

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N9
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Event	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Event DIC	Harry Falk
Date	12/02/2015	Session	First Semifinal

Auction

West	North	East	South
	1NT ¹	Pass	2♦ ²
Dbl ³	2♥	2♠	3♥
3♠	4♥	Pass ⁴	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 14-16 HCP
2: Transfer to hearts
3: Lead directive
4: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	25	N	Louk Voorhees		
Dealer	N	♠ 82	♥ AQ2		
Vul	E/W	♦ Q3	♣ AQ10954		
W	Tarek Sadek			E	Ahmed Hussein
♠	Q973			♠	AK1064
♥	74			♥	103
♦	AK1094			♦	876
♣	76			♣	KJ2
		S	John McAllister		
		♠	J5		
		♥	KJ9865		
		♦	J52		
		♣	83		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥X by N	Down 2	E/W +300	♦ 8

Facts Determined at the Table

North/South summoned the director at the end of the auction. East broke tempo over North's 4♥ bid, approximately seven seconds or so. West stated that East was a sound bidder, and should have around 10 HCP for his 2♠ bid. As West held 9 HCP, the auction gave sufficient authorized information that made his double the only logical alternative considering the vulnerability on the deal.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Six players were polled with the West hand and the auction. Two bid 4♠, while the rest passed over 4♥. This confirmed pass as a logical alternative.

Director Ruling

West had unauthorized information from East's BIT, which suggested that action would be more successful than passing. The player poll established pass as a logical alternative, barring the UI. Therefore, per Laws 12 & 16, the director adjusted the result to 4♥ by North, down 2, E/W +100.

Director's Ruling	4♥ by N, Down 2, E/W +100
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The Appeal

East/West appealed the ruling, and they alone attended the committee. West's double of 2♦ was lead directing; it could have been made on as little as ♦KQ109xx. East is a sound bidder, and West expected him to have a good five card suit (not six, as he would have acted over 1NT), at least 10 HCP, and inferentially, some kind of diamond tolerance.

South's 3♥ bid was competitive, which within the context of the auction meant that he did not expect to make game. West expected 3♠ to make when he bid it, and his diamonds would not only be a good lead for East, but also two fast tricks on defense against hearts, which his partner could not expect. The knowledge that South did not expect to make the contract, combined with the defensive strength of West's diamond holding and the expected strength of East's hand, made it clear to West that he must double 4♥ to protect his plus score in 3♠ as best as he could.

Committee Findings

There was an agreed BIT following the 4♥ bid. Most slow passes suggest bidding rather than doubling, and a 4♣ bid by West would certainly not be allowed following a BIT. However, a slow pass also suggests extra values, and that East expected 3♠ to make. Thus, the BIT made it demonstrably more attractive for West to double in order to protect a positive score from 3♠.

West's arguments were both logical and attractive, and many strong players might choose to double. However, East's bidding might have been predicated on good diamond support (Qxx or QJxx), and North might have bid 4♥ because he held either xxx or Axx in spades and believed he had a perfect fit with partner. If that was the case, 4♥ could easily be making, and doubling could turn a 30-35% result into a zero, while turning plus 50 into plus 100 for down one would not adequately compensate for making plus 140 in 3♠.

Although double appears to be the percentage action, since North might often be bidding 4♥ as a cheap save against 3♠, the committee judged that pass was a logical alternative. Therefore, the director ruling was confirmed, 4♥ by North, down 2, E/W +100.

Committee Decision	4♥ by N, Down 2, E/W +100
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Committee Members

Chairman	Douglas Doub
Member	Gail Greenberg
Member	David Caprera
Member	Aaron Silverstein
Member	Don Kern