


APPEAL	NABC+ ONE
Subject	Unauthorized Information
DIC	Nancy Boyd
Event	Lebhar IMP Pairs
Session	2 nd Final
Date	March 14, 2015

BD#	11
VUL	None
DLR	S

Nicolas L'Ecuyer	
♠	K6
♥	K52
♦	K10642
♣	K96

Fred Gitelman	
♠	AQJ3
♥	J10976
♦	J8
♣	75



Paul Street	
♠	1052
♥	AQ83
♦	AQ9
♣	Q82

Sheri Winestock	
♠	9874
♥	4
♦	753
♣	AJ1043

West	North	East	South
			1♣
P	2♥⁽¹⁾	P	3♥
P	3NT	P	4♦
P	4♠	P	4NT
P	P	P	

Final Contract	4NT by North
Opening Lead	♣10
Table Result	Made 5, N/S +460
Director Ruling	4NT by N, Made 5, N/S +460
Comm. Decision	6NT by N, Down 3, N/S -150

(1) Shows an artificial balanced invitation, not alerted
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The Facts: The Director was summoned at the end of the auction. West stated that North had taken advantage of his partner's failure to alert. North maintained that his partner's 3♥ call exposed the problem since it was contrary to their partnership agreement.

The Ruling: N/S provided their system notes upon request. While it is true that the 3♥ bid is not listed as a possible rebid the notes did not say that 3♥ could not be bid. North asserted that with a good unbalanced hand, South would rebid 2♠ which is a relay. The auction exposed the problem so there was no basis for an adjustment as per Law 16, accordingly the table results stands, 4NT by North, making 5, N/S +460

The Appeal: E/W appealed. All four players attended.

Statements Made by the Appealing Side:

E/W claimed that most other auctions would be revealing enough that East would not lead a club, and that North's 4♠ deterred East from leading a spade. They stated that in their opinion, North had taken flagrant advantage of the failure to alert.

Statements Made by the Non-Appealing Side:

North claimed that 3♥ was asystemic, and that information alone told him that the auction was "off the rails". He claimed that South never did anything unusual in the auction, so he had no need of UI to tell him what was going on. He stated, though the pair's system notes do not fully confirm, that after 1 of a minor-2♥, their methods are:

2♠:	Relays to 2NT. Most unbalanced hands start with 2♠. New suits after the 2NT relay are shortness.
2NT:	natural, non-forcing
3♣, 3♦:	natural, non-forcing
3♥, 3♠:	undefined
3NT:	to play
4♥, 4♠:	good 6-5, non-forcing

With minimum 6-5 hands, they open the major. They were not asked if that was true with spades and clubs precisely. With very good 6-5 hands, too strong for Four of a major, he thought they'd bid Four of a minor. The system notes did not mention bidding a major or bidding past 3NT.

N/S were asked if 2♥ could contain a 4-card major and answered, "very rarely, but it is possible." This was mentioned at the table.

North claimed that 2♥ promised 3-3 or better in the minors, so at IMPs, they never will play a major. This was not revealed during the explanation of 2♥ at the table, nor is it mentioned in their system notes. When asked if he could hold 3=3=5=2, North said, "You know me. I can have anything. He just assumes I have three clubs."

North stated that he bid 4♠, because he thought 4NT would be Blackwood, and that if he bid 4♠, South would bid Blackwood, and that he could then pass.

The Decision: Even if South's 3♥ duplicated some of the Unauthorized Information (UI) from the failure to alert, it did not duplicate all of it. Perhaps North knew from Authorized Information (AI) that the auction was off the rails, but he did not know from AI that his partner thought he had hearts and substantially more strength than he actually held. He knew that from UI. He knew his partner was therefore likely to bid too much, so finding a way to stop in 4NT was clearly suggested over other Logical Alternatives (LA) by the UI, and is therefore not allowed. The Appeals Committee (AC) thought that bidding 5NT was a LA to 4♠. That would get 6♥, and North would convert to 6NT. East has an obvious spade lead against 6NT, which will then go down three.

North has lots of other LAs, but most will lead to something down three, so the AC judged that that was both the best result likely for the Non-Offending Side and the

worst result at all probable for the Offending Side (OS). East/West would not double if they did not know that there was a misunderstanding, so each side gets +/-150.

Even though the actual opening lead was a pretty clear error (North was very likely to have three or more clubs, and South opened 1♣), the OS's irregularity prevented E/W from having any chance to get the score they would have absent the irregularity, so E/W get +150.

The Committee disagreed on whether to award a Procedural Penalty (PP) for flagrant misuse of UI. Most felt that the apparent AI's duplicating most of the UI was sufficient that a player of North's caliber was not expected to figure out that he had unduplicated UI, so no PP was given.

The Committee: Jeff Goldsmith (Chair/Scribe), Fred King, Mitch Dunitz, Ray Miller, Josh Parker

Commentary:

Woolsey – North is permitted to deduce that something is wrong when South makes an impossible bid. That is AI. But he may not use the UI to deduce what went wrong. If they were playing with screens North wouldn't know whether South had forgotten the meaning of 2♥ or South had chosen to make an impossible call, perhaps forgetting the follow-ups to 2♥. The failure to alert tells North what happened. North's 4♠ call (instead of 4NT) was suggested by the UI, as the UI made it clear that South would think 4NT is RKC for hearts. Thus, North is not permitted to bid 4♠ with the hope that South will bid 4NT. The committee ruling looks fine to me.

I would not give a PP. Even though North should have known better than to bid 4♠ if he had thought through the ramifications, one cannot expect players to be perfect in this sort of situation since the issue isn't completely obvious. The score adjustment is quite sufficient.

N/S should be getting an appeal without merit warning for this appeal. But we can't give them one, since the wrong side is appealing. This was a horrible ruling by the director, and is an illustration that we do need committees when it comes to bridge issues. The director simply didn't have the bridge knowledge to understand what had happened.

Wildavsky – I like the AC decision. The alert procedure can lead to UI, and we must take care that pairs do not accidentally benefit from it. We do not know where N/S would have ended up in a hypothetical world with no alerts. The AC judged that there was a significant possibility of an accident, and I agree.

Martel – Committee got it just right regarding the auction, ruling did not. Result of play might have been less generous to E/W, but reasonable. This would be a better hand for a weighted ruling.

Marques – This case kept me thinking about it for some time. The main argument of the AC is that the unauthorized information that North has does not replicate the authorized information available to the same player. I'm actually not sure about that.

The UI deriving from the lack of alert and the next two bids by South is that South thinks that North has hearts and a good hand. With enough evidence that 3♥ is an impossible bid, the AI from it is that South has bid out of the system. North is allowed to ask himself why. Excluding a mechanical error that an experienced South would point out, it's hard to see a reason for that other than South having forgotten the system.

If this is the case, the 3♥ bid shows that South thinks that North has hearts. Then, 4♦ shows that South thinks that North has a strong hand. Therefore, it seems to me that South's bidding shows the same thing as the lack of alert. If screens were in use, wouldn't North have taken the same inferences from the auction? Therefore, I'm not so sure that the score should be adjusted. It seems to me that the UI was in fact replicated by the AI.

Kooijman – I do not follow this cleverish reasoning by the AC. If we accept that North was able to figure out legally that there was a misunderstanding we have to be brave and allow North to end in 4NT. This decision sets us back twenty years, when a misunderstanding even in my country was penalized by an 'automatic' -1400. I had some hope that the Bobby Wolff school had been abandoned by now. And for sure, East's first lead was not a serious error, giving a minuscule plus to the committee.

Am I right in understanding that the TD involved wants players to write down which calls are not part of the systemic agreements?

Goldsmith – I think this was pretty much right, though a PP for blatant abuse of UI is appropriate. The idea of AI's duplicating some but not all of the UI is a little unusual.