement that Roman Keycard only applied when both had bid a suit. Otherwise 4NT was Roman Blackwood, with responses 3/0, 4/1, 2 of same colour, 2 of same rank, 2 other [shown on convention card]. He had shown 2 aces of the same rank. It was inconceivable that partner lacking key cards in hearts could have bid 4NT without two aces with the intention of bidding 6♥.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

The TD did not believe that in this auction the Stop card suggests extra values as in some auctions so 7♥ was not suggested.

Given North's arguments, the TD did not think pass was a logical alternative. South's bidding shows two aces and North has an enormous fit/hand. Law 16A2.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

There are two different issues here.

First, did the use of the 'Stop' card suggest in any way that South has a good hand for his bid? I don't think so. An unnecessary Stop before a descriptive bid (like 1♥ – [3♣] – stop 3♥) might mean something; before a conclusive bid, it doesn't, unless you pretend N/S are c****ing. That settles the case.

But why do they all say South's bidding guarantees two aces? I think it didn't, because that's the way I'd bid with x – AJxx – x – QJ10xxxx. But since there is no UI, we don't have to worry about LAs. North's 7♥ was just a guess, which by the way would have been wrong if South had held 3424 or 3433, even including two Aces.

Barry Rigal's comments:

No grounds for returning the deposit if the AC believed that the TD's grounds for dismissing the director call was correct.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

If South has Axx Axxx xxx xxx or any similar holding with 3+ clubs, 7♥ has no play whatsoever. South has signed off in 6H. The use of the Stop card conveys no information that I can think of. I allow the 7♥ call because I don't see any UI, but I also question North's lack of respect for partner's decision.

David Stevenson's comments:

Of course pass is an LA for North. Yes, as the AC says, he has an enormous hand, with an amazing 24 points! But since he showed 23-24 with his 2NT bid, perhaps South would have guessed that he had 23 or 24 points?

North has produced a perfectly logical argument why he should bid 7♥. It sounds well-thought-out – but is it not just the justification North could have thought up afterwards?

I am quite sure that at least 30% of North's peers would pass 6♥ with no extra values, merely what he has shown. But the worry is that South's stop card may not really suggest going on. If the response to Blackwood had been 5♦ and South had bid stop 6♥ that would merely be expressing the limit of the hand: it would not be suggesting progressing.

So the TD ruled correctly when he said the Stop card did not suggest extra values. His comments about pass not being an LA were wrong, but did not invalidate his ruling.

As to the AC, they did not explain their reasoning which is unhelpful. So we cannot say whether they got it right for the right reason or not.

Eric Landau's comments:

Good ruling. I'm just curious about one thing, though. In what kind of "some auctions" does playing the Stop card suggest extra values? Is that some Welsh thing?

Frances Hinden's comments:

I agree that the 'stop' before the 6♥ bid does not suggest extra values. I've seen this quite often, and it's usually just an automatic 'I'm going to bid slam therefore it must be a stop bid'. So I agree with the ruling. I don't agree with the TD's comment that pass was not a logical alternative: pass is *always* a logical alternative if you give a truthful reply to Blackwood and partner then signs off. We aren't told what E/W's basis of appeal was so I can't comment on whether it was right to return the deposit or not.

Heather Dhondy's comments:

It is surprising that pass is not considered a logical alternative when partner has bid Blackwood, and signed off over the response. In my view pass must always be a logical alternative in such cases.

However here the UI was not a hesitation (in which case I would have disallowed the 7♥ bid), but a stop card, which conveys no suggestion that a 7♥ bid is more likely to succeed than pass. Therefore I would let the result stand.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

The TD has recorded the facts and his ruling in plenty of detail but the appeals form completion stopped there. What was the basis of appeal? What arguments were put forward by E/W? What additional comments, if any, were made at appeal by N/S? Did the AC consider the appeal to have merit? If not, why was the deposit returned?

I don't understand the second paragraph in the TD comments. Why has South shown two aces? Blackwood followed by a small slam bid suggests that either an ace is missing or that the partnership does not have enough strength to make a grand slam; otherwise South would continue with 5NT or some other grand slam try.

However, I do agree with the first paragraph of the TD comments and hence I also agree with the TD's ruling of allowing the table result to stand.

Jens Brix Christiansen's comments:

Once the TD and the AC have determined that the UI available does not suggest additional values, it is formally immaterial whether North has logical alternatives; there is then no infraction. The finding that North has no logical alternative is icing on the cake.

Paul Lamford's comments:

I agree with both the TD and AC. The accidental use of the Stop card and North's reasoning in bidding 7♥, whether wise or not, were unconnected. Note that if the jack of spades in the South hand had been the jack of clubs (with the same distribution), the grand was still reasonable (spades 3-3 or East with four spades and the queen of clubs or any four clubs, or West 4-4 in the blacks). And I struggle to construct a hand for South with only one ace where he would bid Blackwood. But we don't need to rule on North's judgement, just as to whether there was UI, and there was none.

Richard Grenside's comments:

Question: Why would South use the stop card when bidding 6♥? Surely this would be more suggestive of pass rather than bid on? Unless someone can convince me that the unusual use of the stop card suggests extra values, there is nothing to prevent North from bidding 7. Just because an unusual action occurs at the table, this in itself does not necessarily carry any inference of impropriety. Agree with Appeals Committee.

Richard Hills' comments:

I do not agree with the Director that South's bidding shows two aces. After using Blackwood, the textbook method to show partner that all the aces are held is to rebid 5NT (not 6♥).

If I had been South, my failure to rebid 5NT would have shown a hand such as:

2
AJ96
QJT9
QJT9

in which I was punting that a trump finesse would work if pard lacked all of the outstanding trump honours.

North's implausible suggestion that he did not notice the Stop! card is irrelevant. South merely has to make unauthorised information available to North in order for Law 16 to restrict North's choice amongst logical alternatives.

So the only question remaining is whether South's illegal flourishing of a Stop! card demonstrably suggested extra values. I say yes. In an uncontested auction a jump bid (Stop! required) generally shows extra values. This would mean that, from North's point of view, South's erroneous Stop! card demonstrably suggested that the error might have been created by a linkage in South's mind between good values and Stop! cards.

Ergo, I adjust to 6♥ with an overtrick.

Robin Barker's comments:

The TD ruled that pass was not a logical alternative to 7♥ and that the stop card did not suggest 7♥. It is difficult to see what arguments E/W put to the appeals committee to overturn both points: either part of the TD ruling would be enough to let the score stand. Nevertheless it is not surprising that the deposit was returned: non-offending appellants that have had an unauthorised information ruling against them rarely lose their deposit.

Tim Rees' comments:

This ruling looks correct, given the methods being played by N/S. There is no write-up by the AC; if they thought this was an easy decision, why not keep the deposit?

WBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

The L&EC did not appreciate the fact that some Chairmen of Appeals had not written on the Appeals form the reason for the decision of the Committee. It reminds all CoAs that this is a requirement.

Final summary by editor:

Apart from Richard H, everyone is happy that the UI did not suggest bidding 7♥. But few agreed that pass was not an LA: they just thought it irrelevant.

There were some worries about the merit of the appeal, but it was difficult to be sure because of the lack of comment from the AC.

APPEAL No 2: What happened?

07/002 Welsh Foursomes

Tournament Director:

Ted Hill

Appeals Committee:

Anne Jones (Chairman) Malcolm Pryor David S Jones

Swiss Teams Board no 21 Dealer North N/S vulnerable	♠ 5 ♥ AK963 ♦ KQT ♣ AK43	
♠ KT8432 ♥ 7 ♦ A65 ♣ QT6	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ QJ7 ♥ J52 ♦ 943 ♣ J852
	♠ A96 ♥ QT84 ♦ J872 ♣ 97	

Basic systems:

North-South play Acol, 3 weak twos

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
	1♥	P	2♥
2♠	4♥	P (H)	P
4♠	Dbl (1)	P	P
P			

(1) Reserved rights before doubling

Result at table:

4♠ doubled -3 by West, NS +500, lead ♣A

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

TD was told East's second pass was slow – not excessive but definite. This was not disputed.

It was later suggested that East did not wait any longer than the 10 seconds required by Law. If that was the case then no UI was conveyed and West was a free agent. Since no statement about this was made at the table TD subsequently felt that he should have asked the appropriate question at the time and may well have been able to make a proper determination.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

4♥ +2 by North, NS +680 (later revised)

Details of ruling:

If the hesitation did convey UI then pass by West is a logical alternative and TD adjusted to 4♥ +2 to N/S. Pass by West was a logical alternative to 4♠. Law 16. 4♠ cancelled and 4♥ by North assessed to make 12 tricks with little room for doubt.

Director's revised ruling:

Table score re-instated

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Comments by North-South:

(Before seeing Director's statement of facts)

1. There was hesitation by East beyond the 10 seconds.
2. This was not disputed when the TD was called.
3. The TD said he had consulted a colleague (Ken Richardson, DIC) about the matter and ruled 4♥ +2 amended score.
4. Later the opponents appealed now saying that there was no hesitation beyond 10 seconds.
5. The DIC accepted this and reversed the ruling without talking to us (again?).

Comments by East-West:

It was agreed that there was a slow pass by the East hand but it was not pointed out that it followed a Stop bid.

Appeals Committee decision:

Table result stands

Appeals Committee's comments:

N/S appealed as original ruling reversed.

A very confused effort by the TD who had not noticed that 4♥ was a skip bid initially. An away from table approach had resulted in a change of ruling.

While East admitted that she had not noticed that 4♥ was a skip bid and was considering action, West had no reason to think that East's hesitation conveyed any UI. The pause was required by regulation.

The TD had not ascertained the length of pause and the AC found it difficult to reconstruct the table presence but thought excess of 10 seconds was unlikely. No history of East's normal action over a skip bid were available.

Contemporaneous comment of TD 'definite but not excessive'!! AC thought it likely that some weight may have been put on the pause, but didn't feel that without corroborating evidence it should rule against West.

Making a ruling and changing it is bound to cause discontent. TD should consult before ruling. Revised ruling by the DIC didn't support these views.

Note by editor:

The above is mostly taken verbatim from the form, with some guesswork. It is not clear at all what happened. It is not mentioned what happened to the deposit, nor whether one was taken.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

If there had been immediate disagreement about the timing, the TD should have investigated which statement was most plausible. Here, I don't think East considered for more than 10 seconds on her 12-loser hand. East's pause for thought was therefore undistinguishable from the mandatory tempo.

I'll tackle West's later claim that there wasn't a long tempo after all in the same way as immediate disagreement and restore the table result.

My guess is that the TD asked 'do you agree that you paused?', and East, still not realizing that 4♥ was a skip bid, agreed about the BIT, but was never explicitly asked (or didn't realize she was asked) whether she agreed it was longer than 10 seconds.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Not possible to comment on this write-up. Quality of write-up and TD ruling is less than satisfactory.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Great Title. I have no comment.

David Stevenson's comments:

The whole idea of having forms, which are more complicated than most, is to make it easy for the TD to tell people what happened. While he seems to have changed his ruling it is still very confused.

It appears the original ruling was given in haste without consultation. Welsh TDs are always instructed to consult before any judgement ruling, however obvious.

It also appears that the original ruling was that there was a BIT but this did not allow for the mandatory 10 second pause. Once this was remembered it was not obvious whether there was a BIT or not.

It seems clear to me that if there was a BIT it suggested bidding 4♠ over passing, so the 4♠ bid should be disallowed. But was there a BIT?

Eric Landau's comments:

This was a purely factual case, with no issue of law involved. Either the huddle was long enough to convey extraneous information (which would merit an adjustment here) or it wasn't. Only those who were there can make that determination.

Frances Hinden's comments:

I agree with everything the AC said. If the TD really did not realise that 4♥ was a 'STOP' bid (was the STOP card used?) then a proper ruling became impossible. Note that although 800 is possible from 4♠x, I don't think that the N/S defence was so bad as to deny them redress.

Heather Dhondy's comments:

It appears as though this ruling was mis-managed by both TDs and as a result there is no definitive answer as to whether there was a tempo break beyond the required 10 seconds. It appears to be in dispute and in these situations an AC must look at the balance of likelihood. Given the East hand I would think it unlikely that there was a tempo break (indeed West's action should have been unsuccessful as the contract can be defeated by 4 tricks), so I would allow the score to stand.

It also seems probable that if no-one had noticed that 4♥ was a skip bid, then the stop card was not used. This should also have been ascertained by the TD, and if it *was* used, for how long was it placed on the table.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

We have a rather confused picture of events here, so the TD/AC has to rule on disputed facts.

I'd be interested to know how long North had held down the 'stop' card and how soon after the 'stop' card's removal East had called. Although the AC observes that 'No history of East's normal action over a skip bid were available' they could have got out a bidding box and asked East to simulate what he normally does.

Based on the facts recorded, I would rule that West did have unauthorised information from East's tempo for the following reasons:

1. If the reason for East's pause was that he had merely been obeying the 'stop' warning, then surely he would have explained this when the TD first attended the table.
2. Sadly, most players do not obey the 'stop' procedures properly; they tend to pause for about three seconds rather than ten. What matters here is this particular East's normal practice; if he paused for longer than he usually does then West has unauthorised information as a matter of fact.
3. West's 4♠ bid looks very unusual and dangerous. It seems that he was expecting to find some spade support opposite and there is nothing in the authorised auction to suggest that East does have any support for the suit.

Finally, it should be noted that although North/South could have taken 4♥x for 800, the EBU White Book (which is used in the WBU) states that defensive errors in a contract the non-offenders should not have been defending do not constitute a sufficient reason to deny redress to the non-offending side.

Jens Brix Christiansen's comments:

It is indeed hard to determine what happened. The analysis of what the ruling should be depending on what really happened seems reasonable to me. It can only be hoped that in the end the committee based its ruling on correct facts.

Paul Lamford's comments:

This looks a very poor decision indeed. Finding of fact is always based on the balance of probabilities. Did West have UI? Well, you can bet your bottom dollar that if East had passed at East's normal speed over a stop bid, West would have had a Pass card on the table before you could say "Jack Robinson." He has clearly used UI from somewhere, and it is obvious that it was from a break in tempo by East who was considering saving at favourable vulnerability. The statements by North-South, the "break in tempo" whether 11, 12, 15 seconds or just more than she would normally take, and West's and East's hands all point in the same direction. Res ipsa loquitur. I would unhesitatingly change the score to 4♥+2 by NS +680.

Richard Grenside's comments:

You have to be joking. The Reserved Rights says it all, 4♥ + 2 for both sides appears the ONLY logical action by both the director and appeals committee. If West was prepared to sacrifice in 4S then why the pussyfoot 2 spades?

Richard Hills' comments:

WBF Code of Practice, page 6:

It is the function of the Director to make a ruling in a judgemental matter, having consulted appropriately, that executes most accurately the intention of the laws. The desire is that the Director shall not rule automatically in favour of the non-offending side when he is in no doubt that a true judgement requires him to rule otherwise.

So the 1980s Kaplan doctrine - a TD should rule against the offending side and let the AC sort out the mess later - has been well and truly superseded.

It was admirable that the TD and the DIC strove to sort out the mess without waiting for the AC. It was less admirable that the mess was created in the first place by an obviously avoidable error of the TD.

Robin Barker's comments:

It is likely that the right decision was reached. East is perhaps lucky that she managed to consider action for something like the right amount of time, while being oblivious to the skip bid.

Tim Rees' comments:

What a mess! The AC comments sum the situation up well – there's not much to add. The AC generally has to go along with whatever the TD decides in findings of fact such as hesitations. As the final ruling from the TD was that there was no hesitation, West cannot have committed an offence.

WBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

Ken Richardson to remind TDs that it is their duty to ensure correct completion of all forms.

Final summary by editor:

Some commentators have tried to work out what happened, but really it should have been clarified then written on the form.

APPEAL No 3: Confusion reigns supreme

07/003 Welsh Foursomes

Tournament Director:

Ted Hill

Appeals Committee:

Anne Jones (Chairman) Malcolm Pryor David S Jones

Swiss Teams Board no 19 Dealer South E/W vulnerable	♠ JT ♥ -- ♦ J6 ♣ J42	
♠ -- ♥ 43 ♦ -- ♣ Q8765	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ -- ♥ K ♦ Q985 ♣ K3
	♠ KQ65 ♥ -- ♦ -- ♣ AT9	

Result at table:

Heart contract: claimed after six tricks.

Director's statement of facts:

Hearts are trumps. Declarer (West) says 'I will give you the Ace of Clubs'. North objects as the Diamonds are not running.

West said he knew there were no more Hearts out (agreed at the table).

Director's ruling:

5 tricks made

Details of ruling:

Since he knew about trumps the TD ruled that he would play a Club to the King and Ace (as stated) ruff the Spade return, throwing the 3 of Clubs (he wants the Diamonds). He then ruffs a Club, plays the Diamond Queen followed by another Diamond losing to the Jack.

These are Declarer's two losers.

Appeal lodged by:

Not known

Comments by North-South:

West claimed with 7 tricks to go.

‘Throwing my losing Clubs on the Diamonds and giving you the Ace of Clubs’

He has now agreed that this was his comment.

To get to dummy he must play to the King of Hearts and as the Diamonds are not good, he will now lose control and go off.

Comments by East-West:

West, declarer, said “I was aware all trumps have played except for King on table and xx in my hand. I can get to table by ruffing a Club. Provided I do not play a Heart to table I have 5 tricks and not 6 as claimed.”

Appeals Committee decision:

Result:

4♥ -1 by West, NS +100

Appeals Committee’s comments:

The facts reported by the TD were incomplete and confusing. There was dispute as to the contemporaneous statement of the claim.

Despite in depth questioning West was confused about his likely line of play and the appeals committee was convinced that West would fail to make his contract 80% of the time.

The appeals committee was disappointed that the TD had not presented the case as well as he might have. The play to the claim point was not included.

Note by editor:

The above is taken verbatim from the form. It is not clear at all what happened. It is not mentioned what happened to the deposit, nor whether one was taken. The TD ruled a number of tricks made but did not say how many tricks had already been made so it is not possible to tell whether the AC agreed with the TD or amended his ruling. It is the same TD and AC as the previous case.

The editor has made deductions from “To get to dummy he must play to the King of Hearts and as the Diamonds are not good, he will now lose control and go off” and concluded that this means the contract will go off if declarer makes fewer than five tricks. Based on that he deduces:

Result at table:

4♥: claimed after six tricks: five tricks already made

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Director’s ruling:

5 further tricks made

Result:

4♥ ✓ by West, NS -620

Appeals Committee decision:

4 further tricks made

Result:

4♥ -1 by West, NS +100

Barry Rigal's comments:

In the ending described after a club to the king and ace, the correct assumption is that a spade back will be ruffed in dummy and declarer will try to run the diamonds, taking his top winners (three trumps and two minor-suit tricks). An alternative approach of ruffing the spade in hand would also lead to five tricks. Any other approach would be irrational not inferior.

Again quality of TD decision and write-up (and possibly of ratio for AC decision) appears unacceptable.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Another Great Title. I have no comment.

David Stevenson's comments:

I did my best, but we really do need forms to tell us what happened!!!

My guess is that the AC got it right, declarer not realising the problem until someone contested his claim, then saying he knew what he was doing all along.

Eric Landau's comments:

Was the committee's decision some odd attempt to split the difference between rational rulings? Despite the confusion as to West's actual statement, there is no line consistent with anything reported said that would result in declarer's taking four further tricks in the seven-card end position. If he is required to cross in trumps immediately to play diamonds, he will get only two trumps and the ♦Q. If his stating that he knew trumps were gone is taken as an indication that he will reach dummy's diamonds via a club ruff, so that he may be presumed to start by playing clubs (as the director originally ruled), he will take three trumps, the ♦Q and ♣Q (which he will get in the end even if he makes the odd play of not cashing it before ruffing a low club, as the director presumes). So he should get either three tricks or five, but not four. I abstain on the question of, given the number of further tricks he will take, how many he will have come to in total.

Frances Hinden's comments:

It is very hard to judge claim rulings without knowing how the play has gone so far. However, the agreed facts appear to be

- Declarer knew there were no trumps outstanding
- Declarer knew that the ace of clubs was still out
- Declarer thought that the diamonds were running
- Declarer was in 4♥ and had taken 5 of the first 6 tricks

If declarer plays a heart to the king, queen of diamonds, and a diamond he is now making only 3 more tricks and going two off. This appears to be the basis of the N/S appeal.

The AC have ruled on the basis that declarer will play a club to the next trick, and then go wrong later (there are various ways to go wrong, but most of them result in one off). The TD has ruled that declarer will play a club to the next trick, and then do the right thing later. I think the TD is wrong, as there are plenty of careless, but not irrational, ways to go off after playing a club to the king.

Does saying "Throwing my losing clubs on the diamonds and giving you the Ace of clubs" imply that declarer is going to play a club next? I don't think so, I think it implies crossing to dummy in hearts and 'running' diamonds resulting in two off and that's how I would have ruled.

Heather Dhondy's comments:

If West believes that the ♦s are running then the suggested line of crossing to the king of hearts would result in only 3 further tricks being made, and the score would be -2 (2 trumps and the ♦Q). I would rule 4♥-2, NS+200.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

I agree with the AC. The TD should record the full hand and the play to date. Also the exact wording of the claim statement is important as it may imply which card West was playing next.

Jens Brix Christiansen's comments:

The reconstruction of what happened seems reasonable, and I have no further comment there. The AC is arguing along the lines of a likelihood of 80%; this may not be an appropriate approach for resolving claims. Law 70A stipulates that doubtful points should be resolved in favor of claimer's opponents, and 80% is not necessarily the proper yardstick for determining whether a point is doubtful.

Paul Lamford's comments:

This seems non-contentious, but somehow the TD and AC get it wrong based on the facts as presented. West's statement that he was throwing the club losers on the diamonds implies that he was unaware that North still held a diamond guard. It looks normal to cross to the heart and play diamonds, throwing clubs, before giving up a club at trick 12. But North wins the second diamond and plays a spade, so that West only makes three more tricks from the diagram. The correct ruling seems to be 4♥ -2 by West, NS +200.

Richard Grenside's comments:

Seems clear to me, West is under the misapprehension that the diamonds are running, in which case it is reasonable to suspect that a small heart to the K, 4 diamonds + the extra trump would be the attempted line, if declarer at the stage of the Q♦ realised his error, it is too late, a switch to a club produces the same 4 tricks. Ruling: 4 tricks, 1 off.

Robin Barker's comments:

I agree with the appeals committee except I might have ruled only three tricks to declarer. A normal line (consistent with thinking diamonds are good and "giving you the Ace of clubs") is heart to the King, diamond Queen, diamond to the Jack, Jack of spades ruffed, and South is high.

"Giving you the Ace of clubs" is not the same as "knocking out the Ace of clubs at the first opportunity"; the claim did not include establishing club tricks.

Tim Rees' comments:

If we can ignore the quality of the form-filling, this boils down to a relatively simple problem. West has forgotten that the diamonds are not good, so will lose a diamond trick as he attempts to cash the suit. Whether he makes 4 or 5 further tricks depends on whether he crosses to the ♥K or ruffs a club in order to get to dummy. As he thought he was high apart from the ♣A, either would be possible, so the AC was correct in awarding 4 further tricks (if that's what they did!).

WBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

Ken Richardson to remind TDs that it is their duty to ensure correct completion of all forms.

Final summary by editor:

A fair shot by several commentators to work out what was correct. But they do not all seem in agreement!

APPEAL No 4: Good try!

07/004 Welsh Invitation Pairs

Tournament Director:

Ken Richardson

Appeals Committee:

David Burn (Chairman) Malcolm Cuthbertson Artur Malinowski

Butler Pairs Board no 14 Dealer East Nil Vulnerable	♠ A842 ♥ A ♦ KT82 ♣ AKT5	
♠ QT9 ♥ T964 ♦ Q9763 ♣ 9	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ J7 ♥ KQJ8732 ♦ J ♣ J42
	♠ K653 ♥ 5 ♦ A54 ♣ Q8763	

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
		3♥	P
4NT [A]	Dbl	5♣ [A]	Dbl
5♥	Dbl	P	5NT
P	6♣	P	P
P			

Result at table:

6♣ making by North, NS +920

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

After West bids 5♥, and after the hand is played out, West claimed North's double was not in tempo. This is disputed.

West called the TD after the hand to say there had been hesitation by North before North doubled 5♥. South then pulled the double holding only 9 points.

North and South disputed the facts as presented by West; they claimed there wasn't a slow double.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Director's comments:

It is always preferable to be called at the time of the infraction. It is easier then to get the facts agreed, and the rights of all players can be protected by the TD. Players who wait until after the hand has been played are in a position to know if any likely adjustment by the TD would be in their favour.

In this case West had psyched 4NT in an attempt to mislead N/S about their combined strength, naturally this caused problems in the bidding as N/S tried to grapple with the deception. South was aware of West's psyche, and felt his side was being done out of a slam. West made a valiant attempt at disruption, but N/S, especially South, saw through the ruse.

South knew that West had psyched in an attempt to keep N/S out of a slam, and with no bidding space to discover that the slam should be avoided he went for it. It wasn't his partner's (alleged) slow double that persuaded him but the opponents' bidding which pushed him into it. His 5NT bid was based on authorised information as well as any possible UI. West was unlucky in that the slam might reasonably have been expected to go off.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Note by editor:

The TD asked the AC to write comments on the form but they did not.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

Fairly easy in my humble opinion. In such an auction, pausing before doubling tells very little. In general, any positive action, after a slight BIT, in a rocketing auction, will tell very little. Do E/W pretend that, after doubling 4NT, the double of 5♥ could have been made on just a Heart stack?

Barry Rigal's comments:

I'm firmly of the opinion that E/W made this problem for their opponents and social justice demands that they can't expect to complain about the tempo problem they created for their opponents. That said; was there a hesitation? And did it point demonstrably towards removing the double? I'd say that if there was a tempo break it would have pointed towards removing but I'm not convinced there was such a break. (Again unsatisfactory write-up, per TD, by AC).

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Keep the money. Give E/W a lecture on sportsmanship. They psyche, opponents read it, and they complain. On second thought—give E/W a lecture on ethics as well but KEEP THE MONEY.

David Stevenson's comments:

TD ok. AC not. As the English L&EC once said "if the AC cannot think of anything important enough to write on the form, why did they not keep the deposit"?

Frances Hinden's comments:

I agree with the final result, but I don't quite get the point of the long write-up by the TD. So what if South knew that 4NT was a psyche? That doesn't necessarily suggest that slam is making for N/S. I would rule on the basis that a slow double of 5♥ does not suggest bidding rather than passing by South. The slowness might be based on fear that partner will pull (i.e. too many trumps), uncertainty over whether pass is forcing, uncertainty whether he has already shown his values (i.e. that 5♥ could be making if partner can't act), or just general uncertainty in an unfamiliar auction.

With that reasoning, I don't have to decide if the double actually was slow or not, which neither the TD nor the AC appear to have addressed (for the same reason).

Heather Dhondy's comments:

I agree with the TD that he should have been called earlier and this could have resulted in the facts being ascertained with a greater degree of certainty. However this is a disputed hesitation position and the balance of probabilities is that the double was made out of tempo. South chose from amongst logical alternatives a bid which could be suggested by the hesitation so I would adjust to 5♥x-3, +500.

It would have been worth finding out if pass by North would have been forcing. If so, then South has NO reason to remove a slow double.

Incidentally, why were 4NT and 5♣ alerted?

Note by editor:

The Welsh Invitation Pairs includes some foreign pairs. E/W may not have understood Welsh alerting.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

Even if North's double was slow, why does that demonstrably suggest South pull rather than pass? It doesn't, so the TD was correct to let the table result stand. Unfortunately, the basis of appeal was not recorded, but as I am struggling to think of a sensible reason for appealing, I think the AC should have kept the deposit.

Jens Brix Christiansen's comments:

Just a nitpicking comment: The director is recommending that he be called at the time of the infraction, not at the end of the hand. Instead of *infraction*, he should probably have written *break in tempo or other instance of UI*. The slow double is, of course, not an infraction; the possible infraction is South's subsequent action, and the 2007 laws (Law 16B3) make it clear that the TD should be called after the end of play when the issue is a possible infraction of this sort.

Paul Lamford's comments:

"The TD asked the AC to write comments on the form but they did not." Indeed, getting Mr Burn to write things usually requires a bit of effort, which is a pity as it is always worth reading what he does write. Here the high-calibre AC did a fine job, and I fully agree with them that North's double of 5♥ did not demonstrably suggest South's pick a slam 5NT. Indeed, slam was very poor, needing spades 3-2 and for East to have a singleton diamond honour, which I make around 3.4%, assuming the hearts are 4-7. What Bobby Wolff would describe as "rub of the green".

Richard Grenside's comments:

Agree totally with the Director and Appeals Committee to let the score stand. Would have no hesitation in fining E/W for a frivolous appeal and for a probability of a known psyche, obvious from the pass of 6♣ by East. E/W, by their appeal are attempting a second go at getting a good score. Not from me!!!

Richard Hills' comments:

I disagree with the TD's statement that "It is always preferable to be called at the time of the infraction". Indeed, the new Law 16 recommends the opposite policy.

2007 Law 16B3:

*When a player has substantial reason to believe that an opponent who had a logical alternative has chosen an action that could have been suggested by such information, he should summon the Director when play ends**. The Director shall assign an adjusted score (see Law 12C) if he considers that an infraction of law has resulted in an advantage for the offender.*

*** it is not an infraction to call the Director earlier or later.*

Robin Barker's comments:

The TD did not decide if there was a slow Double but did decide that Pass was not a logical alternative to 5NT. The TD's comments seem close to saying that once one side had psyched, the other side are allowed to get away with a little bit of unauthorised information in order to recover.

Perhaps the appeals committee found there was not a slow Double or that the unauthorised information did not suggest 5NT over Pass. Perhaps they found sufficient doubt over the fact of the slow Double, whether bidding was suggested and whether pass was a logical alternative that they could not adjust.

Tim Rees' comments:

The TD made an excellent and well-explained ruling. E/W's contention that South had "only 9 points" should be looked on as South had 9 points more than he might have had. Once North has doubled 4NT, South knows that there is a big hand opposite, and therefore that West is trying something on.

The AC presumably thought the same, but we'll never know.

WBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

The L&EC did not appreciate the fact that some Chairmen of Appeals had not written on the Appeals form the reason for the decision of the Committee. It reminds all CoAs that this is a requirement.

Final summary by editor:

Very few think adjusting is a good idea, but the reasons given are not the same. Some think that E/W, having psyched, are going too far by appealing.

But the main point, so it seems to me, is the fact that the TD was not called at the time. It is all very well for Richard H to quote an irrelevant bit of Law from the wrong Law book ☺, but if he has to quote it, perhaps he should have also quoted 2007 Law 16B2:

When a player considers that an opponent has made such information available and that damage could well result he may announce, unless prohibited by the Regulating Authority (which may require that the Director be called), that he reserves the right to summon the Director later (the opponents should summon the Director immediately if they dispute the fact that unauthorized information might have been conveyed).

The point is that the unauthorised information was disputed. If players leave it to the end of the hand to establish whether a BIT happened, then they must expect to be ruled against.

APPEAL No 5: “Just thinking”

07/005 Porthcawl Congress

Tournament Director:

Jim Proctor

Appeals Committee:

Patrick Jourdain (Chairman) John Salisbury Jim Luck

MP Pairs Board no 5 Dealer North N/S vulnerable	♠ T92 ♥ J62 ♦ KT ♣ K8754	
♠ AKJ4 ♥ 4 ♦ AQ7543 ♣ AT	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ 765 ♥ KQT987 ♦ 8 ♣ Q96
	♠ Q83 ♥ A53 ♦ J962 ♣ J32	

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
	P	2♥ [1]	P
2NT [A]	P	3♣ [A2]	P
3♥ [H]	P	4♥	P
P	P		

(1) Weak, 5-9

(2) 5-7, fewer than 2 top honours

Result at table:

4♥ +1 by East, NS -450

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

TD ascertained facts at end of play. No questions were asked until the end of the auction, and the hesitation before bidding 3♥ was agreed.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

3♥ +2 by East, NS -200

Details of ruling:

Pass is a logical alternative. 4♥ suggested by slow 3♥. Laws 16A, 12C2.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We uphold the TD's decision.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

The decision is obvious, but I don't understand the 'fewer than two top honours' explanation. Is it possible that West explained this, and this explanation further motivated East into bidding 4♥ ?

Barry Rigal's comments:

Correct TD and AC ruling (bravo!) but.....

Deposit return is a travesty. If you play standard English weak twos East has no reason to move on except from UI of an explanation or tempo break?

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Keep the money!!!

David Stevenson's comments:

Seems totally without merit. The AC's comments are meaningless. Why return the deposit? Either East has a minimum, or he does not. Using hesitations so as not to miss game when he is the top end of minimum is illegal. Ok, they probably did not do it intentionally, but appealing on this hand is just unacceptable.

Frances Hinden's comments:

At first sight this is an easy ruling. The only way that I can see E/W having a case at all, is if East said "when I bid 3♣ I thought I was showing a club high card, but then I remembered that I had denied two of the top three honours and 3♣ was a misbid". However there is no mention of this possibility, so I am left wondering both why East bid 3♣ if the explanation was correct, and why the AC returned the deposit.

Heather Dhondy's comments:

On the surface of it I would keep the deposit, however I have not seen any E/W comments and I assume there were some made at the appeal.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

A sensible ruling by the TD. West's pause demonstrably suggests that he was considering bidding game. Unfortunately, the basis of appeal was not recorded, but as I am (again) struggling to think of a sensible reason for appealing, I think the AC should have kept the deposit.

Jens Brix Christiansen's comments:

I would seriously consider keeping the money here.

Paul Lamford's comments:

A few points to make here. I would have argued for both the retention of the deposit and the imposition of a PP, depending on E/W's experience. East was not being invited to the party and had no reason (other than UI) to bid 4♥. Presumably West's 2NT was Ogust, and East should have bid 3♦ showing a good suit and the lower range. Even if East realised without UI that she had misbid with 3♣, she has to respect the sign-off when she gets UI, as pass of 3♥ is clearly an LA. Finally it is wrong to assume that the opponents would have defended the same way against a heart partial compared with a heart game. Here, as North, I would not lead an aggressive club after West has made a game try, but would start with a top spade, and when South wins an early trump it is clear to switch to a club, so I would give at least 50% of -170 to North-South, perhaps 75%, with the remainder being -200 of course.

Richard Grenside's comments:

Why was the deposit returned? Surely this must be clear-cut? The only good thing is that the appeals committee would have been out in less than a minute. I trust the appellants were made aware of their obligations when such blatant use of UI was used.

Richard Hills' comments:

Firstly the Appeals Committee should normally have forfeited the deposit. This is a clear-cut case. West is captain of the auction, so passing 3♥ is the only logical alternative for East.

Secondly, if there were extraordinary circumstances permitting the return of the deposit, the Appeals Committee should have listed those reasons in its report.

Robin Barker's comments:

I would have wanted to ask East why they [singular] bid 3♣, instead of showing 5-7 and 2 top honours, and why they bid 4♥. The decision appears routine, so much so that I see no reason to return the deposit.

Tim Rees' comments:

This seems clear-cut. East has described his hand over 2NT; why should he overrule his partner now? Again, the AC has not written anything. If East had relevant arguments for bidding 4♥, the AC should explain on the form why they rejected those arguments. If East had nothing to add, why not keep the deposit?

WBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments:

The L&EC did not appreciate the fact that some Chairmen of Appeals had not written on the Appeals form the reason for the decision of the Committee. It reminds all CoAs that this is a requirement.

Final summary by editor:

What is the point of a deposit if it is not retained in a completely meritless appeal? No-one disagrees. If there were special circumstances the AC should say so, but instead we get an explanation that is no more use than the failure of other ACs to explain.

APPEAL No 6: Is it unusual?

07/006 Porthcawl Congress

Tournament Director:

June Jones

Appeals Committee:

Mike Tedd (Chairman) David S Jones Gwynn Davis

MP Pairs Board no 20 Dealer West All Vulnerable	♠ J965 ♥ QJ54 ♦ KQ4 ♣ Q8	
♠ Q8 ♥ AK9873 ♦ 65 ♣ 974	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠ KT7432 ♥ 62 ♦ A92 ♣ A6
	♠ A ♥ T ♦ JT873 ♣ KJT532	

Basic systems:

East-West play Multi 2♦

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
2♦ [A]	P	2♥ [A]	2NT [1]
P	3NT	P	4♣
P	4♦	P	P
P			

(1) Not alerted

Result at table:

4♦ making by North, NS +130

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

E/W called the TD back to the table. They claimed that, because of the fact North failed to alert the 2NT, South took the 3NT out to 4♣, and North realised and bid 4♦ as the best fit. There was unauthorised information between North and South.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

3NT -2 by South, NS -200

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Basis of appeal:

South felt he was justified in bidding his club suit.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Agree that there was unauthorised information.

Consider that a minority of Souths would pass 3NT without UI.

Found it difficult to assess whether this minority is less than or greater than the 30% test, but decided that just over 30% would and therefore the 4♣ bid should be disallowed.

Note by editor:

At the time this hand was played the standard in Wales was that a logical alternative was one found by at least about three in ten of a player's peers.

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

If South's 2NT was unusual, 55+ minors, then UI was indeed passed, and I agree with the AC's decision. But this should have been investigated. Some partnerships (including some of mine) play that 2NT shows a sound hand with 44+ minors. In that case, South's bidding can be constructed as a voluntary distortion of his hand ('65, come alive'), ever knowing that he'd have to plunge into 4♣ if partner didn't oblige by bidding a minor. In which case the non-alert didn't influence South.

Barry Rigal's comments:

If South wants to play in five of a minor he jumps to 4NT, but once he bids 2NT and partner fails to alert and gives him UI, he gets to play 3NT down 200. I'm pleased with TD and relieved by the AC ruling, because they managed to avert a miscarriage of justice. Regardless of whether some might remove 3NT, if South gets UI, he must pass 3NT.

Bob Schwartz's comments:

Keep the money!!!

David Stevenson's comments:

Seems a good decision to me. It is also impressive as the only one of six appeals where both the TD and the AC seem to have explained matters fully.

By the time this booklet is published, a new Law book will be in use, and the standard for logical alternatives will be in the Laws themselves. The questions then will be whether a significant number of the player's peers would consider passing, of whom some would pass. I feel sure that the decision to rule it back to 3NT will be far easier under that Law book.

Eric Landau's comments:

This was decided correctly, but I'm surprised that the committee thought it was close. I would expect passing 3NT to be way more than a 30% action, unless South's "peers" consisted entirely of rather conservative bidders. Does South really have that much less playing strength than his partner is supposed to be playing him for when he bids 3NT to play over a 2NT takeout for the minors?

Frances Hinden's comments:

I don't think it is possible to give a ruling on this hand without knowing the N/S methods over a multi. From South's point of view, he has bid 2NT showing both minors and partner has 'raised' to 3NT which should show a good hand with stops in both the majors. Is such a hand possible for a partner who passed over 2♦? If not, the 4♣ bid should be allowed as South has AI that his bid has been misunderstood. If it is, then the adjustment to 3NT is correct.

By the way, if adjusting to 3NT then I would have included a percentage of 3NT-1 in the ruling. It takes a very precise defence (including unblocking the ♠Q) to take 3NT two off after the likely low heart lead.

Heather Dhondy's comments:

Again I would be close to keeping the money. South has received the UI that North has taken his 2NT as natural and has made a bid entirely based on this UI. TD's ruling upheld.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

A crucial question needed to be asked by the TD (or if he had failed to do so, by the AC). At the time South bid 2NT, did he think 2NT showed both minors or did he think that there was no partnership agreement?

If South had thought 2NT to systemically show both minors, then the unusual and unexpected 3NT bid sounds like a suggestion of the best contract opposite 5-5 in the minors and South should pass.

On the other hand, if South knew that he had no agreement about 2NT (in a first-time partnership for example) then the authorised auction tells him with overwhelming likelihood that North's has interpreted 2NT as natural. In that scenario, there would be no logical alternative to pulling to 4♣.

Paul Lamford's comments:

North has passed over West's multi, and therefore does not have something like 13-16 balanced, or he would surely have bid whatever his methods allowed him to bid. The AC should of course be told what defence North-South played over the Multi, and whether South's 2NT bid was a misbid, as I suspect, or systemically correct but not alerted (they may well have established this, of course). So for Pass to be an LA for South, there would have to be hands where North is 11-12 balanced, where 3NT is playable. ♠ Kxx ♥ Axx ♦ xxx ♣ Axxx fits the bill, so I agree that Pass is an LA, and the adjustment is correct.

Richard Grenside's comments:

Interesting case. The initial pass by North shows a non-competing hand, even I would never consider leaving 3NT holding the South cards as partner's initial pass probably limits his hand to 12-13 pts + my 9 gives a maximum of 22, hardly enough to make 3NT. Would like to see N/S's agreements over pre-empts. May be of interest. This time I disagree with both the director and appeals committee. The authorised information, permitted by law was the deciding factor.

Richard Hills' comments:

Since it was marginal whether or not Pass was a logical alternative, and since this point was the basis of the appeal, in this case the Appeals Committee was clearly correct to return the deposit.

But rather than the AC merely guessing at South's logical alternatives, perhaps the AC should have polled some of South's peers?

Robin Barker's comments:

I am surprised that the appeals committee think only a minority would pass 3NT. Who knows what North might have had – there are many hands that do not have a convenient action over 2♦ that would want to play 3NT.

Tim Rees' comments:

It is clear that there was UI (failure to alert) and that 4♣ was suggested by this. I also think it's clear that Pass is a logical alternative. Think of it this way: if North had alerted 2NT and explained it as the minors, how many Souths would have removed 3NT? Not many, I believe.

Final summary by editor:

While some thought the deposit should be kept, the longer analyses showed why there was doubt in this case.

FINAL COMMENTS

Alain Gottcheiner's comments:

It would very much help to read the comments made in front of the AC by the appealing players (and occasionally by the other side), including knowing that there weren't any. In Case 5, for example, I'd like to understand the bidding. And in Case 6, the consideration of N/S's system is essential.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Again the quality of the write-ups causes problems for reviewers, and casts into doubt the quality of the decisions. Overall I don't think the quality of the AC decisions (particularly as regards deposits) is such as to inspire confidence.

David Stevenson's comments:

What a hodge-podge! It is difficult to be sure whether the ACs' decisions were valid since in several cases they did not explain them, and a couple of the TDs' efforts at filling in the details were hopeless. Nevertheless, it seems to me that, as in earlier years, TDs and ACs are getting a fair percentage right until it comes to forfeiting the deposit. As usual, meritless appeals get the deposit returned, which is why we shall get more meritless appeals next year.

Eric Landau's comments:

This set was up to the usual high Welsh standard. I disagreed with only one ruling, and that was #3, which was reported so confusingly that I'm not sure exactly what exactly it was I was disagreeing with.

Jeffrey Allerton's comments:

The Welsh appeals committees did a good job in 2007. However, I have two quibbles:

Firstly, there seem to have been a number of frivolous appeals, and yet in no case was the deposit retained. Does the WBU Laws & Ethics Committee issue guidance to its appeals committee chairmen on this point?

Secondly, there is still a lack of information given on some of the forms. Sometimes even the basis of appeal is not clear. At one time in England the TD would let both sides see the appeals form and record their comments before the appeal was actually heard. I would like to see a return to this practice; written statements can be useful to the AC, giving them more time to consider the arguments and ask supplementary questions. A useful side effect would be to assist appeals reviews such as in this booklet.

Jens Brix Christiansen's comments:

The tradition in the WBU for reporting appeals in a comprehensive write-up is not as well-established as in the EBU. This makes it difficult for an outsider like me to provide much in the form of a summary of my comments.

Richard Hills' comments:

If a TD (Appeal 2) or AC Chair (Appeals 4 and 5) makes an egregious error, back-seat drivers such as myself mock them. It is easy to forget that TDs have a huge workload and, since they are only human, will inevitably make mistakes.

Likewise, it is easy to forget that AC Chairs such as David Burn and Patrick Jourdain give up their dinner breaks to hear appeals, so perhaps may not want to give up sleep in order to comprehensively write up those appeals.

Robin Barker's comments:

It is difficult to comment on appeals when the appeals committee make no comment or the write up of the appeal is so confused that the editor has difficulty in presenting the appeals committee comments.

Tim Rees' comments:

The final rulings all look correct, so at the least the system is getting the right results.

However, the form filling could do with some improvement. In most of the cases, either the TD or AC was deficient in doing this. There were a couple of cases where the deposit could have been forfeited, but no explanation has been provided by the AC.

Final summary by editor:

It is clear that the reporting of appeals was inadequate this year. However, there was a general feeling that, apart from returning deposits, the results were acceptable.