

APPEAL	NABC+ SIX
Subject	Misinformation
DIC	McKenzie Myers
Event	Mixed Pairs
Session	Second Final
Date	March 18, 2015

BD#	8
VUL	None
DLR	W

Christina Madsen	
♠	K
♥	63
♦	J762
♣	J106543

Sherman Gao	
♠	AQ103
♥	1085
♦	A109
♣	AQ9

Michael McNamara	
♠	6542
♥	KQ
♦	KQ8543
♣	2

Weiling Zhao	
♠	J987
♥	AJ9742
♦	(void)
♣	K87



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

Final Contract	3NT by West
Opening Lead	♣5
Table Result	Made 6, N/S -490
Director Ruling	4♥ by E, Made 5, N/S -450
Comm. Decision	3NT W, Made 6, N/S -490

(1)	15-17 HCP
(2)	No Alert

The Facts: The director was summoned after the play of the hand was over. South stated that he would have doubled 3♦ if he had known it was a transfer. West stated that their pair had no such agreement. They play negative doubles at the three level, but not transfer bids. East stated that she intended 3♦ as asking for a stopper in diamonds. The E/W convention card showed transfers next to the Smolen box, but did not have the Systems On box checked.

The play went a club to the King, followed by the ♥A and another heart. South shifted to a diamond, and then pitched spades on the run of the hearts. Declarer dropped the ♠K, making six.

The Ruling: The nature of the E/W agreement was unclear. East's description of her 3♦ bid seemed illogical. Given that they could not prove West's explanation was

correct, it was ruled that the bid was not natural, and misinformation was given by the failure to Alert. East did not inform the opponents of a failure to alert at the end of the auction.

If South had doubled, it was judged likely that E/W would reach 4♥, and that they would not drop the ♠K. The score was accordingly changed to N/S -450.

The Appeal: Both sides appealed the ruling, with South and West attending.

E/W appealed that there was no misinformation provided in the auction. Their system does not include transfers after three level overcalls over their No Trump openings. East, who made the 3♦ call, is a student and inexperienced. Their agreement is that 3♦ should be natural. West bid 3NT thinking his partner had values and diamond length.

N/S appealed that if the contract was changed to 4♥, Declarer should take both heart finesses as well as the Spade finesse, therefore making four for -420, not the -450 as judged by the director.

The Decision: The Committee judged that East was an inexperienced student, and that the system evidence provided by West was sufficient to rule the 3♦ bid as a simple mistaken call, rather than a case of misinformation. The N/S appeal was therefore dismissed and the table result reinstated – 3NT by West, making 6, N/S -490.

The Committee: Aaron Silverstein (chair), Migry Zur Campanile, Ray Miller, Bruce Rogoff, Jim Thurtell (scribe)

Commentary:

Goldsmith – I'll buy that it was a mistaken bid, but East didn't know that, and she is responsible for announcing before the opening lead that there was a failure to alert. Whether she actually thought 3♦ showed hearts (likely), was Stayman (possible), or asked for a diamond stop (seems very unlikely, but that's what East said), East ought to know that 3♦ needed to be alerted. If North heard that 3♦ was asking for a diamond stopper, but West thought it showed diamonds, she likely would have reasoned that E/W might have no diamond stopper, but they surely have a club stopper, so she likely would have led a diamond. That would have led to 3NT down two when declarer takes the spade finesse to try to make.

The actual ruling suggests that the AC didn't believe East's claim of what she thought 3♦ meant. If East had announced that the failure to alert was about a transfer, then it would have been at all probable, but maybe not likely that North would have led a diamond. In that case, I'd give N/S -690 and E/W -100. But I'd deem it likely that a diamond was led, so I'd award reciprocal 100s. In that case, I don't feel the need to award a 1/4 board PP for not announcing the failure to alert, which I would give to anyone who is playing in the finals of a national event.

Woolsey – East stated that the 3♦ call asked for a stopper in diamonds? Oh please. And if that was East's belief, then East was required to state after the auction is over that West failed to alert such an agreement.

Unless E/W have solid documentation that the 3♦ call is natural in their methods, the cards speak. The cards say that West failed to alert an alertable call, and that N/S were damaged. The director was correct to adjust the contract to 4♥, which of course should be adjudicated to making 4, not 5 - a director error based on lack of bridge knowledge. The committee should not have assumed that the partnership agreement is that 3♦ is natural.

The fact that East is an inexperienced player should have no relevance at all. Once East chooses to play in a national event, East is playing under the same conditions as everybody else in the event. If you play with the big boys, you play by the big boys rules.

Wildavsky – A close case. One could argue that West's explanation ought to mention that East had often been confused on such auctions. East ought to offer an explanation at the end of the auction unless he can be certain that his partner's explanation is correct, and it's difficult to see how he could be at that point. I make this one too close to call.

Martel – The director was wrong, as committee noted, but acceptable conclusion.

Marques – It looks like language difficulties prevented the evidence about the meaning of 3♦ to surface sooner than inside the AC. The TD decision looks normal when it is judged that 3♦ is natural. With the new evidence, the AC's decision is correct.

Kooijman – Sounds like a clear misbid. The TD should have turned off his automatic pilot approach here.