

Subject of Appeal: Misinformation	Case: N16
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Event	Freeman Mixed BAM	Event DIC	Steve Bates
Date	07/25/2014	Session	First Final

Auction

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

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: 15-17 HCP
2: Alerted; denied 4 spades

Hand Record

Board	14	N	Erwin Linzner		
Dealer	E	♠	Q86		
		♥	J97		
Vul	None	♦	AQJ83		
		♣	109		
W	Sumit Daftuar			E	Carol Frank
♠	KJ103			♠	A2
♥	854			♥	KQ103
♦	5			♦	K1076
♣	KJ654			♣	A87
		S	Nancy Blaustein		
		♠	9754		
		♥	A62		
		♦	942		
		♣	Q32		

Final Contract	Result of Play	Score	Opening Lead
3NT by E	Made 5	E/W +460	♠ 4

Facts Determined at the Table

South called the director when West displayed his hand as dummy. Before making her opening lead, South asked several questions about the auction. During the auction, the 2NT bid had been Alerted, but no explanation had been requested. When the bid was asked about by South before the opening lead, West said, "If I have four spades, I should bid 2♠." South said she was going to play him for four spades until he gave that information, and was going to lead a diamond but after the remark, she believed he did not have four spades and led one.

Director Ruling

West's remark was improper and misleading. Per Law 20F, West should only explain his own call if his partner is explaining the bid incorrectly, and he should do so in a manner that will not mislead the opponents. Based upon Laws 20F6, 21B3, and 12C, the score was adjusted to 3NT by East, making 4, E/W + 430.

Director's Ruling	3NT by E, Made 4, E/W +430
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The Appeal

South appealed the director's ruling. She and both of the opponents attended the hearing. South said that she was going to lead a diamond until West implied with his statement that he did not have four spades. In assigning 10 tricks to E/W, a director showed South the Deep Finesse analysis showing that E/W make 4NT. South said that those results often do not happen at the table. On a diamond lead, declarer might have misjudged and taken only nine tricks.

The E/W agreement was that West should have bid 2♣ if he held four of them. West made his statement in response to what he thought was a questioning glance by an opponent while East was explaining the 2NT bid. E/W thought it highly likely that East would have taken ten tricks on a diamond lead.

Committee Findings

West made an improper and misleading statement that could have influenced South's opening lead. The committee considered a diamond lead likely enough in the absence of the irregularity that it examined the possible results after the lead of the ♦9. When East gained the lead with the ♦K, she would surely play the ♣A and a small club to the jack, followed by a heart to the king and ace (as happened at the table). From there, even if North did not cash his diamonds (setting up East's 10), East would finesse on his heart return as a safe way of trying for an overtrick. Thus, E/W would take at least 10 tricks on a diamond lead.

In order to award N/S four tricks on a diamond lead, there must be a line of play where that result is at least at all probable. N/S offered no suggestions as to how declarer might have lost four tricks other than "it could have happened". Given that South took the ♥K with the ace after a spade lead it seemed likely that she would do the same after a diamond lead. In that case the committee could see no likely losing line for declarer. Therefore, N/S were assigned an Appeal without Merit Warning.

The committee informed West that the player who alerts answers any questions about the alert, not the bidder. When a player makes a bid that does not conform to the partnership agreement, he should especially refrain from answering questions about his bid.

Postscript: At the other table, in 3NT, the opening lead was a diamond to the jack and king. The declarer played the ♣A and a small club to the jack, followed by a heart to the king, winning the trick. She then cashed all her winners and lost the rest, making 3.

Committee Decision	3NT by E, Made 4, E/W +430
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Committee Members

Chair	Douglas Doub
Member	Ellen Kent
Member	Ed Lazarus
Member	Jim Thurtell
Member	Scott Stearns