

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N6
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Event	Blue Ribbon Pairs	Event DIC	Douglas Grove
Date	12/04/2014	Session	Evening, Final Round

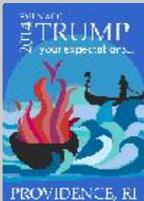
Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Forcing
2: Break in Tempo (screens)

Hand Record

Board	8	N	Cedric Lorenzini		
Dealer	W	♠	K10732		
		♥	Q962		
Vul	None	♦	K		
		♣	1086		
W	Michael Polowan			E	Jared Lilienstein
♠	AQ984			♠	J5
♥	K107			♥	AJ854
♦	4			♦	7652
♣	KJ42			♣	A7
		S	Thomas Bessis		
		♠	6		
		♥	3		
		♦	AQJ10983		
		♣	Q953		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
4♥ by W	Made 4	E/W +420	♦ K

Facts Determined at the Table

The Director was summoned at the end of play. Screens were in use, and during the auction, the bidding tray remained on the North/East side for about one minute prior to being returned with North's Pass and East's Double of the 4♦ bid. All players agreed to the duration. The North/South pair felt that the pull of the Double was based upon the tempo break in passing the tray.

West indicated that, according to their system notes, all Doubles of part-score contracts are take-out, not penalty. Examination of the notes proved inconclusive in the eyes of the Director with regard to this assertion concerning this particular auction.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

Seven players were polled on what they would do with the West hand following the Double. All seven passed, demonstrating that pass was a logical alternative. The players also agreed that although Deep Finesse indicates that 4♦ will go down three tricks, that particular defense was highly unlikely to be found.

Director Ruling

Based upon the inconclusive nature of the system notes and the results of polling, the Director found that West made use of Unauthorized Information from the break in tempo. Per Laws 16B1a and 12C1e, the result on the board was changed to 4♦X by South, down two, E/W +300.

Director's Ruling	4♦X by S, Down 2, E/W +300
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The Appeal

The East/West pair appealed the ruling, and West attended the Committee meeting. He brought Ron Smith as a witness to their partnership agreements, as well as more extensive system notes, supporting the takeout nature of East's Double. He also contended that the slow Double made passing more likely to be successful, and bidding less likely, than if done in tempo.

The Committee also determined that the players polled had not been asked if their bid would change if the Double was systemically for takeout.

Committee Findings

The Committee determined that this was a case arising under Law 16B, which provides the guidelines for constraining a player whose partner has made available to him extraneous information that might suggest a call or play. It was clear to the Committee that there was an unmistakable hesitation.

Accordingly, the committee considered whether the BIT suggested a line of action. In pursuing this issue, careful attention was paid to the appellant's claim that the Double was for takeout (prototypically with a 2-5-1-5 distribution hand). Although the system notes were unclear on the Double in this particular situation, they were quite clear that many otherwise penalty doubles would be takeout doubles for this partnership. To provide additional clarity on this issue, the testimony of Ron Smith concerning his knowledge of the system fortified the takeout nature of the double and was convincing to the committee. This meant the putative information of the BIT was more ambivalent than the directors had previously believed. While the BIT certainly suggested something about the Double, it did not suggest a particular course of action in the eyes of the committee. This meant West could use his bidding judgment freely.

The Committee was aware that the player poll was unanimous in passing the Double. Since the players polled were not asked what they would do if the Double was takeout, the Committee felt the results might have been different with that additional information. Therefore, the Committee used its own judgment as to whether Pass was a logical alternative. It ultimately decided that while Pass was a logical alternative, it was not demonstrably suggested by the BIT. Therefore, the result at the table was restored: 4♥ by West, making 4, E/W +420

Committee Decision	4♥ by W, Made 4, E/W +420
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Committee Members

Chair	Chris Moll
Member	Ed Lazarus
Member	Lou Reich
Member	David Stevenson
Member	Craig Allen