

Subject of Appeal:	Tempo/Unauthorized Information	Case:	N1
---------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------	----

Event	Platinum Pairs	Event DIC	Terry Lavender
Date	03/22/2014	Session	First Semi-Final

Auction

West	North	East	South
			1♣
1♥	Dbl	4♥	Pass ¹
Pass	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Explanation of Special Calls and Points of Contention

1: Break in Tempo

Hand Record

Board	11	N	Frank Merblum		
Dealer	S	♠	KQ85		
		♥	987		
Vul	None	♦	A97		
		♣	1052		
W	John McCallister			E	Migry Zur Campanile
♠	J97			♠	643
♥	A5432			♥	KQJ106
♦	852			♦	J104
♣	KQ			♣	J4
		S	Alan Applebaum		
		♠	A102		
		♥	(void)		
		♦	KQ63		
		♣	A98763		

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

Facts Determined at the Table

The director was summoned after the final pass. It was reported that prior to passing East's 4♥, South hesitated for 30 seconds and touched the bid cards inside of the bidding box.

Additional Factors Determined Away from the Table

The director polled four players. One player said that North's double was "50-50," but after a hesitation, the likelihood of that double being successful reached nearly 100%. This player also questioned South's pass instead of bidding 5♣. Three other players who were polled passed.

Director Ruling

Based on the results of the poll and in accordance with Laws 16B and 12C, the director ruled that pass was a logical alternative and adjusted the results to 4♥ by West, down three, N/S +150,.

Director's Ruling	4♥ by W, Down 3, N/S +150
--------------------------	----------------------------------

The Appeal

North/South appealed the ruling. North, East and West attended the hearing. The screener asked North what basis he had for his appeal, and informed him that the poll was unanimous in finding pass as a logical alternative. North was also told that the panel included three national champions who would, themselves, pass.

North said that he believed doubling was obviously correct and that passing was not logical. He also said that he made the bid he would have made without the hesitation. Both sides concurred that the facts as presented were accurate. East-West provided little more than agreement with the director's ruling.

Committee Findings

The 30-second hesitation and reaching for a bidding card constituted unauthorized information (UI). It was clear even to North that the UI demonstrably suggested that passing would have been less successful. The polled players and the Appeals Committee found pass to be a logical alternative; with most of the polled players and the Committee choosing pass. North's statement that he made the same bid he would have made without the UI is not a justification for his double since he has a Law 73 obligation to carefully avoid taking any advantage from that UI.

Accordingly, by use of Laws 73, 16 and 12, the correct adjustment is to remove the double and impose the same line of play and defense as occurred at the table: 4♥ by West, down three, N/S +150.

North is an experienced, high-level player and he should have known that he had no reasonable chance to win this appeal since he could present no flaw in the director's legal analysis. He knew, too, from the poll that other high-level players would choose to pass. The Appeals Committee assigned North an Appeal without Merit Warning.

Committee Decision	4♥ by W, Down 3, N/S +150
---------------------------	----------------------------------

Committee Members

Chair	Michael Huston
Member	Ed Lazarus
Member	Ray Miller
Member	Craig Allen
Member	Marc Rabinowitz
Member	Chris Moll