



2003

APPEALS

Edited by David Stevenson

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

2003

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All the appeals from the WBU events have been included herein. It is hoped that they will provide interest and an insight into the way that people in Wales are ruling the game.

After the success of the 2002 edition it was decided to repeat this publication. This publication has been put on the WBU website. The feedback from this will be used to decide whether to repeat this in future years. Also consideration will be given as to whether to publish it as a booklet [as is happening in other countries in similar situations]. So, whether you liked this publication or not, if you can see how you would improve it, if you would like to purchase a paper copy, or if you have any other comments, please tell the L&EC Chairman, Anne Jones. If you wish to comment on the actual appeals, the layout, the editing or the Commentary please tell the Editor, David Stevenson. The way to contact the L&EC Chairman or the Editor is detailed on the next page.

Comments have been made on the appeals by an international group of people who have donated their time, for which we thank them. Also further thanks are due to Richard Hills for assisting with proof-reading. Many of the commentators are subscribers to the bridge-laws mailing list, the best international discussion of the Laws of Bridge on the internet: if you are interested in joining (it's free!) the Editor will provide details. The Editor can also provide details of how to subscribe (including how much it costs) to the Australian Director's Bulletin, the foremost magazine for Tournament Directors in the world.

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Commentators

There are comments on each Appeal by various commentators. Their comments here reflect their personal views.

David Stevenson, the editor, is an International Tournament Director from Liverpool, England. He has served as a member of the Tournament Appeals Committee of the World Bridge Federation, and on Appeals Committees in the ACBL and Sweden. He is a member of the Laws & Ethics Committees in England and Wales. He was formerly the Secretary of the European Bridge League Tournament Directors' Committee, a commentator in the ACBL appeals books and Chief Tournament Director of the WBU.

Herman De Wael is an International Tournament Director from Antwerpen, Belgium. He has served as a member of the Tournament Appeals Committee of the World Bridge Federation and is a member of the Appeals Committee of the European Bridge League.

Frances Hinden is a tournament player from Surrey, England. Recent successes include winning the 2003 Gold Cup. She used to direct club and county competitions regularly, and has recently joined the EBU panel of referees.

Eric Landau is an American. He was a successful tournament player in the ACBL and Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, but has been semi-retired from competition since the late 80s and currently plays only once in a while. He is the author of the book "Every Hand An Adventure", and his writings have also appeared in The Bridge World, the Bulletin of the ACBL, and various lesser-known publications. He directs at the club and local levels occasionally, and managed a bridge club for several years.

Richard Hills:

I know Symmetric Relay, English Acol, and the Ghestem pox;
In my comment'ry on casebooks I've a pretty taste for paradox,
I quote in elegiacs all revokes of Heliogabalus,
When claiming I can state peculiarities parabolous;
I can tell undoubted squeezes from pseudo-squeeze epiphanies,
I know the croaking chorus from the Frogs of Aristophanes!
Then I can hum a ruling of which I've heard the players panic for,
And whistle all the airs from that infernal book Kaplanic Law.

Chorus:

And whistle all the airs from that infernal book Kaplanic Law,
While waiting for the airs from that infernal book Grattanic Law
Next year the airs from that infernal book Grattaaaaaaaanic Law.

Richard Hills:

Then I can write on appeal forms in Babylonian cuneiform,
And cite the inconsistencies of exegeses scarce uniform:
In short, in casebook comment'ry, and as proof-reading editor,
I am the very model of a modern bridge competitor.

Ron Johnson is a strong club and former tournament player from Ottawa, Canada. He has won the New York regional open pairs. He has always been fascinated by tournament reports and appeals. He also writes fairly extensively on baseball.

Adam Wildavsky is the proprietor of Tameware LLC, a computer consulting company in New York City specializing in "Extreme Programming". He has been interested in the laws ever since he became the director of the MIT Bridge Club, more than a few years ago. Adam is a member of the ACBL's NABC Appeals Committee, an ACBL casebook commentator and is a regular contributor to the Bridge Laws Mailing List. He is appeals editor for the Greater New York Bridge Association. His recent tournament successes include a win in the 2003 Reisinger Board-a-Match (Point-a-Board?) teams, and a Bronze Medal in the Monte Carlo Bermuda Bowl. His study of the laws is informed by his study of Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand. From 1972-1974 Adam lived on Hall Road in London next door to the future home of the St Johns Wood Bridge Club.

Gordon Bower is a bridge teacher and club director from Fairbanks, Alaska, USA. He has also directed extensively online, and chairs the Conventions and Systems Committee at Swan Games Company. He has won several regional events and served on the ACBL District 19 board of directors. Away from the bridge table he is a mathematician and geologist.

Laurie Kelso is one of Australia's top Tournament Directors from Melbourne, Australia. He is the editor of the Australian Director's Bulletin, the foremost magazine for Tournament Directors in the world.

The WBU L&EC does review all WBU Appeals, and where there has been some official comment that is also included under the heading "**WBU Laws & Ethics Committee comments**". Note that in fact there were no such official comments for any of the 2003 appeals.

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

2003

APPEALS

Abbreviations

There are some abbreviations, and they are listed here:

WBU	Welsh Bridge Union
L&EC	Laws & Ethics Committee
TD	Tournament Director
Director	Tournament Director
AC	Appeals Committee
Committee	Appeals Committee
LA	Logical alternative
AI	Authorised information
UI	Unauthorised information
PP	Procedural penalty [a fine]
N/S	North-South
E/W	East-West
(A)	Alerted
(H)	Hesitation [agreed]
(1), (2) etc	References to notes below
P	Pass
♠♥♦♣	Spades hearts diamonds clubs
Dbl	Double
Redbl	Redouble
NT	No-trumps

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General

From the 1st August 2000 Tournament Directors are permitted to give “weighted” scores when assigning, for example if they adjust a score because of misinformation they might give a score of 50% of 6♠ making, and 50% of 4♠ +2. Previously only Appeals Committees were permitted to do this. The World Bridge Federation hopes that this will reduce the number of Appeals.

The format used to show such results is based on the “Maastricht protocol” whereby higher NS scores are shown first. It helps scorers and TDs if a consistent style is used. Example:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

10% 6♣ -1 by West, NS +100
+60% 6♠ doubled -3 by N/S, NS -800
+30% 6♣ making by West, NS -920

Unlike most other publications of this sort around the world, we have named the Tournament Director in each case. He or she is the man or woman who attended the table, took the evidence, told the players the ruling, and presented the case to the Committee. But the ruling will only be given after he or she has consulted with at least one other Director, and possibly a top player as well. Thus he or she is not solely responsible for the ruling – on rare occasions he or she may not agree with it himself or herself.

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APPEAL No 1: Form? What form?

Tournament Director:

John Pyner

Appeals Committee:

Tim Rees (Chairman) Malcolm Pryor John Salisbury

Swiss Teams Board no 14 Dealer East None vulnerable	♠ AJ87643 ♥ J92 ♦ 3 ♣ 86	
♠ T5 ♥ 83 ♦ T4 ♣ AKT7532	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W<div>E</div>S</div> </div>	♠ KQ2 ♥ Q74 ♦ J972 ♣ J94
	♠ 9 ♥ AKT65 ♦ AKQ865 ♣ Q	

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
		Pass	1♦
1NT(1)	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Dbl	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

(1) Psyche

Result at table:

4♥ making by South, NS +420

Director's ruling:

Red psyche

Note by editor:

No appeals form was filled in by the Director. A psychic bid form was filled in with the bare facts. The Director did not write any details on it. Assuming that normal WBU regulations were followed – the form does not confirm this – the effect of a Red psyche is that the board is cancelled and scored as Ave+/Ave– plus a standard procedural penalty (or more). This would mean that the board was scored as 3imps to N/S and E/W would also be fined 0.5 VP.

The meaning of a Red Psyche is one where the actions of psycher's partner appear to cater for a concealed partnership understanding about the psyche. Thus it is an objective criterion: the Director has not ruled that this player allowed for a psyche, merely that his actions are similar to that of a player who was allowing for a psyche.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West (presumably: not on form)

Comments by East-West:

East wrote: North has bid 2♠ voluntarily. I have only one sure trick in defence.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit forfeited

Appeals Committee's comments:

East should be bidding as West has shown 15-18. 3NT is likely to make if this is the case. 3NT is the obvious bid, so passing has fielded the psyche. This is a Red psyche.

David Stevenson's comments:

It is extremely unfortunate that there was no Appeals form, and that full details were not put on the Psyche form that replaced it. The pass over 2♠ looks like a man who has seen his partner's 1NT overcalls before so the ruling and decision look right.

Herman De Wael's comments:

I presume this EW pair know the rules - in which case this is flagrant and an additional penalty should be awarded over and above the appealing.

I am frustrated though at the implications of this. What have East-West done wrong according to International Regulations? I know the British regulations are stronger, and this probably qualifies under them, but in other countries? What is so wrong with a player knowing that partner is apt to psyche and taking this into account by passing? Of course opponents should also be informed as to the nature and frequency of possible psyches, but if the CC says "X has a tendency of overcalling 1NT on a weak one-suited hand - about once every three months".

And OK, the CC does not mention this, so we rule MI, saying that it should. We might then award an assigned score with North passing, East raising to 3NT, and E/W going 2 down in 4♣ doubled - oh no, that's not even more than the table result. So the ruling becomes : UI, no damage.

Richard Hills' comments:

I believe that the WBU regulation of automatically giving the non-offending side a +3 imp gain after a Red Psyche is misconceived. If this were an Aussie case, and I were the TD, I would rule an adjustment to this Australia-legal auction:

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
		Pass	1 ♦
1NT(1)	2 ♠	3NT(2)	X
4 ♣(3)	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	Pass	XX(4)	Pass
Pass	Pass		

- (1) 15-18 balanced
- (2) Trusting partner
- (3) 15-18 balanced, 5 or 6 clubs, panicking due to tenuous diamond stopper
- (4) Still trusting partner

4 ♣xx would give N/S a score of +1000, which is an 11-imp gain on the table score of +420. Therefore, I suggest that the WBU slightly amend its Red Psyche regulation to give the non-offending side a minimum of +3 imps, but a greater amount of imps if a legal auction consequent on a non-fielded psyche would have given the non-offending side +4 or more imps.

Ron Johnson's comments:

As I understand the WBU regulations, East would be entitled to assume partner had psyched if the authorized information at the table reveals the psyche. And it is pretty obvious by the time the auction reached the 3 level that North/South have their bids (and thus partner had psyched his 1NT call). So the issue is East's initial pass.

I strongly disagree with the committee's assertion that 3NT is the obvious answer (sure it's a 9 count but it's flat and those jacks don't have to be worth full value -- they generally aren't. Yes, game need not be cold to make it worthwhile, but West will probably accept with any hand you want to be in game with), but it seems to me equally clear that East should do something -- double, invite game or start a drive to some game. So I'm in agreement that East fielded the 1NT overcall. (I strongly disagree with the WBU's position on psyches, but they are the regulations in force for the tournament and thus they need to be enforced)

I assume that even if comic notrump was permitted East/West would have to alert the 1NT overcall.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

No form? No comment.

Gordon Bower's comments:

The committee's bridge judgment is off base. 3NT isn't obvious, it is somewhere between questionable and suicidal. East's ugly 9 is barely even an invitation opposite 1NT (with a 3-3-4-3 8-count, the percentage action after pass-1NT-pass is PASS!), which he knows will be refused (the points are 11-15-5 around the table if everyone is bidding honestly.)

Over 2♠, East's choices are pass and double, and either one could be right. (If East doubles 2♠, South will probably bid 3♥, and the psych will be exposed when West fails to double anything NS bid.)

This psych is a bleached seaweed colour, greenish yellow or yellowish green according to whether you think East's pass is a minority position. Calling this Red is a real stretch unless West has a very impressive history of psyching. Keeping the deposit is simply wrong.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The WBF Code of Practice discusses situations where a player's level of awareness regarding his partner's psyching habits reaches a point where an occurrence may be anticipated. It also authorises artificial score adjustment and possible procedural penalties where such tendencies are not disclosed. The WBU approach in classifying certain actions as 'Green, Amber or Red' is consistent with the above.

In this case, I see no reason to identify West, rather than North or South as the hand lacking values. East's decision to pass over 2♠ is indeed consistent with some concern about the validity of his partner's 1NT.

Final summary by editor:

I note with interest Richard's suggestion for how to deal with a Red Psyche. It is a pity that it is an illegal way of dealing with it. The infraction of Law in a fielded psyche is the psyche itself, which is illegal under Law 40 where it is covered by a hidden agreement. The fielding – illegally allowing for it – shows that it was illegal, but it is the original psyche that is the infraction.

Now, Law 12C2 requires an adjustment for the non-offending side thus:

“the most favourable result that was likely had the irregularity not occurred”

So you cannot include the 1NT overcall in any such assignment. That makes it very difficult to actually do an assignment since there is often very little auction to help [for example, after a fielded third-in-hand opening, an assignment would be based on pass-pass-?] which is why the WBU has the practical rule of Ave+/Ave- plus a procedural penalty for a fielded psyche.

APPEAL No 2: I'm so weak!

Tournament Director:

Sarah Oliver

Appeals Committee:

David Harris (Chairman) Laura Woodruff Graham Heal

Swiss Teams Board no 20 Dealer west All vulnerable	♠ J9862 ♥ 72 ♦ A7 ♣ Q852										
♠ A ♥ AK4 ♦ KT8654 ♣ AT9	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 73 ♥ QJT963 ♦ J92 ♣ 76
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ KQT54 ♥ 85 ♦ Q3 ♣ KJ43										

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	Pass	1♥	1♠
3♦	3♠	4♦	Pass
4♥	4♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl(H)	Pass	5♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Result at table:

5♥ making by East, NS –650

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

TD was recalled by South at end of hand. He asked TD to make a ruling as he was unhappy about the 5♥ bid by East after West's slow double of 4♠, which was agreed.

After considering the hands and consulting with other TDs the TD decided to allow the result to stand.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

TD did not think pass would have been a logical alternative. 5♥ is not indicated in preference to 5♦ by the hesitation. Law 16A.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Comments by East-West:

I pulled it because I thought 4♠ was going to make, and I would have done without the hesitation. I chose 5♥ because I knew my partner had three hearts. from the bidding and I didn't want my hand to go down on the table.

Appeals Committee decision:

Score assigned for both sides:

4♠ doubled –2 by South, NS –500

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

The Committee have some sympathy for East who has responded on minimal values and then bid 5♥ expecting it to go off with 4♠ doubled probably making. However, the Committee feel that Pass is a logical alternative.

David Stevenson's comments:

This seems a routine decision by the AC. Players who understand their responsibilities under Law 73C will accept that once partner has paused before doubling they can only take it out if they are sure everyone would – and that is not clear. I wonder whether the TD consulted with some good players as well as another TD as is recommended these days.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Straightforward decision by the AC. There might be arguments in favour of E/W, but this pair apparently did not understand the ruling so they didn't bring any.

Richard Hills' comments:

"I pulled it because I thought 4♠ was going to make, and I would have done without the hesitation."

The possibility that 5♥ is a logical alternative that an unconstrained East would have normally selected is irrelevant when a UI-constrained East has to obey the requirement of Law 73C, "...carefully avoid taking any advantage..."

If East thought 4♠ was going to make, why didn't East immediately sacrifice against 4♠? By passing 4♠ East was taking a grave risk that West would also Pass, and that E/W would miss a cheap save against a contract that East "thought" was cold. Could East's immediate Pass of 4♠ have been due to East (subconsciously) avoiding a phantom sacrifice? Might East possibly have changed their original intention from 5♥ to Pass if West had flashed a quick penalty double?

There is a popular misconception, even amongst people who should know better (such as the Chief Director of New Zealand), that the correct procedure after getting UI from pard is to ignore the UI, then make the call that you would have normally selected. Not so. However, if this WBU appeal casebook gives Welsh players a better understanding of the requirement of Law 73C, perhaps next year's WBU appeal casebook will be a one-page document. To dream the impossible dream?

Ron Johnson's comments:

I totally agree with the Appeals committee. East chose not to bid 5♥ initially (and thus clearly doesn't expect to make), partner expresses an opinion that 4♠ is going down and now East chooses to bid 5♥. It's absolutely clear to me that pass is a logical alternative here and that the unauthorized information suggests bidding 5♥.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

A close decision. I have no quarrel with either ruling.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I am sympathetic to East's position (that's what happens when you respond on subminimum values) but think pass is a LA and agree with 4♠X-2.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

There is really nothing in the auction (aside from the hesitation) to suggest that West cannot defeat 4♠. Whilst East might be nervous about his minimal values, 'Pass' definitely remains a logical alternative.

Final summary by editor:

A fairly standard decision: it is surprising the TD thought otherwise. Several have sympathy for East but this is what happens when partner hesitates.

APPEAL No 3: Four or five?

Tournament Director:

Linda Greenland

Appeals Committee:

David Harris (Chairman) John Glubb Chris Rochelle

Swiss Teams Board no 27 Dealer South None Vulnerable	♠ A865 ♥ JT9 ♦ KQ5 ♣ JT9										
♠ 7 ♥ A8432 ♦ J ♣ Q86542	<table><tr><td></td><td><i>N</i></td><td></td></tr><tr><td><i>W</i></td><td></td><td><i>E</i></td></tr><tr><td></td><td><i>S</i></td><td></td></tr></table>		<i>N</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>		<i>S</i>		♠ Q93 ♥ K76 ♦ AT932 ♣ A3
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ KJT42 ♥ Q5 ♦ 8764 ♣ K7										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
			Pass
Pass	1 ♣ (A)	1 ♦	1 ♠ (A)(1)
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Explanation given: “May be only four”

Result at table:

1 ♠ +1 by South, NS +110

Director first called:

At end of hand by East

Director's statement of facts:

East felt that his hand was a marginal reopening double holding queen to three trumps, and decided against re-opening if there might only be four spades in the South hand. East stated he would definitely have re-opened with double (takeout) if South is known to have five spades. South had stated that he thought the 1♠ bid showed five spades as dummy was being spread, after the opening lead had been made. The TD told South that he should have expressed this opinion before the opening lead was selected so that a TD could have been summoned at that point, and he could re-open the auction (Law 21B).

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

2♥ +2 by West, NS -170

Details of ruling:

Had South given a timely explanation the TD would have re-opened the auction. Law 21B1. Since it was now too late to change a call the TD adjusted to 2♥ +2. Laws 21B3, 40C.

Note by editor:

No explanation for the alert of 1♣ is given on the form, and the space for Basic System is left blank. Under Welsh alerting rules a 1♣ opening needs an alert if it may be a three card suit.

1♠ does not require an alert whether it shows 4+ or 5+ spades. It would require an alert if it were non-forcing, however, except that South has already passed.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Basis of appeal:

Don't believe East has any reasonable bid.

Director's comments:

South is a sufficiently experienced player that he should know that he ought to correct misinformation before the opening lead is made.

Appeals Committee decision:

Table score re-instated

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Committee accept that South's bid did not show five spades and that East was not manifestly misled as a result of North's explanation that South's bid showed at least (but may be only) four spades. It is acknowledged that East may or may not have doubled if no alert had been made.

David Stevenson's comments:

I tend to agree with the AC that East was merely blowing smoke – what difference does four or five spades really make to re-opening on a balanced hand? But if South had followed his responsibilities correctly there would have been no problem since the auction would have been re-opened and we would have found out for sure whether East would have protected. So perhaps table result stands plus a small Procedural Penalty to South would have been best.

Herman De Wael's comments:

I'm afraid I don't understand the Director's ruling. OK, he wants to punish south for not correcting before the lead, but surely East cannot do anything with the information that South has at least 4 or at least 5 spades?

Frances Hinden's comments:

The AC have decided that the NS partnership agreement was that the bid showed 4+ spades and hence that East was not misled. Personally I struggle to see what difference South's minimum spade length should make to East's final decision. Both arguments lead to the same result, which is that the table score stands.

Richard Hills' comments:

Insufficient information is provided in this appeal's case notes. Did the AC overrule the TD's determination of fact for no particular reason? Was the AC aware that the WBU has adopted this clause in the WBF Code of Practice?

“The expectation is that each appeals committee will presume initially that the Director's ruling is correct. The ruling is overturned only on the basis of evidence presented. For this reason the Director must inform the committee if a ruling in favour of the non-offending side reflects a margin of doubt that continues to exist after the appropriate consultation procedure.”

Or did the TD inform the AC of a “margin of doubt”?

Of course, one reason for the existence of Laws 92 and 93 (which establish appeal procedures) is that an Appeals Committee has more time to investigate facts, so an AC may therefore discover additional evidence that was impractical for a Director to unearth. Therefore, it is entirely possible that both the TD and AC gave impeccably correct rulings upon their respectively available facts.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the committee. I can't see that East was damaged by misinformation. The explanation seems correct (may be as few as 4 spades but in no way denies holding more) and he knew that South was a passed hand. Seems to me that North/South had adequately disclosed their agreements.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The stated grounds for the appeal are questionable. East's reason to bid is that it's seldom right to sell out at the one level, the more so opposite two limited hands.

The AC needs to give some justification for its ruling, ideally by quoting the laws it used and the facts it found which made those laws applicable. As is, the ruling is literally baseless. As the TD noted South could have nullified any possible harm from UI by speaking out before he laid down the dummy. Since he did not, his side must lose any benefit of the doubt.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I still can't tell whether the actual agreement was promising 4 or 5 spades. East's hand is a very marginal reopening indeed, and even if he does reopen I can't see any effect beyond making North bid 2♠ next round. I restore 110 and return the deposit.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The Committee appears to have established that the original explanation by North was accurate (i.e. 4+ spades). As such, there was no infraction and hence no adjustment.

Final summary by editor:

It is difficult to see any damage whether there was misinformation or not, and the commentators tend to agree on this.

APPEAL No 4: What shall I lead?

Tournament Director:

Cindy Middleton

Appeals Committee:

Catherine Jagger (Chairman) Eddie Lucioni Jon Seavers

Swiss Teams Board no 25 Dealer North EW vulnerable	♠ J9 ♥ JT7 ♦ AKT3 ♣ AKT4	
♠ KQ5 ♥ AKQ942 ♦ Q4 ♣ 97	<div style="text-align: center;"> <i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i> </div>	♠ T82 ♥ 83 ♦ 87652 ♣ 652
	♠ A7643 ♥ 65 ♦ J9 ♣ QJ83	

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♠
Dbl(1)	1NT	Pass	2NT
Pass(H)(2)	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

(1) Double shows at least four hearts and probable clubs.

(2) Agreed hesitation

Result at table:

3NT -2 by North, NS -100, lead ♥8

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

Hesitation by West gives East unauthorised information. When East is on lead he must avoid using unauthorised information which might suggest a heart lead. When West holds two suits East might lead either.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

50% of 3NT making by North, NS +400
+ 50% of 3NT -2 by North, NS -100

Details of ruling:

Laws 12C3, 73F1.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by North-South:

East 'knows' because of the hesitation to lead a short(est) suit. I would have had no problem had West doubled 3NT. East should lead either a club possibly a diamond but not a heart.

Appeals Committee decision:

Table score re-instated

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We feel that the hesitation only implied that there was probably a long suit or better hand with West and gave no information that it was hearts rather than clubs. So we felt that the lead at the table was unaffected by the hesitation.

David Stevenson's comments:

If West had doubled 3NT East would surely have led a heart – his shorter unbid suit. So I do not believe the actual hesitation did not suggest hearts over clubs and agree with the TD's ruling.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Did you notice that the Director included in his weights the possibility of a heart lead? That is forbidden in WBF and EBL-land, and I believe also in EBU and WBU! If the hesitation suggests a heart lead, then East is not allowed to lead a heart and the contract is always made. The AC has decided that the heart lead has not been suggested, going with the reasoning that East cannot know which long suit West has. But the suggestion conveyed by the hesitation is that West has a good long suit (either for doubling or even for bidding). Combined with the fact that the double showed 4 hearts and maybe also clubs, the possibility of a long heart suit stands out a mile. There has been an appeal in the EBL where we formulated it as "the hesitation does not suggest either suit, but it does suggest a short suit lead". In that sense the AC ruling is wrong. East should not lead his short suit after the hesitation, if there is a LA.

But then we come to the third part of the ruling - is there a LA to a heart lead? I don't think so. West certainly has hearts, and only possibly clubs. South does not have hearts, but he can have clubs. If this contract goes down, it's partner who has to do it, and he needs a long suit for it. I also lead hearts here, even with the hesitation. So I think the AC got it wrong after all, even if they ended up with the ruling I would also have given.

Richard Hills' comments:

The English Bridge Union's guide for TDs, the White Book, states:

"may not include the disallowed [action] as part of the weighting. This is affectionately called a "Reveley ruling" because of a decision some years ago which brought this problem to the L&EC's notice. Some authorities in other countries permit Reveley rulings."

I do not know whether the Welsh authorities permit Reveley rulings, but my understanding is that Welsh regulations closely parallel English regulations. If the Welsh authorities have outlawed Reveley rulings, then the Welsh authorities deserve to receive a Procedural Penalty for failing to inform Welsh Directors.

The TD was not entitled to adjust the score unless the TD determined that the hesitation illegally suggested a heart lead. Therefore, to avoid a Reveley ruling, the TD should have excluded the illegal heart lead from the weighted score. So, the legal weighting should have been 100% of 3NT making by North, NS +400.

The AC agreed that West's hesitation suggested that West held a long suit. Therefore, the AC needs to be trained in basic statistical probability theory. If West holds a long suit, and if the opponents' auction suggests that the opponents both have balancedish distributions, then West's long suit is more likely to be opposite East's doubleton heart, and West's long suit is less likely to be opposite East's tripleton club. Therefore, the hesitation demonstrably suggested a heart lead over a club lead. Therefore, the Appeals Committee's restoration of the table score was demonstrably contrary to Law 16A, "...the partner may not choose from among logical alternative actions one that could demonstrably have been suggested over another by the extraneous information."

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the committee. While East clearly has unauthorized information (partner must have something unusual to be contemplating any action over the 2NT call), it in no way shows hearts.

(quoting now from Law 16A) "[...]partner may not choose from among logical alternative actions one that could demonstrably have been suggested over another by the extraneous information."

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The TD ruling is incorrect. Once he rules the heart lead illegal he must decide on the likely results absent a heart lead. The only possibility is nine tricks for NS.

The AC ruling is also incorrect. Yes, the hesitation implied a long suit, and both East's hand and the auction told him his partner was more likely long in hearts than clubs.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I agree with the committee. East's own hand points to trying to hit his partner's suit, hesitation or none, and the bidding did not indicate which of West's suits was better.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The issue is whether the hesitation suggests a heart lead, but given that the Director decided in the affirmative, then 50% of the table result should not have been included in the original adjustment. I agree with the Committee's position on this one, although had the hesitation occurred one round later (i.e. in the pass-out seat), would we now be debating whether it was indicative of a heart or spade holding?

Final summary by editor:

Let me assure Richard that the EBU White Book applies in Wales, except in any situation where the WBU has decreed otherwise. There are very few of these and none that affect this problem.

As is noted by some commentators [but missed by me] the actual ruling is an illegal 'Reveley ruling'. Once the heart lead is disallowed any percentages given under Law 12C3 must exclude the possibility of a heart lead, and 3NT makes without a heart lead.

APPEAL No 5: Three top honours

Tournament Director:

Sarah Oliver

Appeals Committee:

Ann Jones (Referee)

Note by editor:

A Referee is an Appeals Committee of one

MP Pairs Board no 19 Dealer South EW vulnerable	♠ 76 ♥ AK4 ♦ AQ732 ♣ J97	
♠ 42 ♥ 8653 ♦ KT9 ♣ Q863	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	♠ AK9 ♥ JT972 ♦ 84 ♣ K54
	♠ QJT853 ♥ Q ♦ J65 ♣ AT2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♠(A)(1)
Pass	2NT(A)(2)	Pass	3♠(A)(3)
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

(1) Weak Two – 6-10 points

(2) 15+

(3) 3 of top honours

Result at table:

4♠ +1 by South, NS +450, lead ♦

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

North explained South's 3♠ as showing three of top honours, South thought it showed any three honours. West said he may not have led a diamond if he thought South had any points outside spades. A diamond lead gives declarer eleven tricks – any other lead only makes ten.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

TD ruled result at table should stand because even if South had held AKQ of spades there was still room for him to have J♦ as well. South did have three honours – Q, J, T.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Basis of appeal:

West does not believe the lead is routine.

Comments by North-South:

As we were playing Benjy Acol East-West should have known AKQ of spades would have been 3NT.

As North stated South should have three of the top five honours for the bid. South held QJT.

Appeals Committee decision:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

66.6% of 4♠ making by South, NS –420

+ 33.3% of 4♠ +1 by South, NS +450

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

E/W were misinformed. Choice of lead more open if correct explanation given. Declarer should have corrected before opening lead. Advise N/S to confirm their system agreements. Law 12C3.

David Stevenson's comments:

The TD's reasoning is very strange, and the appeal was needed to correct it.

Herman De Wael's comments:

I'm not familiar with the finer points of English usage. If an ordinary player says an honour, does he include the ten? OK, but then what are top honours? AKQ surely? So why does North not say AKQ of spades? And why does South not correct the explication? So - we have something to stick South by. But then what to do with West? He knows South has no points outside spades. So why does he lead diamonds? He's giving South an extra finesse, and one that will win. Rather, he should lead hearts or clubs, through dummy's supposed strengths. So I doubt if West had thought this one through before leading and I'm not going to give him a second shot. Result stands.

Frances Hinden's comments:

There are two initial issues here:

- (1) What does "three of top honours" (3oTH) mean?
- (2) What is the N/S partnership agreement?

From the form, we see that N/S believe the answer to both is 3 of the top 5 honours. The TD has not addressed this; the AC by implication have ruled

- (1) "AKQ"
- (2) "3 of the top 5".

Without knowing the reasoning it is hard to comment, but I don't find the answer to (1) obvious. As "3oTH" makes no sense as a description, why didn't E/W ask for clarification before leading? What does the convention card say? (This hand was discussed at length on the internet, when West gave the additional information that there was no CC, and N/S agreed that the 3♠ was in fact "good points, good suit".) Having answered the first two questions, how likely is a non-diamond lead with the correct explanation? This is purely a matter of judgement. My expert panel all led a diamond on either explanation, so perhaps the AC were generous to EW. Against that, West does have a logical argument for not leading a diamond, and I automatically feel prejudiced against any pair who say that their opponents should have known their system.

Eric Landau's comments:

What did South promise? At various points in the writeup we find this described as "three of top honours", "any three honours", "three honours", and "three of the top five honours". With that kind of terminological confusion in the writeup, there must have been terminological confusion at the table as well. If any of those phrases were meant to be synonymous with "AKQ" somebody might well have said so in so many words. If E-W weren't sure exactly what N-S meant, they could have asked for clarification; they are not entitled to assume that such nebulous phrases imply exactly what they want them to and claim to have been misinformed if their assumption turns out to be wrong. Moreover, even if there were misinformation, the connection between the misinformation and West's lead of a diamond is extremely tenuous at best -- West could have made the same argument about a club or trump lead had that been the one to blow a trick. I'd have upheld the Director's ruling and allowed the table result to stand.

Richard Hills' comments:

The TD needs to be trained in basic statistical probability theory. Sure, it is still possible for South to hold the ♦J on the misinformation that West received. But it is much less likely that declarer holds the ♦J compared to the likelihood of declarer holding the ♦J if West had been correctly informed. After correct information, a passive opening lead is much more attractive to West, so West has been demonstrably damaged by the misinformation.

The Referee noted that South failed to correct North's misinformation before the opening lead, as required by Law 75D2. Furthermore, South seemed to be unrepentant in their Law 75D2 infraction, as N/S argued that it was E/W's fault for failing to realise that North had given misinformation. So, if I had been the Referee, I would have given N/S an educative Procedural Penalty, to encourage timely full disclosure by N/S in future.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I would have liked a better explanation from North (perhaps, "any 3 of the top 5 honors, but not AKQ -- with that he'd have bid 3NT") and do not accept North/South's contention that West should have been aware of the negative inferences from the 3♠ response.

Having said that, I don't accept that the explanation damaged West and thus agree with the director.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The first part of the TD reasoning is not logical. West is not arguing that South could not hold a diamond honor, but that it is less likely if he holds the top three spades than otherwise. The second part may be logical - I don't know, because I cannot parse the first phrase of the statement of facts.

All that said I prefer the TD's ruling to the AC's. On the facts as given I see no evidence of misinformation, and in any case I think the diamond lead is a standout.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I agree that "top honours" instead of "honours" is misinformation. It's not obvious to me what impact this information would have on West's lead.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The agreement was 3 of the top 5 honours and North's explanation was not concise. This appears to have affected West's choice of lead and hence the Referee's adjustment seems about right.

Final summary by editor:

The commentators do not seem in agreement as to whether there was misinformation. I cannot understand how three of the top honours can mean anything but AKQ. Some commentators said that West should have asked further if he had doubts. Well, I will admit to bias, I was West, and three top honours or three of the top honours seems completely unambiguous, then and now. How can the ten or jack be considered a "*top*" honour?

I am interested in Frances' expert panel. At pairs I considered a passive club lead for some time before realising how safe a diamond lead was. At teams I would always lead a diamond.

APPEAL No 6: What happened?

Tournament Director:

Keith Richardson

Appeals Committee:

Andrew Kambites (Chairman) Patrick Jourdain Pat Scares

Swiss Teams Board no 20 Dealer West All vulnerable	♠ K ♥ KJ43 ♦ QJ972 ♣ J83	
♠ AQ83 ♥ 85 ♦ AKT5 ♣ K97	<div>N</div> <div>W E</div> <div>S</div>	♠ 9542 ♥ A2 ♦ 643 ♣ AQ65
	♠ JT76 ♥ QT976 ♦ 8 ♣ T42	

Basic systems:

North-South play Benji Acol, Weak NT

East-West play Variable NT, Multi 2♦

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1NT(1)	Pass	2♣(A)(2)	Pass
2♠	Dbl	Pass	3♥
Pass	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

(1) 15-18

(2) Staymanic

Result at table:

4♠ -2 by West, NS+200

Play:

T1	Heart to ace	T2	Spade 2 7 Q K
T3	Heart king	T4	Diamond Q to A
T5	♠3, ♦, ♠9, ♠T		

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

2♠ doubled making by West, NS –670

Note by editor:

The form does not contain any detail by the TD as to what the infraction was nor why he ruled as he did nor who appealed nor why.

Comments by North-South:

South could not stand penalty double therefore bid 3♥. They went voluntarily to 4♠. North did not double. Neither did South. 4♠ cannot make.

Appeals Committee decision:

Score assigned for both sides:

3♥ doubled –2 by South, NS –500

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

The double of 2♠ should have been alerted if it was for penalties: E/W were damaged by this misinformation.

If South believed double was penalties she should have alerted it. In that case East might have doubled 3♥ for 500. We agree East would not have bid 4♠ if he had been told the double of 2♠ was for penalties.

Deposit returned: we feel our job would have been easier if East had turned up rather than leave it to West.

David Stevenson's comments:

Another poor effort at passing information with an incomplete form. It seems very difficult to make sensible comments on this case.

The comments by the AC seem to suggest that the double of 2♠ was for penalties, so the infraction was failure to alert [an unalerted double in Wales is for takeout]. But looking at the hand this seems incredible.

The main conclusion is that if these case-books are to have any meaning it is necessary for TDs to fill in Appeals Forms fully and clearly.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Yes, what happened?

Frances Hinden's comments:

North makes a penalty double on a hand suitable for a take-out double. South pulls a penalty double with 4 trumps, taking the normal action after a take-out double. I'm curious as to how E/W discovered that the double of 2♠ was penalties! Reading between the lines, it appears it was systemically penalties, in which case it should have been alerted and E/W were damaged. The AC's decision is better than the TD's ruling as there is no reason to alter South's bidding if there was no UI. I might have given E/W some percentage of +600 from 3NT, as North needs the ♠K to make the penalty double and pull at all plausible.

Richard Hills' comments:

The AC commented, "we feel our job would have been easier if East had turned up rather than leave it to West." So what? Nowhere in the Welsh regulations does it state that both appellants must make life easier for an AC. Instead, an appellant's non-attendance at an appeal hearing simply has the logical consequence that any doubtful point is likely to go against the appellants.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I honestly don't understand anything about this hand. North is supposed to have made a penalty double and South ran? North/South actually have an agreement that this double is penalty?

It seems absolutely clear to me that North intended the double as takeout and that they actually have no agreement as to what the double meant. As such, East/West were not misinformed about the North/South agreements.

East had all of the information needed to take a piece out of 3♥ if he wanted to. He opted not to, choosing instead to bid 4♠.

It seems to me to be very clear to rule result stands. (Based on the incomplete information available that is. It's entirely possible that I'd rule differently had I heard the appeal)

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

If I had made a ruling like that I wouldn't have filled in a form either!

That said, without the facts I have no basis to comment.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I am surprised the AC thinks 3♥X is a likely result, with EW having a known fit and East having only two hearts. 4♠ looks like a normal contract to me, and would stick with the table result unless EW can give me some clear idea of how they feel they were damaged. If so, 3♠-1 or some mixture of 3♥X and 3♠ is possible.

I can't imagine why the table director thought 2♠X was a reasonable final contract. South wasn't under any constraints.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I do not understand the Director's original adjustment, which is consistent with 3♥ being ruled an infraction. The other strange aspect of this case is that neither of the N/S hands, nor the players' subsequent actions supports their contention that the double was actually penalties! If one does accept that the double was at least penalty orientated, then that information would certainly discourage East from bidding 4♠.

Final summary by editor:

The commentators have struggled, but done their best, with insufficient information. We really need completed forms.

APPEAL No 7: What does the hesitation show?

Tournament Director:

John Pain

Appeals Committee:

Andrew Thompson (Chairman) Laura Woodruff David Howard

Swiss Teams Board no 7 Dealer South All vulnerable	♠ QT85 ♥ 8754 ♦ T73 ♣ 92	
♠ AK74 ♥ AKQ6 ♦ 5 ♣ QT86	<div>N</div> <div>W E</div> <div>S</div>	♠ J92 ♥ J3 ♦ K942 ♣ AKJ5
	♠ 63 ♥ T92 ♦ AQJ86 ♣ 743	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦(1)	Dbl
4♣	Pass	4♥(2)	Pass
4NT(3)	Pass	5♦(4)	Dbl
6♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

- (1) Fourth suit forcing
- (2) Agreed slow
- (3) RKCB
- (4) 1 or 4 aces (out of 5)

Result at table:

6♣ making by East, NS -1370

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

Facts agreed. East's 4♥ was noticeably slower than the rest of the auction. TD recalled at end of play.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

The slowness of the 4♥ gives West no additional information that he did not have from the rest of the legal auction. Although there is unauthorised information, West has not taken advantage of it. Law 73C.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Basis of appeal:

West's action is not evident.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

We felt that West was never going to pass with only four hearts, also he has four-card support for partner's suit. Also East has no discernible extra values anyway. Had West had five hearts the decision to bid on would be more doubtful.

David Stevenson's comments:

Completely routine: so much so that the deposit might have been retained.

Herman De Wael's comments:

No, West's action is not evident. But as the TD and AC rightly said "what does the hesitation show?" The only possibility I can see is doubt and so stopping in 5♣ would be the suggested action that may be ruled against.

Frances Hinden's comments:

The final ruling is fine, but the AC comment is strange. Whether or not East has discernable extra values is irrelevant to any debate about West's actions.

Richard Hills' comments:

In my opinion, the Appeals Committee did not fully resolve the issue of logical alternatives. The AC seemed to narrowly focus on whether or not Pass was a logical alternative for West. Because West held only a four-card heart suit, the AC breathed a sigh of relief and ruled that the actual auction was legal. But is a 5♣ call a logical alternative? If East held a misfitting minimum game force, such as:

♠ J92
♥ J3
♦ KQ42
♣ KJ95

then East would have to respond 5♦ to West's RKCB – and E/W would have zoomed pass their last safe spot. So, if I had been the AC, my ruling would be:

1. West's logical alternatives after East's 4♥ include both 5♣ and 4NT.
2. A hesitation in a slam-try auction is (in my opinion) a demonstrable suggestion that the hesitator holds better values than a misfitting minimum. Therefore, the hesitation demonstrably suggests 4NT would be more successful than 5♣.
3. If West had bid 5♣, East would not force to slam due to East deducing that their ♦K was a wasted value opposite West's known shortage in diamonds.
4. Score adjusted to +620 in 5♣.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the committee. East doesn't have his hesitation. (Maybe a stray extra jack, no big deal). Had this happened at pairs I'd have been more troubled because it would be a lot more attractive to play in hearts.

At teams I just can't see passing 4♥ as a logical alternative.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

OK.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I agree that passing 4♥ isn't an LA, and while it's not clear what either E or W is doing, they are clearly in some kind of a slam-exploration sequence. I think it's clear for West to bid on with a 4-loser hand after two forces, even if he has 5 hearts and 4♥ was to play.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I believe the hesitation was indicative of doubt about the correct denomination, rather than possession of extra values. I also agree that passing with only a four-card heart suit wasn't really an option. A good decision all round.

Final summary by editor:

Fair enough, though there was some doubt not as to whether pass was a logical alternative, but whether some other call, maybe 5♣, should have been chosen instead of 4NT.

APPEAL No 8: Weighted assignment

Tournament Director:

Ken Richardson

Appeals Committee:

Roland Bolton (Chairman) Jim Luck Chris Rochelle

Swiss Teams Board no 14 Dealer East None vulnerable	♠ Q93 ♥ K4 ♦ K54 ♣ AQ953	
♠ J4 ♥ QJ8763 ♦ T6 ♣ T62	<div>N</div> <div>W E</div> <div>S</div>	♠ A2 ♥ T9 ♦ AQJ982 ♣ K74
	♠ KT8765 ♥ A52 ♦ 73 ♣ J8	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♦	2♠
2NT(1)	3♠	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

(1) Intended as Lebensohl: not alerted.

Result at table:

3NT -6 by West, NS +300, lead ♠3

Director first called:

At end of hand

Director's statement of facts:

E/W had agreed to play Lebensohl, but disagreed as to whether it applied in this situation. North was not given the correct explanation. West failed to inform North (Law 75D2) that East should have alerted 2NT. If West had done so, as required by Law, the bidding could have been re-opened for North, who would have had the chance to correct his final bid (pass) without penalty.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides (Law 12C3):

75% of 3NT doubled –6 by West, NS +1400
+ 25% of 4♠ –1 by South, NS –50
= NS +837

Details of ruling:

West may not bid on the failure of East to alert 2NT, when East chooses to bid 3NT to play west should trust partner and play there when it is doubled. North may choose to bid 4♠ instead of double. Judged as 75% – 25%. (Other contracts are possible.)

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by East-West:

Partnership has no agreement to play Lebensohl in this situation.

We believe that the chance that East would pull the double of 3NT to 4♦ is quite strong and West pulling the double is insurance in case partner was expecting a club suit and not a heart suit.

We are appealing against the probability ruled by the TD and suggest some weight to 4♥ doubled and 4♦ doubled, eg

25% of 3NT doubled
+ 25% of 4♦ doubled
+ 25% of 4♥ doubled
+ 25% of 4♠ –1 by N/S

Appeals Committee decision:

Score assigned for both sides:

3NT doubled –6 by West, NS +1400

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

After East's supposedly strong bid, we see no reason for West to remove to 4♥ after the double of 3NT.

In our view no reason why 4♠ bid should be considered by N/S. Hence this is removed from the TD's calculations.

David Stevenson's comments:

Would you play 3NT doubled with the West hand when East has opened with a one-level bid? I wouldn't! I think the AC has been very harsh here with their adjustment: the one suggested by E/W seems much fairer.

But was there an infraction anyway? It does not seem that they had agreed to play Lebensohl in this situation so there was no misinformation. How about restoring the table result?

Note that the TD has calculated the weightings wrong: he should calculate theimps for each score and **then** apply the weightings.

Herman De Wael's comments:

What everyone seems to forget is that although North/South have a right to the correct explanation, they do not have a right to the knowledge that EW were having a bidding misunderstanding. So when East bids 3NT over Lebensohl and 3♠, East is showing a very strong hand. Does North intend to double that? I don't believe that is a 100% decision.

Frances Hinden's comments:

There are two approaches to this hand:

- A) The agreement is lebensohl, and North was misinformed.
- B) The agreement is 2NT is natural, or there is no agreement, and there is no MI but West has UI.

The TD and AC have ruled under A, in which case I can accept 3NTx-6 (although if 1♦ cannot include an Acol 2♦ I believe that West is very likely to pull and would consider a percentage of 4♥x-2 even with the UI). However, even with the standard 'misexplanation rather than misbid' I might believe East. It is a very unusual auction for lebensohl and with a filled-in CC I would expect to see it under 'defence to jump overcalls'. The AC may have reasons to believe otherwise, but don't give them. Under B I would rule result stands: if anything, pulling 3NT to 4♥ is suggested by the UI so West has acted correctly.

Note the TD should have worked out theimps for 3NTx-6 and 4♠-1 and then applied the weightings, rather than calculating a raw weighted score.

Eric Landau's comments:

Confusion over methods is not an infraction per se. E-W were playing Lebensohl, but Lebensohl does not apply to 1♦-2♠-2NT in the absence of a special agreement. E-W claimed to have "no agreement to play Lebensohl in this situation", which is supported by the Director's finding that "E-W... disagreed as to whether it applied in this situation". East didn't alert 2NT, but should not do so in the absence of an agreement as to its meaning. The failure to alert gave unauthorized information to West, suggesting that East didn't take 2NT as Lebensohl, but West fulfilled his obligation (under Law 73C) to avoid taking advantage of the unauthorized information when he passed 3NT. The Director found that "North was not given the correct explanation", but in fact no explanation was requested or given at all. I fail to see where E-W committed an infraction, and would have allowed the table result to stand.

Richard Hills' comments:

In my opinion, both the TD and the AC were putting the cart before the horse. They were concentrating on the awful horror of a non-alert of lebensohl, but failing to consider whether E/W had an partnership agreement – not merely a West guess – that 2NT was indeed lebensohl in this situation.

If I had been TD, I would have concentrated on these words in the footnote to Law 75 (directions altered for convenience):

“the mistake was in West’s bid. Here there is no infraction of Law, since North-South did receive an accurate description of the East-West agreement; they have no claim to an accurate description of the East-West hands.”

There is no textbook on the planet that describes the actual auction as a lebensohl auction. So, it seems to me on the balance of probabilities (Law 85A), that West had overextended the lebensohl concept beyond the actual E/W partnership agreement, and therefore West has merely misbid.

Furthermore, if West has merely misbid, then the footnote to Law 75 clearly states that West has zero responsibility to inform N/S about this misbid. Therefore, West has not infringed Law 75D2 either. No infraction, no weighted adjustment – table score stands.

Ron Johnson's comments:

East/West appeal and end up with a worse score than they started out with (not that it rates to be worth more than an imp or two). When I saw who appealed and the basis of the appeal, I felt it likely that the ruling would be an appeal without merit (my information being that players are discouraged from appealing when the issue is a matter of the weights given by director on a 12C3 ruling)

I certainly can't fault the committee's reasoning or ruling -- I felt pretty much the same way they did. Oh well, East/West got their deposit back.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

I prefer the TD's ruling to the AC's. It seems to me overwhelmingly likely that 2NT was a mistaken bid by a player who had agreed to play a convention he did not understand, and so no explanation was required, by East or West. Further it's not clear to me that North would double 100% of the time, given the info that his opponents were having a misunderstanding. Further, I would allow West to pull 3N doubled to 4H. He was perhaps overly ethical to sit for 3N in the first place, opposite a partner whose opening was limited by the failure to open at the two level. Sitting for a double would not be logical.

Gordon Bower's comments:

Does anyone in Wales (or anywhere) play Lebensohl in this auction? This looks like a simple misbid my West, no infraction, no adjustment.

Was West under UI constraints because 2NT was not alerted? If he thinks East has a strong semi-balanced hand I can't see him sitting for 3NTX. The most likely final contract after a double is 4HX which isn't going down more than two... so, no damage, table result stands. I'll charitably say I think the director's judgment was a bit off and the committee's judgment a bit farther off.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

When a weighted score is assigned, the percentages are usually those of the resultant IMPs and not those of the original raw scores. The Committee's re-adjustment seems spot on (although E/W probably wish they had not appealed)!

Final summary by editor:

Was there misinformation? The commentators were not in agreement. Even if there was the commentators do not agree on adjustment.

Some people do play Lebensohl in this position, though it is very rare.

APPEAL No 9: It is a good hand

Tournament Director:

Mike Amos

Appeals Committee:

Jeff Smith (Chairman) Filip Kurbalija Malcolm Harris

Swiss Teams Board no 15 Dealer South NS vulnerable	♠ KJT2 ♥ 7 ♦ QT543 ♣ K75	
♠ A93 ♥ T43 ♦ J72 ♣ QJ94	<div>N</div> <div>W E</div> <div>S</div>	♠ Q9654 ♥ 92 ♦ 98 ♣ 8632
	♠ 7 ♥ AKQJ865 ♦ AK6 ♣ AT	

Basic systems:

North-South play Acol, 2♣ GF, Multi 2♦, Acol 2♥/♠

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2♣(A)(1)
Pass	2♥(A)(2)	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥(H)
Pass	4NT(A)(3)	Pass	5♦(A)(4)
Pass	6♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

- (1) GF or 23/24
- (2) 7+ points, less than three controls
- (3) RKCB
- (4) 1/4 key cards

Result at table:

6♥ making by North, NS +1430

Director first called:

Before final pass of auction by West

Director's statement of facts:

West drew TD's attention to North's 4NT after South's slow 4♥ bid. It was agreed the bid was slow and the TD directed play to continue. TD recalled at end of play. West argued that 4NT was not clear-cut. TD asked North why he had bid 4NT – he said it was clear to make a slam try with this hand after 2♣ – he had two controls + 9 points. His partner had shown a strong ♥ suit.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

N/S were playing strong 2s so North knows South has 9+ playing tricks. It seems that most players would make a slam try with two kings.

Note by editor:

I was playing in this tournament and this hand was played in the match between the two top teams. My partner and I bid 6♥ but at the other table North played 7♥ after an RKCB mix-up. East failed to lead a spade. We finished second, they won, and I have to feel this hand played a large part in the result!

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

The hesitation was unfortunate, but on balance we feel that North would always bid on since he has some extras and thus we uphold the TD's decision. Note that 2♣ is game forcing and they have an Acol 2♥ bid in their system hence North knows that South will be even stronger.

David Stevenson's comments:

Routine: the only question is whether the appeal had merit.

Herman De Wael's comments:

So? North has shown seven points (he has 9) and less than three controls (he has 3). So? He's super-maximum, but if partner simply bids 4♥ (I suppose that 3♠ denies anything in hearts) then why go on? You're looking at a load of c**p, and partner bids GF and then his game in your worst suit. So you pass. Unless partner keeps you awake by bidding it not as fast as all that. +680.

Frances Hinden's comments:

Yes, North is worth a slam try but he didn't make a try, he drove slam via RKCB. It could be argued that the slow 4♥ bid made it less likely that South had say Qx AK109xxx AK AQ. Perhaps South would have bid slam over any slam try from North, but the AC do not make it clear if they are ruling on this basis.

Richard Hills' comments:

I agree with the TD and AC that correct evaluation of North's cards means that it is illogical for North to Pass South's non-forcing 4♥. However, I note that correct evaluation of South's cards means that it is illogical for South to bid a non-forcing 4♥. In my opinion, anyone partnering an illogical card evaluator, such as South, is also likely to be an illogical card evaluator himself. So, I would rule that for the N/S "class of player", the illogical Pass is a logical alternative for the illogical North. Therefore, if I had been the TD, I would have adjusted the score to 4♥ +680.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I simply disagree with the ruling here. Yes, North is maximum for his bidding but I feel strongly that passing the signoff is a logical alternative here. Presumably South had options if he cared about whether North held two controls. He chose to sign off (slowly).

It's very much like a hesitation Blackwood situation.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The TD and AC reasoning does not take into account the fact that if South really holds a minimum for his bidding he ought to have been able to bid 4♥ in tempo.

North described 4NT as a "slam try", but Blackwood is more than a slam try. It's a commitment to slam unless two key cards happen to be missing. 4NT was not a good bid, since the partnership might have been off the first two diamond tricks. 5♣ seems right to me, and I expect South would continue on to slam.

The TD and the AC need to be precise in their language. There was UI, and it demonstrably suggested bidding on, so the question is not what most players would do but rather whether pass is logical. In order to allow the score to stand the ruling must declare that "Pass is not a logical alternative." I'd have no quarrel with such a statement, but it's one that should be made explicit.

Gordon Bower's comments:

No complaints. Some sort of slam try is inevitable with 9HCP opposite a game-forcing hand.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

Neither the Director nor the Committee believed a Pass of 4♥ was a logical alternative. This decision really hinged upon the N/S agreements. If an Acol 2♥ had not been available, then I suspect an adjustment may have been forthcoming.

Final summary by editor:

While few thought pass of 4♥ was a logical alternative it is possible that North's actual choice of 4NT, a slam check rather than a slam try, should have been disallowed.

APPEAL No 10: Not a great heart stop

Tournament Director:

Malcolm Lunn

Appeals Committee:

David Harris (Chairman) John Salisbury Malcolm Pryor

Swiss Teams Board no 9 Dealer North EW vulnerable	♠ 9 ♥ KQJ8742 ♦ A98 ♣ 85										
♠ A2 ♥ T953 ♦ KQ7 ♣ Q642	<table><tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr></table>		N		W		E		S		♠ KJT764 ♥ -- ♦ J6 ♣ AKJ97
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ Q853 ♥ A6 ♦ T5432 ♣ T3										

Basic systems:

North-South play Acol, Multi 2♦, Lucas Twos

East-West play Benji Acol

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Dbl	1♠
Dbl	2♥	3♣	Pass
3♥(A)(1)	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Dbl(A)(2)	Pass	Pass
Pass			

(1) Explained as looking for a heart stop

(2) Alerted late, after East and South had passed, but before West had passed.

Result at table:

3NT doubled –3 by East, NS +800

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

East wished to reserve his rights due to a late alert of the final double. If TD had been called before West's final pass the TD could have re-opened the auction with East.

East alleges that South described the double as asking for a spade lead, then that she might be wrong as partner has bid hearts. It is asking for a heart lead.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

E/W did not summon the TD as soon as the infraction (alleged) took place. And as West has called the TD cannot re-open the auction, which the TD could have done before West had called. Law 21B1.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Director's comments:

Law 21 allows the TD to either allow change of call (Law 21B2) or award an adjusted score (Law 21B3) – it was not too late to change East's pass when South alerted (even late) and therefore Law 21B3 does not and cannot apply.

Comments by East-West:

East said: South alerted after passing. I asked explanation and was told partner wanted a spade lead. Therefore there was no reason to call the TD as I believed partner had a stop in hearts and I can make 3NT on a spade lead.

Partner passed and South now corrected explanation to partner wanting a heart lead. If this had been explained correctly before my partner passed I would have called the TD and changed my call to 5♣.

Please note I called the TD as soon as the correct explanation was given but unfortunately too late to change my bid. The TD ruled for us to reserve our rights and play the contract.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Dispute on exact timing of alert by South but East already passed when void ♥ having shown a heart stop!

E/W are authors of their own misfortune.

David Stevenson's comments:

It's fun, but it isn't bridge!

Herman De Wael's comments:

Let's focus on EW first. Did they do something else wrong? 3H is explained as asking for a stopper. When, and by whom? Then 3NT is explained as showing a heart stopper. When and by whom? East states he believes West has shown the heart stopper (he gives this as reason why he wants to play 3NT after a double asking for hearts). So there are questions here that need to be answered. But let's assume that EW did nothing wrong.

Then East decides to pass 3NTX without asking what the double means, or wait for the alert. I don't like it when they then call the TD. That's a double shot. But let's go on.

South then alerts and explains it as asking for spades. EW keep their sigh of relief hidden.

West now passes and South changes his explanation. Now it is indeed too late for East to change his call.

If we judge that East knew all along that he was showing a heart stopper, then I'm willing to overlook the fact that he passed the double without asking, but give him a second call (4♣, probably playing 5) when the explanation that it asks for hearts comes so late that he can no longer change it. I said "if we judge that East knew all along". I'm not convinced that this is the case.

Frances Hinden's comments:

Well, you've certainly left the best until last! The TD found a simple reason not to adjust which EW disagree with (I don't entirely understand their comments, but there seems to be a timing issue). My reason not to adjust would be simple: if the double means "3NT is going off on the normal lead" (a heart) I don't think it is alertable so there can be no reason for either player to change their call. Having studied this appeal in some detail, I have three unanswered questions. What was the double of 1♠ and if responsive why was it not alerted? Why did 3NTx concede 800 rather than 1100? When did East discover he was bidding a hand from a different board?

Eric Landau's comments:

East's psychic 3NT might well be deemed "irrational, wild or gambling", but as it took place before the irregularity occurred this should not affect the ruling. His pass of 3NTX, after having been told that the double asked for a spade lead, is entirely reasonable; he had been, in effect, told that his gamble had already succeeded. I don't doubt that had he been correctly informed that the double requested a heart lead, he would not have passed. So the outcome of the appeal rests on the application of L21. The Director notes that "if TD had been called before West's final pass the TD could have re-opened the auction", but East alleges that "partner passed and South now corrected [his] explanation". The determination on which the appeal hinges is purely factual one: did South correct his earlier explanation before or after West passed? The committee appears to have fallen into the understandable temptation to avoid the need to make an essentially arbitrary finding with insufficient information by ignoring the factual issue altogether and finding instead that "E-W are authors of their own misfortune". They merely noted in passing that there was a "dispute on [the] exact timing of [the] alert" and moved on to irrelevant considerations, when their job was to resolve that dispute.

Richard Hills' comments:

It seems to me that South mistakenly made a late alert of an unalertable natural double. It seems to me, therefore, that East has no entitlement to withdraw their earlier irrational Pass. At the time East passed, E/W had not been misinformed – the mistaken alert and its subsequent retraction came later.

Ron Johnson's comments:

Why did East/West get their deposit back? This is such a clear ruling.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

E/W's description of events does not seem to have been contested so I will assume it is correct. If so then both rulings seem poor to me. EW were misinformed, and with correct information it seems likely they'd have achieved a superior score. EW may have been damaged primarily through East's unusual action, but if we allow the score to stand we allow NS to benefit from having provided misinformation when they could have known that it would disadvantage their opponents. This situation is covered by law 72b1, which instructs us to adjust the score. I find nothing in the law suggesting that -only- the offenders' score should be adjusted, but that is the way the law is customarily applied and I've no quarrel with that custom.

Gordon Bower's comments:

No complaints.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I agree with the Director and Committee, East elected to roll the dice and lost – he shouldn't be protected from his own foolhardy actions. The timing of the alert only becomes relevant if it affected East's decision to Pass. If East's subsequent actions really were dependent upon the nature of the double, he would have inquired (whether there had been an alert or not).

Final summary by editor:

I am surprised by Adam's assertion that Law 72B1 be applied to one side only. I have no experience of this happening and consider it normal to apply it to both sides.

Generally the comments suggested that East got what he deserved.

FINAL COMMENTS

David Stevenson's comments:

In one case there was no Appeals form, in another it was not fully filled in, and in many of them the details were rather sparse. It is difficult to comment suitably on these appeals in the absence of full information, and this makes the job of the commentators much harder, also that of the Laws & Ethics Committee which reviews every appeal.

A couple of the basic TD rulings were pretty incredible, and the ACs were needed to sort them out. I felt the ACs were doing a better job this year, though too many deposits were returned. At least the TDs were taking them from the players this year!

Frances Hinden's comments:

Overall I didn't disagree strongly with any of the final decisions. The Welsh ACs have done a generally good job of imposing sanity on some fairly eye-popping actions.

In potential misbid/misinformation cases both the TDs and ACs could be clearer in specifying what they have decided the partnership agreement actually is, and hence the logic behind the ruling. It is not always clear if they have ruled misinformation but no damage, or misbid.

Richard Hills' comments:

I applaud the Welsh Bridge Union for continuing its experiment in appeal casebooks, as I understand that last year's inaugural effort was found both instructive and amusing. I am also a panellist for this year's parallel EBU appeal casebook. I believe that the percentage quality of sensible decisions is higher in the Welsh casebook. A triumph for the Red Dragon!

Indeed, the only repeated (minor) error that was revealed in this casebook, was merely failure in mathematical analysis. One TD (appeal 5) and one AC (appeal 4) did not realise that bridge is partly a statistical probabilistic game, and they fell into variations of the Monty Hall trap. (See Appendix.)

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

My personal goal for the appeals process in general is to see AC rulings improve, and in particular for AC's to make appropriate rulings in cases where the ruling is or ought to be clear. To judge whether and by how much ACs are improving matters I have concentrated on cases where the AC ruled differently than the AC did, and further where I did not think the decision was particularly close.

On four of the ten cases presented here the AC ruled as the TD did. In another I did not find enough facts to judge whether either ruling was reasonable. One decision I thought was close -- I could see ruling either way. In the remaining four cases, 3, 4, 5, and 8, while the TD decision was not always perfect, I judged that the AC worsened it each time.

This is a sad state of affairs. ACs ought to improve rulings much more often than they worsen them -- they have a smaller caseload than TDs, more time to interview the players, and more time to deliberate.

I do have some suggestions for improvement, which I've borrowed from my suggestions for the EBU last year.

The first is the continuation of these casebooks -- one cannot improve what one cannot measure. While the ACBL still has considerable room for progress, I believe the ACBL casebooks are primarily responsible for the betterment in ACBL TD and AC rulings over the past decade.

Second, I think every committee must be explicit regarding the law or law which they are applying. It's amazing how much this can achieve. This is also an effective tool for directors, and ought to be a requirement in all jurisdictions.

Gordon Bower's comments:

I am a bit concerned that my bridge judgment was so different from the committee's (in cases where I didn't think the decision was close) three times.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I believe that the WBU Appeals Committees did an outstanding job this year. In nearly every instance where a Committee came to a different conclusion to a Director, the reasoning appeared sound and understandable. The actual write-ups were also more detailed than before, although certain important facts were omitted in reporting some of the original Director's decisions.

My only other observation is that when a Committee decides to vary the original Director's ruling, the write-up should contain a reference to the applicable law.

Final summary by editor:

Generally the feeling is the ACs did well, though more explanations by TDs and ACs would be beneficial.

APPENDIX – THE MONTY HALL PROBLEM

Below are extracts from an article by Keith Devlin on the Mathematical Association of America's website. If you wish to read the complete (and very interesting) article, surf to:

http://www.maa.org/devlin/devlin_07_03.html

In the 1960s, there was a popular weekly US television quiz show called Let's Make a Deal. Each week, at a certain point in the program, the host, Monty Hall, would present the contestant with three doors. Behind one door was a substantial prize; behind the others there was nothing. Monty asked the contestant to pick a door. Clearly, the chance of the contestant choosing the door with the prize was 1 in 3. So far so good.

Now comes the twist. Instead of simply opening the chosen door to reveal what lay behind, Monty would open one of the two doors the contestant had not chosen, revealing that it did not hide the prize. (Since Monty knew where the prize was, he could always do this.) He then offered the contestant the opportunity of either sticking with their original choice of door, or else switching it for the other unopened door.

The question now is, does it make any difference to the contestant's chances of winning to switch, or might they just as well stick with the door they have already chosen?

When they first meet this problem, most people think that it makes no difference if they switch. They reason like this: "There are two unopened doors. The prize is behind one of them. The probability that it is behind the one I picked is $1/2$, the probability that it is behind the one I didn't is also $1/2$, so it makes no difference if I switch."

Surprising though it seems at first, this reasoning is wrong. Switching actually **DOUBLES** the contestant's chance of winning. The odds go up from the original $1/3$ for the chosen door, to $2/3$ that the **OTHER** unopened door hides the prize.

I think the reason the Monty Hall problem raises people's ire is because a basic ability to estimate likelihoods of events is important in everyday life. We make (loose, and generally non-numeric) probability estimates all the time. Our ability to do this says something about our rationality - our capacity to live a successful life - and hence can become a matter of pride, something to be defended.

The human brain did not evolve to calculate mathematical probabilities, but it did evolve to ensure our survival. A highly successful survival strategy throughout human evolutionary history, and today, is to base decisions on the immediate past and on the evidence immediately to hand.