

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N4
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Event	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Event DIC	Douglas Grove
Date	12/02/2014	Session	Evening, 1 st Qualifying Round


Auction

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT ¹
2♣ ²	Pass ³	Pass	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Clubs & and a Major
3: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	8	N	Stephen Mackay		
Dealer	W	♠	Q54		
		♥	J102		
Vul	None	♦	Q852		
		♣	AQ9		
W	Jonathan Fleischmann			E	Morrie Kleinplatz
♠	J10632			♠	K8
♥	K54			♥	9873
♦	A			♦	J1063
♣	J765			♣	1042
		S	Ray Jotcham		
		♠	A97		
		♥	AQ6		
		♦	K974		
		♣	K83		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
2♣X by W	Down 3	N/S +500	♦ 5

Facts Determined at the Table

East summoned the director to the table after North's third pass. He said that North had paused for 10-15 seconds before passing 2♣. N/S agreed there was a hesitation, but did not agree on the length of time.

N/S said they played systems "on" in this sequence; a double of 2♣ would have forced 2♦ by South. The pass was non-forcing; South's double was for takeout.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Four players were polled on what they would do with the South hand over 2♣. Three passed with the South hand and one bid, saying he couldn't sell out at matchpoints. The poll demonstrated that pass was a logical alternative.

Director Ruling

The break in tempo suggested action with the South hand. Based on Laws 16 and 12C1, pass was imposed on South. The result was changed to 2♣ by West, down three, N/S plus 150.

Director's Ruling	2♣ by W, Down 3, N/S +150
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The Appeal

N/S appealed the ruling and North, South and West attended the hearing. N/S had detailed agreements about bidding over 1NT-2♣. North was taking a shot hoping for a reopening double. N/S play negative doubles at the two level, but opener is not required to reopen. South thought E-W had an eight-card club fit and that N/S must have an eight-card fit as well, so he balanced with a double. South said North is known to bid slowly and that South is an aggressive player.

The West player believed that Pass was a logical alternative for South. N/S did not ask about lengths of suits for the 2♣ bid, but this holding was within E/W's systemic agreements, even 4-4 in the two suits is allowed.

Committee Findings

Unauthorized information (UI) was stipulated at the table by all four players. The hesitation demonstrably suggested that bidding was more likely to be successful than passing. Based upon the poll and the committee's judgment, pass was a logical alternative and therefore South must pass. It does not matter that South is an aggressive player and would not defend 2♣ undoubled on this auction after the UI.

Accordingly, the ruling at the table was upheld: 2♣ by West, down three, N/S plus 150. The committee assigned N/S an Appeal without Merit Warning.

Committee Decision	2♣ by W, Down 3, N/S +150
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Committee Members

Chair	Richard Popper
Member	David Caprera
Member	Eugene Kales
Member	Patty Tucker
Member	Craig Allen