



2002

APPEALS

Edited by David Stevenson

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

2002

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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.

This is the first time that appeals from the WBU have been published. 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. Many of them 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. Thanks are also due to Linda Greenland for doing most of the typing, and Richard Hills for proof-reading.

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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 Wales and England. He is the Secretary of the European Bridge League Tournament Directors' Committee, a commentator in the ACBL appeals books and a former Chief Tournament Director of the WBU. He contributes to the Australian Director's Bulletin and runs an International Bridge Laws forum.

Barry Rigal is an expatriate Englander living in New York, USA. During his UK career he won Gold Cup, Tollemache (3 times) and Spring Fours (five times), and represented UK in Camrose 6 times (6-0 record). He is a full-time Bridge player, journalist, commentator, and writer. He has been an Appeals Committee Team Leader at US Nationals for the last 3/4 years.

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 is a former Secretary of the Australian Bridge Directors Association. His competitive successes include winning five Australian Youth Bridge Championships, being Chess Champion of both Tasmania and Canberra, and winning his school's Spaghetti Eating Championship.

Fearghal O'Boyle is a European Tournament Director from Sligo, Ireland. He is heavily involved in Bridge administration in Ireland and writes a regular 'Rulings' article in the Irish Bridge Journal.

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.

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.

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.

Adam Wildavsky, 43, 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 and is a regular contributor to the Bridge Laws Mailing List. He is appeals editor for the Greater New York Bridge Association. He's won three ACBL National Championships, most recently the 2002 Reisinger Board-a-Match teams. His study of the laws is informed by his study of Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand.

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 2002 appeals.

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

2002

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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: What was he thinking about?

Tournament Director:

Anne Jones

Appeals Committee:

David Ronson (Chairman) Joe Patrick Peggy McCombie

MP Pairs Board No 6 Dealer East E/W Vulnerable	♠ JT5 ♥ AT6 ♦ KJ62 ♣ QT3	
♠ A73 ♥ 874 ♦ A4 ♣ K9874	<div><i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i></div>	♠ KQ962 ♥ J92 ♦ QT8 ♣ AJ
	♠ 84 ♥ KQ53 ♦ 9753 ♣ 652	

Contract:

4♠ by East

Play:

T1 ♠4, 3, T, Q

T2. ♦8, 5, A, 6

T3. ♦4, K, T, 3

T4. ♥6, 9, Q, 4

T5 ♠8

Result at table:

4♠ making by East, NS -620, lead ♠4

Director first called:

At the start of the next hand

Director's statement of facts:

South explained that East had hesitated at trick 4 on the lead of the ♥6, so on winning the trick South played another trump and did not cash the heart winners his side had.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

TD ruled hesitation with J92 opposite xxx was culpable, but South had no reason not to play the suit.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

David Stevenson's comments:

Suppose East had not hesitated: what would South have done? Probably played a spade! No doubt that is why the TD and AC let the result stand.

However, the chance that South would have got it right would have been increased if East had played in tempo. So I believe South was damaged – a little. Thus I feel that a ruling such as:

25% 4♠ -1 by East, NS +100
+75% 4♠ making by East, NS -620

might have been more equitable.

Barry Rigal's comments:

A fascinating opening deal.

A competent East would have responded to the director that he had a (legitimate) problem at trick 4. Which of the ♥9 and ♥J might persuade South not to continue the suit? Had he made that argument, he would have swayed me to allow his tempo break. But East is clearly not competent. Had he been he would have played on clubs, making ten or eleven tricks (win the spade in hand go to the ♦A finesse clubs, unblock, draw trumps etc). East's actual line doomed him to one down on 99.44% of the possible layouts. So my assumption is that the TD might reasonably have inferred that East's tempo-break might have led to the problem that actually materialized. East was not thinking Bridge thoughts, he was thinking unethical ones. Now we come to South's play. If North had ♥1062 he might well have led the ♥6 back. Was there any hand where East [presumably having opened 1♠ and rebid the suit or shown five spades by his opening] might go down in 4♠ -- holding e.g. KQJxx/AJ9/Qxx/xx. on a trump back declarer wins in hand and unblocks diamonds, crosses to the ♥A to pitch his heart loser on the ♦Q, and ruffs a heart for ten tricks. South knows from partner's play of the ♦K that declarer has a discard coming; so he must return a heart. His failure to lead a heart is also noteworthy.

The TD should have either let the score stand with a procedural penalty to E/W if he considered it appropriate, or adjusted the score on the basis that South's inferior defence did not break the chain.

Then the Committee could go either way here -- my instinct is to let the table result stand but I could be persuaded by colleagues with a strong opinion in the opposite direction.

Richard Hills' comments:

From South's point of view, East could have held an initial heart holding of ♥AJ9 (instead of the actual ♥J92). But in that case, leading a heart into the ♥AJ does not cost a trick – the ♥J could instead be ruffed in dummy after a pitch on the ♦Q. Therefore, I might agree with the TD that South was irrational in failing to continue hearts.

My ruling on a possible score adjustment would depend on South's ability – an average South would retain -620, a bunny South would get an adjustment to +100.

No matter whether or not the score was adjusted, merely describing East's break in tempo as "culpable" is insufficient. I would definitely impose the standard Welsh PP on East for an infraction of Law 73D1: *"players should be particularly careful in positions in which variations may work to the benefit of their side"*. It is possible that East was thinking about whether the ♥J or ♥9 was the better falsecard. Edgar Kaplan's response to that excuse was, "It is the card, not the tempo, which must deceive."

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

The write-up is sparse. The bidding might help us comment more on South's defence. Did declarer deny a 4-card heart suit? Based on the evidence provided I agree that South has earned minus 620.

Why did East hesitate? In fact I don't think there is any good bridge reason for East to hesitate. If the TD decided that East was 'culpable' then at least the E/W score should be adjusted.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the director and the committee that the result should stand, but disagree with their reasoning. South need not defend perfectly to get an adjustment if there has been an infraction. (As it happens I disagree with the bridge judgment of the committee and director. Continuing hearts could give a trick away if East has his hesitation. Switch the rounded aces for instance)

However, I think it quite likely that what really misled South was North's underlead. In other words I think it unlikely that South would have continued hearts even if East had followed in tempo.

Not that this excuses East. I trust that the appropriate action was taken.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Of course East has nothing to think over. Of course this is a reason why South misplays. That should be reason enough to warrant redress. In cases of misinformation we don't award redress when the non-offenders have done something "Wild, Gambling or Irrational". Why not apply a same standard here? I don't believe South's misplay was so bad that it breaks the link with the infraction.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The failure to continue hearts may have been an error, however this would have been clearer if the auction had been included in the write-up. Maybe the Director should have asked East what he was thinking about, although I doubt the answer would have been a 'demonstrable bridge reason'. I believe the hesitation contributed to South's decision not to continue the suit. It looks pretty close to a 73F2 adjustment to me.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

What was the auction? How can one rule without it? While I can't guess what the proper ruling might be I'll comment on write-up and the laws involved.

East's hesitation was culpable? What does that mean? Quote a law please!

If East had no bridge reason to hesitate (73D2) and if he could have known that the hesitation would be likely to damage the defenders (72B1) then he cannot be allowed to keep his result. I'm not claiming East did or did not have such a reason -- that is one issue the director and AC ought to have addressed. If that is what the director meant by culpable then he was required to adjust the E/W score, though not necessarily the N/S score.

Final summary by editor:

Judgements differ on this hand, but I am surprised I am the lone commentator recommending a weighted score adjustment.

APPEAL No 2: Hesitation Blackwood

Tournament Director:

Linda Greenland

Appeals Committee:

David Harris (Chairman) Peter Goodman Tim Rees

Swiss Teams Board no 19 Dealer South E/W vulnerable	♠ 73 ♥ AT7 ♦ JT65 ♣ 9843										
♠ AQJT86 ♥ 64 ♦ -- ♣ KQJT6	<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>		♠ 95 ♥ K83 ♦ AK873 ♣ A75
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ K42 ♥ QJ952 ♦ Q942 ♣ 2										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
			P
2♣	P	2♦	P
2♠	P	4NT	P
5♦	Dbl (A)	5♠ (H)(1)	P
6♠	P	P	P

(1) Agreed hesitation

Result at table:

6♠ making by West, NS -1430

Director first called:

After 6♠ bid

Director's statement of facts:

West bid 6♠ after questions about the double and a slow 5♠ bid by East. Director was recalled after the contract made.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

5♠ +1 by West, NS -680

Details of ruling:

The standard procedure is to rule against "Hesitation Blackwood".

Slow 5♠ = unauthorised information to West who doesn't know how many aces East has.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Basis of appeal:

Double made it more likely that the missing ace was in diamonds.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

It appears that West had taken advantage of the unauthorised information provided by East's slow 5♠ bid.

David Stevenson's comments:

These are the sort of hands where after a slow 5♠ West convinces himself that he can bid 6♠ because of his void. However, what would he have done after a brisk 5♠ signoff?

There could be two aces missing, and pass over 5♠ is a logical alternative. This is so clear that I can only assume the deposit was returned because East-West were inexperienced. Even so it might have been kept.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Presumably E/W were playing Benjaminized Acol -- otherwise the 2♣ bid looks a little etiolated! This is germane information that should have been sought out, and recorded.

In Hesitation Blackwood auctions such as here, the double of 5♦ introduces a new element; East's action is often out of tempo -- he has other things to think about. Is that enough of an excuse to ignore the tempo break? I think not, but it is closer than it might appear.

If West had made the argument more strongly that his alternative way to handle the hand was to jump to 6♦ over 4NT, and that North's double told him that his opponents had diamonds --hence his void was working, I might have believed him.

Certainly the initial TD ruling looks right; to my mind the AC also did the right thing -- though again I can see how a well-presented case might have swayed me.

Richard Hills' comments:

West seems to have a working void. On the other hand, West is missing a lot of other working cards, after having opened a game-force with shape rather than strength. The defence could have two cashing aces or the ♥AK. East's slooow 5♠ increases the chance of 6♠ being successful, so I support the TD and AC ruling.

That said, I dislike the mechanical "standard procedure" to rule against Hesitation Blackwood. Just because ruling against Hesitation Blackwood is correct 99% of the time does not mean that cases of Hesitation Blackwood should be assessed arbitrarily. The next Hesitation Blackwood case could be the 1% exception.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

I agree with the TD and AC although more information would help. Is 2♦ compulsory? Does 5♠ say anything about diamond controls?

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the director. In this case, the slow signoff clearly shows exactly two aces. Depending on the experience of the pair, some form of procedural penalty seems in order.

Herman De Wael's comments:

West has an interesting defence to his decision: He did not have time to describe his hand fully, as partner jumped to Blackwood. After responding by-the-book, he retook control in bidding slam anyway. But bridge does not work that way. If your system is not up to scratch to bid out this reasonable slam, you should not compensate by hesitating.

An interesting twist to this tale: The reason given for bidding the slam turns out not to be true. The slam makes, not because the missing Ace is the correct one, but because two finesses work. Must we really take away an advantage that comes from being lucky? Yes, we must.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I agree that North's double improves West's hand, however I still don't think that 75% of the field would ignore partner's sign off. Was the double really lead directional?

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The standard procedure may be to rule against "Hesitation Blackwood," but that's only because following the laws normally results in an adjustment. Circumstances alter cases, and one must follow the law to determine whether or not the so-called standard procedure ought to apply in this case.

Was there UI? Yes. Were there logical alternatives to the action chosen? Yes, 5♠. Did the UI demonstrably suggest the action chosen over any logical alternatives? Yes. What was the most likely result absent the illegal action? Clearly 5♠. So adjust to 5♠ for both sides.

Had the director explained the law that way perhaps the appeal could have been avoided. Certainly one hopes that the reasoning would lead the AC to conclude that the appeal had no merit. I still can't fathom what merit they found.

Final summary by editor:

A very clear case. Should the deposit have been retained?

Hesitation Blackwood is a curse. People convince themselves that they would go on, but I doubt they would continue after a brisk signoff. However, as a couple of commentators noted, each case must be scrutinised carefully to see if this is the rare case where continuing is legitimate.

APPEAL No 3: A known double fit

Tournament Director:

Liz Stevenson

Appeals Committee:

David Harris (Chairman) Anne Jones Laura Woodruff

Swiss Teams Board no 20 Dealer West All vulnerable	♠ J8763 ♥ 953 ♦ 2 ♣ AJ53										
♠ Q ♥ AQJT ♦ QT9543 ♣ K6	<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>		♠ T95 ♥ K8642 ♦ A86 ♣ T9
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ AK42 ♥ 7 ♦ KJ7 ♣ Q8742										

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

(1) Showing four spades and five clubs

(2) Agreed hesitation

Result at table:

4♠+1 by North, NS +620, lead ♥x

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

Recalled at end of hand.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

4♥-1 by East, NS +100

Details of ruling:

Pass was a logical alternative to 4♠.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit forfeited

Appeals Committee's comments:

Pass was clearly a logical alternative, especially given North's first decision to only bid 2♠ knowing that N/S had a double-fit under their specific agreements. Deposit forfeited as it is understood that the Appeals Consultant advised against appealing. There is no merit in this appeal.

David Stevenson's comments:

The only problem with this is that North might easily have bid 4♠ on the second round, and the hand is worth more than 2♠. Still, for someone who thinks 2♠ is the right bid, pass must be a logical alternative at the end so there is no doubt the ruling and appeal are right.

The only alternative could be if North was sandbagging – deliberately underbidding to try to be doubled. Not only does this look very strange on this hand and auction but presumably the report would have said so if North had claimed this as an excuse.

Barry Rigal's comments:

This sort of ruling and appeal is tough because we need to put ourselves in the mind of someone who would only bid 2♠ with the North hand. They might make the argument; "I was always going to bid 4♠ if necessary, but I wanted to buy the hand as low as possible." They might also make the argument that South's slow pass suggested extra high-cards not shape --and that this pointed to defending not bidding on (maybe partner has xxxx/A/AKx/Qxxxx and was thinking of doubling 3♥?) Also North's heart length is great on this auction --the actual developments are far from surprising,

I would not buy into those arguments. I'd support the TD and AC rulings because of the 2♠ call, but again a good presentation by North might have made me hesitate.

Richard Hills' comments:

North's initial 2♠ was a Walter the Walrus point-count gross underbid. After West's 4♥ call, Pass by North is also a gross underbid, so technically not a logical alternative. But I have a simple rule in these common situations: You cannot be wakened from a previous gross underbid by pard's hesitation.

I am glad that this WBU Appeals Committee sensibly agrees. Contrast this with an EBU Appeals Committee that allowed a player who had made a limit rebid of a 15-16 1NT to raise their pard's slooow signoff. (EBU Appeals 2002, Number 8)

Note by editor:

The EBU Appeals booklet can be found on the EBU site at:

http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws_ethics/laws_publications.htm

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

I'll stick my neck out here and disagree with the TD, the AC and the AC Consultant.

Sure Pass is a logical alternative to 4♠ but does the hesitation suggest 4♠ over Pass? I don't think it does.

Again more information would clarify matters but if we assume that South's initial Double promised an opening hand with 4 spades and 5 clubs then the hesitation doesn't really provide any additional information to North.

Also the hesitation may have been because South was thinking of doubling 3♥ in which case bidding 4♠ is definitely not suggested over Pass. I await with interest to see what I have missed.

Ron Johnson's comments:

Very well handled. I'm glad that an Appeals Consultant was available. He gave North/South the correct advice.

Herman De Wael's comments:

There is indeed no merit to this appeal.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

North knew about the double fit before he bid 2♠. Pass is an LA and the hesitation certainly makes 4♠ much easier so the ruling and adjustment seem correct. It isn't surprising that the committee kept the deposit.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Well done all around, including keeping the deposit.

I'd like to have heard from N/S. Why did they appeal?

I'd also like to see the appropriate laws cited. Even in a straightforward case like this one it helps. Suppose the case had been explained one law at a time:

1. There was UI. (73A)
2. Pass is a LA to 4♠. (16A)
3. The UI demonstrably suggested 4♠ over Pass. (16A)
4. In the absence of the illegal 4♠ call, 4♥ was the most unfavorable result for N/S that was at all probable, since I can't find a plausible defense that would allow the contract to make. That is also the most favorable result that was likely for E/W. (12C2)

I hope N/S would be less likely to appeal a ruling explained like this. If they did appeal they'd have to attack a particular link in the chain of reasoning. Were they alleging that there was no hesitation, or that there was no LA to 4♠, or did they just have money to burn?

Final summary by editor:

There are often difficulties in considering what a player would do when on an earlier round he has done something strange.

It reminds me of the story of the Welshman who was lost in Dublin so he asked a passer-by how to get to wherever he was going.

“Well now,” said the passer-by, “if I was going there I wouldn’t start from here.”

APPEAL No 4: See mum, I have an ace, I can double!

Tournament Director:

Ken Richardson

Appeals Committee:

Anne Jones (Chairman) John Glubb

Teams Match Board no 26 Dealer East All vulnerable	♠ A ♥ J93 ♦ AQ1074 ♣ Q1063										
♠ QJ763 ♥ K10652 ♦ 5 ♣ 82	<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>		♠ 984 ♥ A87 ♦ J3 ♣ J9754
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ K1052 ♥ Q4 ♦ K9862 ♣ AK										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
		P	1♦
P	2♦	P	P
3♦	5♦	Dbf	P
P	P		

Result at table:

5♦ doubled +1 by South, NS +950

Director first called:

After dummy was spread

Director's statement of facts:

The failure to alert 2♦ was the reason for West's 3♦ bid. If West had known, by an alert, that 2♦ was game forcing he would have passed. N/S subsequently asked the TD to consider whether the double of 5♦ was "wild or gambling". The director did not feel that this was the case, and was irrelevant to his ruling.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

2♦ +4 by South, NS +170

Note by editor:

This is from an international match Wales v England.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Comments by North-South:

North South accept that their score should be +170, but feel that the final double of 5♦ was wild and gambling and that East West should keep their score of -950 arising from this

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

No deposit taken

Appeals Committee's comments:

The Committee does not consider double to be wild and gambling. The action was neither.

David Stevenson's comments:

What does East know? His partner has not got enough to bid over 1♦. Of course, this could be a good hand with length in diamonds, but not once West has protected with 3♦. So West is known to be weak and distributional. East knows that diamonds are breaking, his partner is weak, and that he has one trick in defence. So why did he double?

He can be absolutely sure that 5♦ is making, barring a miracle. The only reason for doubling is that he is hoping to get a good score if the miracle occurs, and a ruling in his favour otherwise, ie it is a pure double shot attempt. In fact it is the clearest example of a double shot attempt I have ever seen.

Put it another way: the WBU standard for denying redress is if a subsequent action by the non-offenders is "wild or gambling". Well, how would you describe the double of 5♦ with no defence opposite a known weak distributional hand? Simple: it is wild **and** gambling!

No doubt the ruling and decision should have been

Score assigned for North-South:

2♦ +4 by South, NS +170

Score for East-West:

Table result stands, ie 5♦ doubled +1 by South, NS +950

Barry Rigal's comments:

Once N/S had got to 5♦ on UI, why should E/W be offered the choice of -620 or 950 as opposed to -170? E/W may have stretched on the auction but N/S committed the infraction and to my mind should have lost their deposit too.

Richard Hills' comments:

If I were the Appeals Committee, I would have voted to keep the deposit.

Note: I do not believe monetary deposits are equitable; £25 is a lot of money to one person, but a trivial amount to another person. If the deposit was instead 25 **imps**, then the international captain might have thought twice before appealing.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Perfect ruling by TD and AC and Scribe. East's double might be poor but it is not woefully bad. To be denied redress it has to be worse than woefully bad.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I guess you can't retain a deposit when you don't take one. There is no merit to this appeal. On the information East has, double may a poor call, but it's not close to wild or gambling. I'm disappointed to see an international class player (or more probably, their captain) bringing this appeal forward.

Herman De Wael's comments:

I am a bit confused here. Director and Appeal Committee are focusing on the wrong problem.

First of all, there is a case of unauthorized information. Unless this is a match with screens (not stated), North has the information that South did not alert. Should he bid 5Di with that knowledge?

Secondly, if west is told that 2Di is game forcing, yet sees South pass it, should he not believe any other explanation than that N/S are having a misunderstanding? Well, maybe he could deduce that also from his partner's pass combined with his meagre values. Which brings us to:

Thirdly, West should realize in any case how the values lie. His distribution merits some action no matter what the explanations. The only reason he has for not competing is because of the missing knowledge of the misunderstanding. And that is knowledge he is not entitled to.

But none of that seems to have been considered, or at least it is not being reported. As to the matter that was considered, I agree that the double is not "wild" or "irrational", although I would not be so quick to rule out "gambling".

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The write-up makes no mention of what the true N/S agreement is. I assume 2♦ was systemically an inverted minor raise. If this is so then the non-alert constitutes misinformation and the adjustment back to +170 is automatic. East's double was bad bridge, but I don't think it qualifies as "wild or gambling".

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

The "wild or gambling" aspect is irrelevant since East could never have scored as well against 5♦ as he would have against 2♦, whether or not he doubled.

Final summary by editor:

No deposit was taken. Some of the commentators, not realising this, said they would have kept the deposit. Whether the system of taking deposits is equitable or not, it seems unfortunate that frivolous appeals can be made in international matches because there is nothing to lose.

I am surprised that no other commentator but me thought that a double of game with one trick opposite a partner known to be weak was acceptable. Some thought it was irrelevant because E/W already had a bad score but that is contrary to the Law, and encourages the despised 'double shot'.

Unlike many sports where the double shot is legal, in bridge it is not. So if East does not have a double at all it is not acceptable to double with his hand, expecting to occasionally get a good score, and the rest of the time get an adjustment. Under WBU rules, East will now get no adjustment, though his opponents will still get their adjustment. So whether East could have done as well against 5♦ is irrelevant: all that matters is whether his double was "wild or gambling".

APPEAL No 5: Just another game bid

Tournament Director:

Ted Hill

Appeals Committee:

Jill Casey (Chairman) Irene Thomas Diana Harris

MP Pairs Board no 12 Dealer West N/S vulnerable	♠ AJ762 ♥ K ♦ A763 ♣ T52										
♠ 53 ♥ T8753 ♦ JT954 ♣ A	<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>		♠ QT ♥ AJ964 ♦ Q82 ♣ QJ6
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ K984 ♥ Q2 ♦ K ♣ K98743										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
P	1 ♠	2 ♥	3 ♠
4 ♥	P (H)	P	4 ♠
5 ♥	P	P	P

Result at table:

5 ♥ -3 by East, NS +150, lead ♠5

Director first called:

At end of hand, but before traveller opened.

Director's statement of facts:

South sacrificed in 4 ♠ after his partner's hesitation

The hesitation was agreed.

Note by editor:

Someone added the words "It was not" to the appeal form after the TD wrote "The hesitation was agreed". It is not known who did this.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

Law 16A. The TD ruled that South had a clear cut sacrifice of 4♠ because it sounded, from the bidding, that 4♥ would make (from South's hand also).

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by East-West:

Cannot see how South can think he's sacrificing. 2♥ is a weak overcall, and 4♥ should look like the sacrifice. We cannot see how South's bid of 4♠ is justified after hesitation. He's bid his hand with 3♠ and 4♠ appears to be a game bid based on the hesitation.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Unhappy with time at which director was called - this should be **before** hands are known to E/W. 4♠ bidder does not know how defensive his hand is and, at the vulnerability, most players would bid 4♠ as two-way bet.

David Stevenson's comments:

Players have a right to call the TD at the end of the hand and it is normal to do so.

South has UI from his partner's hesitation and pass looks like a logical alternative. If he thought it was worth 4♠ why did he bid 3♠ the previous round? I am surprised this was not adjusted to 4♥ -2.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Again the problem here is that South has a clear-cut drive to game facing an opening bid. Anyone who makes a limit-raise should not simply be allowed to change her mind. The tempo is significant --and here to my mind if South thought she had a limit bid the first time the only thing that made her change her mind is partner's tempo.

So the TD ruling was wrong and the AC should have ruled the other way too. The point about the TD call is a valid one but I would not allow people's ignorance of procedure to damage them from making the TD call.

Eric Landau's comments:

I see no basis for the director's judgment that South could assume from the bidding and his hand that 4♥ would make. The committee correctly states that 4♠ was a good two-way bet, and that most players would bid it, although many would have done so over 2♥. Nevertheless, South's passing out 4♥ is not an illogical action, particularly once he has chosen not to bid 4♠ on the previous round, while North's hesitation clearly suggests that bidding 4♠, rather than passing, is more likely to produce a better result for N/S than would be the case if North had passed in tempo. I would have adjusted the score to 4♥ -2, NS +100.

Richard Hills' comments:

Did the TD incorrectly assume that both sides had agreed a hesitation, when in actuality N/S disagreed that a hesitation had occurred? (N/S may have failed to press this issue **before** the appeal, since the TD had ruled in their favour.) Evidence in favour of a non-existent hesitation is that North's cards mean that North has no reason to think before passing. Did N/S and/or the TD attend the Appeals Committee hearing so that the facts could be confirmed?

However, if we postulate that the TD correctly determined that the hesitation existed, what did the hesitation demonstrably suggest? North would either Double or bid 4♠ with maximum values. Therefore, a slooow Pass suggests that North has minimum values, but shapely. So, the UI demonstrably suggests that South bid on to 4♠. (It is irrelevant that the actual North hand was not shapely.)

The Appeals Committee argued that E/W did not call the TD in a timely fashion. This is incorrect. Only if the putative infractor (South) was dummy should the TD have been called earlier. With South being a defender, E/W appropriately waited until the end of play. See the footnote to Law 16A2.

It seems that both the TD "clear cut sacrifice" and the AC "bid 4♠ as a two-way bet" were sensibly brought up on real bridge – rubber or imps – with its maxim of: *When in doubt, bid one more*. However, this case occurred in the ersatz bridge of matchpoints. In this case -420 may be a below-average score, but a vulnerable sacrifice of -500 is a bottom. At adverse vulnerability at matchpoints I would therefore rule that Pass by South is most definitely a logical alternative.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

A tough judgement problem and one best left to the AC.

Assuming the hesitation was agreed, I am not as sure as everyone else that the 4♠ bid is so clearcut. So I would have preferred to adjust to 4♥-2 and get N/S to appeal.

One the other hand, South decision not to double 5♥ means he really did believe 4♥ was cold for at least 10 tricks. Maybe hesitations suggest nothing to this class of player?

And yes - if the TD was called at the time of the hesitation or when South bid 4♠ the facts could have been agreed in an easier manner.

Ron Johnson's comments:

First point: It would take some doing to convince me that there was no agreed hesitation. Huge weight has to be placed on the director's statement of facts.

I understand the committee's unhappiness with the timing of the director call. It does look like East/West could be trying a double shot (A successful protest if the call doesn't work out). Still, a late call does not absolutely deny them redress.

I strongly disagree with the details of the director's ruling. See appeal number 3. Given that this South chose to bid only 3♠ at his first turn it seems clear to me that pass must be a logical alternative. However it is much less clear that the hesitation suggests bidding on. Could North be contemplating a double? Easily. In fact the one call that I would not permit South to make is a double, since it allows for North either having a penalty oriented hand (he'll sit) or an offensive oriented hand (he'll pull)

In other words, I agree with the final ruling(s) but the process matters.

Herman De Wael's comments:

This appeal has almost the same amount of merit as number 3.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I disagree with both the director and the committee, since I believe 'pass' to be a logical alternative for South. The E/W comments seem spot on, sacrifices at unfavourable vulnerability are rarely "clear cut". I also don't see why the timing of the director call should prejudice E/W's chances of an adjustment. It often takes players a finite amount of time to realise they have been damaged.

The interesting issue on this hand is whether the tempo break suggests bidding as opposed to defending - I think it does. Since the director and the appeals committee found there were no logical alternatives to 5♥, they unfortunately didn't need to consider what if any actions were suggested by the hesitation.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Unhappy with AC reasoning. E/W have no fewer rights at the end of the hand than they had earlier. Had they called the director earlier he would have instructed them to proceed and to call him back if necessary. The reason to call earlier is that it may be easier to establish the hesitation.

The director and AC's primary job was to establish whether or not there was a significant break in tempo over 4H. If they determined that there was then their decision ought to have been easy:

1. Was there UI? I'm presuming yes for purposes of argument.
2. Was there a logical alternative to 4S? Surely Pass was a LA.
3. Did the UI suggest 4♠ over Pass? It did. Given South's heart holding North was unlikely to have been thinking about doubling -- it's much more likely he was considering bidding 4♠ himself.
4. What was the likely result has South Passed? That's easy -- 4♥-2. That score ought to have been assigned to both sides if the hesitation could be established.

Final summary by editor:

The majority feel this should have been adjusted to 4♥-1, though one or two of the commentators are less sure what the pause indicates.

The comment of the AC was very strange. It is perfectly normal to call the TD at the end of the hand in UI cases.

APPEAL No 6: Why should I not go on?

Tournament Director:

Sarah Oliver

Appeals Committee:

Lloyd Lewis (Chairman) Mike Baker Dewi Jones

Teams Match Board No 4 Dealer West All Vulnerable	♠ 86 ♥ A753 ♦ Q10976 ♣ 52										
♠ 53 ♥ 2 ♦ AJ4 ♣ K1087643	<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>		♠ AKJ42 ♥ K8 ♦ K83 ♣ AQ9
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ Q1097 ♥ QJ10964 ♦ 52 ♣ J										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
P	P	2NT	P
4♣ (A)	P	4♠ (A)	P
4NT (H)	P	6NT	P
P	P		

Result at table:

6NT making by East, NS -1440

Director's statement of facts:

The hesitation was agreed.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

4NT +2 by East, NS -690

Details of ruling:

TD ruled that pass was a logical alternative.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by North-South:

West has passed originally so East knew the partnership had at most 32 points and maybe less. Therefore there may well be 2 missing Aces. Partner's hesitation clearly indicates that he has an Ace, since without one he would sign off easily. Pass is a logical alternative for East, and any further move must be removed from his options as suggested by the unauthorised information.

Comments by East-West:

West is marked with a long minor and one Ace – he has not made a quantitative raise so my point count is irrelevant. I have very good support for either minor and my kings are protected on the lead. I thought the worst it would come down to was the spade finesse.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

David Stevenson's comments:

This appeal has no merit whatever, and East needs the UI laws explained to him. Players just cannot go on over slow signoffs.

Barry Rigal's comments:

Correct ruling and the AC might well have considered taking the money. East had a valid point in a sense -- partner can clearly not have a long solid suit here. But 'pour encourager les autres' we have to show people that they can't bid on in auctions like that --and West has to learn to bid better (in both senses of the word)!

Richard Hills' comments:

East could have bid 6NT on the previous round of bidding, but did not. The extra round of bidding gave East no useful extra legal information, merely illegal UI. Therefore, in my opinion, the E/W appeal was totally without merit and I would have retained the deposit.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

West is the captain of this auction. The slow sign-off does convey information. The TD and the AC got it right. I wouldn't return the deposit to an experienced E/W pair.

Ron Johnson's comments:

Routine Hesitation Gerber ruling. East/West should have been advised against appealing and the deposit should have been retained.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Can anyone explain to me how the hesitation shows one ace? According to the write-up, without an ace, West would have passed. So to me, the 4NT bid shows the ace.

What is West thinking of? Passing, obviously. So the hesitation demonstrably suggests underbidding. Which East did not do.

I think the TD and the AC got this one wrong.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

Hesitation ace-asking sequences invariably imply extra values and/or controls. The adjustment back to +690 is virtually automatic. West would have done better if he have planned ahead before bidding 4♣ - he might then have found a better alternative action.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

What did 4♣ and 4♠ mean? One can scarcely make a ruling without knowing.

Final summary by editor:

A fairly incredible example of Hesitation Blackwood, ok, ok, Hesitation Gerber! When partner asks for aces and signs off quickly, players pass routinely. It is only when partner's signoff is slow that players convince themselves they have the wherewithal to progress. Hesitation Blackwood must be stamped out, and the Committee did no-one any favours by returning the deposit.

APPEAL No 7: A non-jump bid with a Stop card?

Tournament Director:

Neil Morley

Appeals Committee:

Matthew Hoskins (Chairman) Steve Foster Laura Woodruff

Swiss Pairs Board no 20 Dealer West All vulnerable	♠ J64 ♥ AK982 ♦ Q6 ♣ T76										
♠ 3 ♥ J4 ♦ J8743 ♣ QJ842	<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>		♠ AQT952 ♥ Q73 ♦ T95 ♣ 9
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ K87 ♥ T65 ♦ AK2 ♣ AK53										

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

(1) Weak

(2) Not alerted

(3) Stop card used

Result at table:

4♥ +1 by North, NS +650

Director first called:

After 3♥ bid

Director's statement of facts:

TD was called to the table at the point at which North had used the Stop Card. TD advised that UI might be available to South and that he should bid on the basis of no Stop card having been used.

TD was re-called at the end of play by East who felt that South's 4♥ was influenced by the use of the Stop card.

TD returned to the table to ascertain certain facts:

1. Was 3♥ forcing? North said it was.
2. Why was the treatment of 2NT (over Weak 2) different from 2NT directly (they play transfers)? North said she could not remember if transfers apply but 3♥ was forcing.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

3♥ +2 by North, NS +200

Details of ruling:

TD decided that UI had or may have been used. It was not clear what North-South were playing, whether 3♥ was transfer, forcing or non-forcing.

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Basis of appeal:

3♥ is forcing.

Director's comments:

This is not a regular partnership. From the TD's questions it appeared that North was not clear what the partnership agreement was.

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

- (1) North described South's range as 17+ (North has no extras above this).
- (2) North confirmed she would have moved from 2NT with a weak hand and a long heart suit.
- (3) North-South seem to have few forcing auctions.

We therefore feel the UI **is** relevant and uphold the Director's ruling.

David Stevenson's comments:

This is not as clear as most of the appeals in this booklet. Despite North claiming 3♥ was forcing the Committee seem to have investigated thoroughly.

Barry Rigal's comments:

I do not know **ANYONE** who plays 3♥ as weak to play over 2NT openings or overcalls. It is either transfer or forcing. That being so South can do what he likes. If the AC can produce one person who supports their hypothetical treatment I'd have sympathy -- but they won't be able to do so.

[Mind you 20 years ago in the Young Chelsea I had a beginner partner who did pass in that auction -- but I have not played with him since].

On that basis there was no damage, so the table result should have stood --though I would have sympathy with a TD who ruled the other way and left it up to the AC to establish the facts.

Eric Landau's comments:

South's incorrect use of the Stop card gave North the unauthorized information that South was inattentive and uncertain, but neither the director's and committee's comments nor the stated facts provide any reason to assume that the unauthorized information would have made North's 4♥ bid any more attractive than it would have been otherwise. Had North passed and 3♥ made exactly, the same comments could equally well have been used to justify adjusting the result to 4♥-1. I would have allowed the table result to stand.

Richard Hills' comments:

Once again we find that the Stop Card baffles bunnies. (EBU Appeals 2002, Number 12) I recommend that Wales joins Australia in getting rid of the Stop Card, or at the very least restrict the use of the Welsh Stop Card to experts-only events.

Note by editor:

The EBU Appeals booklet can be found on the EBU site at:

http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws_ethics/laws_publications.htm

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

The TD and AC did a good and thorough job here. Well done.

Ron Johnson's comments:

Very well done in a tricky situation. I don't actually see any merit to the appeal, but at the same time would not have wanted to retain the deposit.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Once again, the AC focuses on the wrong issues. Who cares what 2NT and 3♥ mean? There is only one infraction: unauthorized information from the use of a stop card at the wrong moment. Now what does that information indicate? I can only think of one semi-logical reason why North would think he is jumping, and that is that he is pre-empting. So if the UI suggests anything, it would be passing. Since that is not the action that South took, there seems to me no reason to change anything. North/South are in the dark, and they happen to land on their feet. Good on them.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

No one seems to have asked North why she initially used the stop card. She obviously thought she was making a jump bid. Was she trying to respond to a 1NT overcall or was she trying to bid 4♥? In either scenario she might have chosen to make a Law 25B correction. Did the director offer her this option?

The write up seems to suggest that not only the partnership, but also the players were very inexperienced. Leaving aside the Law 25B issue, South was indisputably in receipt of (via the stop card) unauthorised information. An adjustment however is only warranted if the N/S (non)agreement makes 'pass' a logical alternative for South. The committee's efforts, in order to elicit information from the appellants, suggest that it was.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Fine work by the director and the AC.

Final summary by editor:

The majority seem to accept that the AC has investigated thoroughly enough to have got the decision right, even if it rather surprising.

Incidentally, Welsh 'bunnies' do not get confused by the Stop card, which is far simpler to understand than scoring!

APPEAL No 8: Transfer break? No, I don't feel like it

Tournament Director:

Jon Seavers

Telephone Referee:

Anne Jones

MP Pairs Board No 16 Dealer West E/W Vulnerable	<p>♠ A84</p> <p>♥ 2</p> <p>♦ AKJ3</p> <p>♣ J9863</p>	
<p>♠ KJ</p> <p>♥ KQ97</p> <p>♦ Q974</p> <p>♣ A54</p>	<p><i>N</i></p> <p><i>W</i> <i>E</i></p> <p><i>S</i></p>	<p>♠ Q93</p> <p>♥ AT653</p> <p>♦ 52</p> <p>♣ Q72</p>
	<p>♠ T7652</p> <p>♥ J84</p> <p>♦ T86</p> <p>♣ KT</p>	

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

- (1) 15-17
- (2) Take-out
- (3) Question asked: "What is double?"
- (4) Long hesitation including further question re takeout double

Result at table:

4♥ making by West, NS -620,

Director first called:

At table throughout – rights reserved at the end of the auction

Director's statement of facts:

The hesitation was for over a minute and the questions asked frivolous; E/W were playing transfer breaks with any 4 card support but West chose not to. The double was described by both East and West as Penalties and then amended to invitational values and penalty orientated. N/S reserved their rights at the end of the auction and asked for a ruling at the end of play as they felt they had been damaged by the unauthorised information that East was uncertain whether to double or not.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

3♠ doubled making by South, NS +530

Details of ruling:

Laws 73C, 16A

Note by editor:

A Referee is an Appeals Committee of one.

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by East-West:

East-West feel that West's action was based on authorised information obtained in the auction

Telephone Referee's decision:

Director's ruling upheld

No deposit taken

Telephone Referee's comments:

The deposit would have been forfeit if one had been taken.

David Stevenson's comments:

Another case where a frivolous appeal seems to have been caused solely by a player not knowing what the Law requires in a UI situation.

Why was no deposit taken? Not to do so is an invitation to frivolous appeals like this one.

Barry Rigal's comments:

I agree with the TD but not the AC. Using normal judgment the West hand is deficient in spades and has the worst possible heart holding for defence and the best for offence. West could have predicted that his five points in hearts would be irrelevant on defence if North had a singleton. The removal to 4♥ is certainly clear enough that a split score or 12C3 as appropriate should have been considered, and my ruling would have been to let +620 stand for E/W.

I hate to let the offenders 'get away with it' but in real life the West hand is so packed with offence (facing a likely three-card spade suit) that the 4♥ call stands out.

Richard Hills' comments:

According to the Telephone Referee: "The deposit would have been forfeit if one had been taken."

There may be a case for automatically taking deposits, and standardisation of other appeals procedures in Wales.

There may also be a case for always using on-site appeals committees. The quality of decision-making by a local AC may initially be lower than an expert telephone referee, but eventually many expert committee-members will be educated.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

It looks like unauthorised information was transmitted from East to West and that the ruling is routine. I've seen worse appeals than this one so I wouldn't vote to keep the deposit.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the Telephone Referee's comments. Nobody would be in any doubt as to the nature of East's hand due to the nature of the questions posed. And it's pretty much always going to be a logical alternative for a limited hand to pass a penalty double.

Herman De Wael's comments:

Even an Appeal Committee of less than one person could not get this one wrong.

What is West thinking? Whatever reason can there be for bidding 4♥?

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I am sure West regrets bidding only 2♥ and without the hesitation he could have had second thoughts. East has a legal right via Law 20 to inquire whenever it is his turn to call, however the nature of these questions and the apparent indecision displayed do constitute unauthorised information to his partner.

The West hand contains reasonable defensive values and in light of the hesitation, the undisclosed heart fit is now not enough justification for West to overrule partner's penalty suggestion.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Fine work again. As for the comment "East-West feel that West's action was based on authorised information obtained in the auction" note that this is not the standard that the laws require. To adjust the score we need only demonstrate that West chose from among LAs one which was demonstrably suggested by the UI. We may never know what West based his action on, nor have we any need to know.

Final summary by editor:

Pretty clear, though opinions differ whether the appeal was bad enough to be frivolous. Whether it was or not it seems a deposit should be taken to give the Referee the option.

In a lot of these cases it seems that not enough players understand Law 73C, which says [paraphrased] that when in receipt of unauthorised information from partner a player must do his best not to take any advantage. Too many players seem to think that if a call seems reasonable then it is legal.

APPEAL No 9: Doesn't everyone protect?

Tournament Director:

Peter Hand

Appeals Committee:

David Stevenson (Chairman) Tim Rees Jim Luck

Multiple Teams Board no 15 Dealer South N/S vulnerable	♠ 8762 ♥ A987 ♦ AQT3 ♣ Q										
♠ AQ543 ♥ T ♦ K952 ♣ J83	<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>		♠ JT ♥ J652 ♦ 764 ♣ AKT7
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ K9 ♥ KQ43 ♦ J8 ♣ 96542										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
			P
P	1 ♣ (A)	P	1 ♥
Dbl	2 ♥	P (H)	P
2 ♠	P	P	P

Result at table:

2♠ making by West, NS -110

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

It was agreed that there was a slight hesitation after the 2♥ bid. Play continued and the TD was called back at the end of the hand to assess whether West should have bid 2♠.

Director's ruling:

Score assigned for both sides:

2♥ +1 by South, NS +140

Details of ruling:

Law 16A2 – having chosen to double the first time pass would be a logical alternative.

Note by editor:

Multiple Teams is called Round Robin teams in much of the world

Appeal lodged by:

East-West

Comments by East-West:

Non-Vul against Vul, with opponents subsiding in 2♥, 2♠ is a bid 75% of the room would make as partner is marked with values regardless of any hesitation.

Appeals Committee decision:

Table score re-instated

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

Authorised information gives the same information so 2♠ bid is permissible

David Stevenson's comments:

I agree with the Committee – well I would, wouldn't I? It is just a simple judgement case: is 2♠ a bid that at least seven in ten people would find? We thought so.

Barry Rigal's comments:

The TD gave the right ruling here. But the AC wrongly put themselves into West's shoes when they said that there was AI to allow them to bid 2♠. The correct perspective is to ask why they would take a second call on a sequence where their partner had had the opportunity to bid their own hand and neglected to. West must pass 2♥ and blame himself (for not bidding 1♠ then doubling) or East for not acting himself directly.

Eric Landau's comments:

This case is similar to #5. Although 2♠ is a normal bid which most players would make, passing out 2♥ is not an unreasonable choice, and East's hesitation made it more likely that West's 2♠ bid would work out well for E/W. I would have upheld the director's ruling, adjusting the result to 2♥+1 by South.

Richard Hills' comments:

I disagree with the logic of the Appeals Committee. East's hesitation gave West UI that N/S were not underbidders. I have seen many Biltcliffe Coups in my time; thanks to East's pause, West knew that the downside risk of pushing the opponents into a making game was unlikely to exist.

Biltcliffe Coup: The opponents stop in a partscore, you balance, the opponents now bid to game, you double and the opponents make. (Coined by David Bird in his excellent Monks of St Titus series - named after the eponymous Brother Biltcliffe, who performed the coup three times in a single match.)

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Another tough judgement case.

I applaud both the TD decision to rule against E/W and the AC decision to rule for E/W. Having an AC take a closer look at close judgement rulings is no bad thing. Maybe the AC got it right - certainly in expert circles not many West's would Pass 2♥.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I agree with the director's ruling – at least in the abstract. To me pass is a clear logical alternative (I would pass) and the hesitation suggests bidding on. But that's a matter of bridge judgment and the committee did get a chance to talk to West. I could see myself being convinced that pass was not a logical alternative for West.

Herman De Wael's comments:

I would be mightily surprised if this Appeal Committee would make an error.

I am not surprised.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

The prior auction marks East with the values he possesses. This information is available with or without East's "slight hesitation" and therefore 2♠ is not an infraction.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

(The editor tells me that 1♣ likely showed an opening hand with no five-card suit outside of clubs.)

If the committee wants us to accept their reasoning they must go into more detail. I find their contention unsupportable.

What does the authorized information show? It depends on the N/S style, which ought to be described. N/S will usually hold eight hearts between them but could hold seven. North is unlikely to hold more than 14 HCP and South is unlikely to hold more than 10 HCP. So N/S hold at most 24 HCP -- I'll give the AC the benefit of the doubt and reduce that to 23 HCP, and also assume that N/S hold eight hearts between them. That means E/W hold at least 17 HCP, giving East at least 7 HCP and at most four hearts. Without the UI East might hold something like xxx KQxx xxx Qxx -- after East hesitates that's no longer a possibility.

I would rule as the director did. I hate to see decisions like this where the AC overrules a perfectly good director ruling. It gives ACs a bad name and must be discouraging to the TD as well.

Final summary by editor:

Whether the Committee was right or not TDs are taught that being over-ruled casts no doubts on their abilities. This was a straight bridge decision, and the commentators disagree as did everyone else who discussed it at the time.

APPEAL No 10: Give partner a choice

Tournament Director:

Chris Rochelle

Appeals Committee:

Tim Rees (Chairman) Mike Baker Jim Luck

Swiss Teams Board no 36 Dealer West All vulnerable	♠ J64 ♥ 873 ♦ 9 ♣ KJ7532										
♠ Q75 ♥ A642 ♦ A863 ♣ Q4	<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>		♠ T93 ♥ KJT95 ♦ KQT7 ♣ 6
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ AK82 ♥ Q ♦ J754 ♣ AT98										

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

Result at table:

3♥ making by West, NS -140

Director first called:

After 3♥ bid

Director's statement of facts:

The TD was called to table after a slow double was pulled to 3♥. He ruled that West with a minimum hand opposite a partner who could not proceed over 2♥ would play in a 5/4 fit rather than defend 2♠ doubled.

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

All information available in the authorised auction

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

Deposit returned

Appeals Committee's comments:

West has 4 card support for partner, so it seems clear to support him. East is offering a choice of 2♠ doubled, 3♥ or 3♦. East will not have 4♠, so the 3♥ bid is clear.

The deposit was returned, but only just!

David Stevenson's comments:

This all seems reasonable. West might just gamble a pass at Pairs, but at Teams it seems too dangerous a position.

Barry Rigal's comments:

I like the TD decision here; partner has passed out 2♥ so defending to 2♠ will not get E/W rich. With four hearts and a minimum West has a clear-cut removal and the deposit **SHOULD** have been withheld. Comments like the one in the text implies the AC should have taken the money -- and they knew it!

By the way, where was North in this auction? Anyone for 4♣?

Richard Hills' comments:

I disagree with both the TD and the AC – I would have adjusted to 2♠x +670.

Suppose the layout was thus:

	♠2 ♥KQJ ♦JT975 ♣JT92	
♠ Q75 ♥ A642 ♦ A863 ♣ Q4	<i>N</i> <i>W</i> <i>E</i> <i>S</i>	♠JT98 ♥T8753 ♦K ♣A87
	♠AK643 ♥9 ♦Q42 ♣K653	

Now East would Double in tempo, West would “guess” to leave the Double in, scoring +500 versus 2♠x instead of a minus score playing in 3♥.

The “only just” comment by the AC on the return of the deposit is poor. In my opinion, deposits should always be returned when a non-offending side appeals against a TD decision permitting the UI-assisted removal of a penalty double. (In my more radical opinion, players should be actively ethical by routinely passing their partners’ slooow penalty doubles.)

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Have E/W any agreements about the 2♥ bid? Is double invitational but penalty oriented?

On the evidence presented the TD made a good decision and the AC agreed. I don't think the appeal is frivolous.

Ron Johnson's comments:

I know I would disagree with this ruling at pairs. And I don't see

- a) why East can't have 4 spades
- b) why it would be a requirement for West to want to defend

Still, it is teams, East's hand is limited by the pass of two hearts so it can't be a pure penalty double. I agree (just!) that a pass is not a logical alternative. I strongly disagree that this is an appeal without merit.

Herman De Wael's comments:

It does seem logical to assume that the double is asking for co-operation, so the hesitation does not carry any additional information.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

East's double implies general values and West makes the obvious call. I can't see any infraction and hence there is no adjustment.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Good rulings by the director and the AC.

Final summary by editor:

The commentators seem to suggest that this was slightly closer than the AC thought.

APPEAL No 11: What does strong mean?

Tournament Director:

Ken Richardson

Appeals Committee:

Peter Garner-Gray (Chairman) John Salisbury Peter Hand

Multiple Teams Board no 16 Dealer West E/W vulnerable	♠ T874 ♥ A53 ♦ J974 ♣ 74										
♠ AQJ ♥ JT97 ♦ KQ82 ♣ KQ	<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>		♠ 532 ♥ 862 ♦ 63 ♣ 108653
	<i>N</i>										
<i>W</i>		<i>E</i>									
	<i>S</i>										
	♠ K96 ♥ KQ4 ♦ AT5 ♣ AJ92										

<i>WEST</i>	<i>NORTH</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>SOUTH</i>
1NT	P	P	Dbl
P	2♦	P	P
P			

Result at table:

2♦ -1 by North, NS -50

Director first called:

At end of auction

Director's statement of facts:

The TD was called at the end of the auction by North who claimed he had a mis-explanation of the opponents' system. The opening 1NT bid had been described as strong, but was in fact 14-17. North felt this was an inadequate explanation. The TD said the hand would have to be played out, and North should call him back at the end of the hand if he was unhappy. The TD was called back, and North asked to appeal the ruling. The TD said he hadn't given a ruling yet, would he like one now?

Director's ruling:

Table result stands

Details of ruling:

It is the responsibility of players to establish certain basic facts at the start, N/S also had copies of E/W convention cards, and the TD felt that describing 14-17 NT as "strong" was reasonable, so result would stand – any damage was self inflicted.

Note by editor:

Multiple Teams is called Round Robin teams in much of the world

Appeal lodged by:

North-South

Basis of appeal:

Inadequate explanation

Appeals Committee decision:

Director's ruling upheld

No deposit taken

Appeals Committee's comments:

Appeal committee was unanimous that the range of 1NT fell into the category that the opponents had a duty to know. In addition they felt that strong was a reasonable description of 14-17 and that to assume 14-17 was weak was somewhat eccentric.

David Stevenson's comments:

So three members of an Appeals Committee, one Director, two opponents and all the commentators in this booklet have to waste their time because N/S got a poor score and are inventing some excuse to persuade their team-mates it was not their fault.

Whoever decided not to take a deposit in this case is making a mockery of the Appeals system.

Barry Rigal's comments:

North should have had his deposit (and some vital part of his anatomy) removed. Such blatant lawyerly pettifoggery is disgusting. With a clear-cut pass whatever the meaning of the NT bid North is trying to get his own back in committee what his inability to think at the table prevented him from doing the first time. String him up!

Richard Hills' comments:

I agree that there should be no adjustment. I fail to see how N/S could possibly have been damaged. As for North's apoplexy at a mere 14-17 range being described as "strong", I charitably assume that North is a recently retired Rear Admiral, accustomed to everything being bid in a ship-shape and Bristol fashion.

Fearghal O'Boyle's comments:

Good TD decision. Good AC decision. Good write-up.

North was lucky that no deposit was taken.

Ron Johnson's comments:

Again, you can't retain a deposit if you don't get it in the first place. This appeal is utterly without merit and North/South should have been advised of this.

Herman De Wael's comments:

What does "no deposit taken" mean? Does it mean "we don't want to keep your deposit because we like you but we don't want to seem silly to the rest of the world by not keeping your deposit"? In which case I agree with the Appeal Committee. Sometimes an AC needs to educate. This is probably one such case.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

Ascertaining the opponent's NT range at the commencement of a match is a bit like confirming their minimum suit opening requirements - it saves a lot of potential problems later.

This appeal has no real merit. If a single HCP made such a difference to N/S then they needed to inquire. The phrase "inadequate explanation" should be replaced with "inadequate self-protection". Pity a deposit wasn't taken - and kept. The only noteworthy aspect is that West actually possesses 18 HCP for his 14-17 1NT!

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

I can't believe that the description N/S were given was misinformation. Supposing it was, though -- what would N/S have done differently had they known openers' range?

Final summary by editor:

A total waste of everyone's time. I hope whoever decided not to take a deposit has realised what the effect was.

Since the WBU Laws & Ethics Committee has decreed that deposits are always to be taken perhaps it would not be unreasonable to ask that in the occasional case where no deposit is taken the TD explains why not on the Appeal form?

FINAL COMMENTS

David Stevenson's comments:

In three cases no deposit was taken. Two of them had no merit whatever, and there was a total waste of time for a lot of people. So why was no deposit taken?

In only one case did the Appeals Committee overturn the Director's ruling. There were a few others where I feel they easily might have, but in only one case do I feel the Director and Appeals Committee have completely lost their way – allowing redress after the clearest wild or gambling case ever.

Overall, the only really worrying element is the number of frivolous or possibly frivolous appeals.

Eric Landau's comments:

I have reviewed the WBU appeals for 2002, and I am impressed! Either you have unusually strong directors and committees in Wales, or they had an especially good run last year. In eight of the 11 cases you sent, I found myself totally in agreement with the committee (which upheld the director's ruling in all eight cases), and have no comment. There were three cases in which I felt that on the (admittedly somewhat sparse) facts given I'd have voted opposite to the committee's decision. In two of them, my opinion may have been influenced by my ACBL-centric tendency to be relatively liberal in judging what may constitute a "logical alternative action" for a player who has received unauthorized information.

Richard Hills' comments:

Overall I agreed with the decisions of the TDs and ACs. In one case I believed that the AC ruled better than the EBU AC in a parallel case did.

I was disappointed with the AC judgements of the effects of UI in Appeal 5, Appeal 9 and Appeal 10. In my opinion, each time the AC appeared not to have completely analysed all the issues.

Appeal 5 seemed to me to have too many unresolved questions in its write-up. What the AC did resolve was to make a strong but unlawful statement on when to call the TD. Was the AC's statement a personal view, or was it based on a Welsh regulation? If the latter, will the WBU modify the regulation so the reg becomes consistent with the Laws?

Ron Johnson's comments:

I am surprised by the number of appeals with absolutely no merit. Feel free to include this or not.

I've long felt that a little pamphlet should be made available to those contemplating an appeal to an unauthorized information ruling. Something that lays out in plain language the obligations under the Laws. With examples. This hand would make a splendid example. The 4♠ call may well have been the best call, and the call that would have been chosen had South passed in tempo. But it's simply not permitted.

Laurie Kelso's comments:

I found many of these quite difficult to comment upon since the information in the original write-ups was in some cases quite minimal.

Adam Wildavsky's comments:

Of the 11 cases the AC ruled as the director did in 10. That's a sign that many unnecessary appeals are being heard. In my judgement the ACs ought to have found many of these appeals without merit. In cases where no deposit is taken there ought to be some other risk attached to an appeal, if only an official warning as in the ACBL. A screening process might also help, as would including player's names in the casebook.

Another way to reduce the number of appeals would be to correct what I believe to be a unfortunate interpretation of the law by the EBU, which has been followed by the WBU. That is the "three in ten" standard for Logical Alternatives. Look at the E/W contention in case nine, that 75% of players would balance over 2H. While the AC did not rule on that basis they might have under present regulations. Even if it is true that most players would bid, the call would have an element of danger that is no longer present once partner hesitates. Pass would not be absurd – in fact it would be right quite often. The present standard claims that an action that would be taken by 25% of the field is illogical. That in itself makes little sense, but it also means that one time in four E/W will gain an advantage to which they are not entitled.

Looking at it another way, suppose East passed in tempo, perhaps with most of his points in hearts. If West then passed N/S would have no recourse. Allowing pairs to gain through their hesitations can only encourage further hesitations -- none of us would like to see the game played that way.

The WBF Code of Practice uses the following definition -- I believe it expresses the intent of the authors of Law 16:

"A 'logical alternative' is a different action that, amongst the class of players in question and using the methods of the partnership, would be given serious consideration by a significant proportion of such players, of whom it is reasonable to think some might adopt it."

Final summary by editor:

Frivolity seems the main issue here!

Adam makes comments about what is a logical alternative, citing case nine. If this had been an ACBL appeal, I am sure we would have made a different decision, since pass instead of 2♠ is a logical alternative in North America, but not in Wales.

But he then quotes the Code of Practice, with its phrase 'significant proportion'. Wales does follow this definition, but has a different interpretation as to how many people constitutes a significant proportion. While there is no problem with commentators airing their personal views in this booklet, I cannot remember the time that the interpretation of Logical Alternative in Wales and England was challenged by anyone from those countries. I think we are happy with it!

I do like Ron's idea of a simple UI pamphlet.