

Appeal #	Issue	Event
GCC-01	Misinformation	Gold Coast Congress Seniors' Pairs
Stage	Round	Date
Final	3	2014-02-23
CTD	L. Kelso	
Committee	B. Neill (c), T. Brown, M. Wilkinson	
Scribe	S. Yuen	

Board 16
Dealer W
Vul EW
Scoring Matchpoint pairs

North

♠ QJT3
 ♥ KJT873
 ♦ 62
 ♣ 3

West

♠ 98
 ♥ 64
 ♦ AKJ7
 ♣ QJT75

East

♠ K64
 ♥ Q5
 ♦ T853
 ♣ AK42

South

♠ A752
 ♥ A92
 ♦ Q94
 ♣ 986

West	North	East	South
Pass	2D(1)	Pass	2S
2NT(2)	Pass	3C	Pass
Pass	3H	Pass	3S
Pass	Pass	4C	4S
Pass	Pass	Double	All pass

- (1) Weak, both majors
- (2) Agreed as showing both minors; not alerted

Trick*	West	North	East	South
1	♦ <u>A</u>	x	x	x
2	♦ <u>K</u>	x	x	x
3	♣ <u>Q</u>	x	x	x
4	♦ T	♥ 3	x	<u>Q</u>
5	8	Q	<u>K</u>	♠ 2

* Some uncertainty as to the order of play for the first four tricks; see respondents' case

Table result	4Sx-1 by South, NS -100
Director's ruling	NS: 4Sx-1 by South, NS -100 EW: 4Sx= by South, NS +590
Committee's ruling	NS: 4Sx-1 by South, NS -100 EW: 4Sx= by South, NS +590

The Director: Was called to the table at the end of play. The players agreed that the 2NT bid had not been alerted, but East-West had the systemic agreement that it showed both minors. As South believed the 2NT bid to be natural, she placed the spade king with West, and consequently chose not to take the spade finesse.

The Director considered that general bridge knowledge for a player of South's standard would include the fact that 2NT was very likely to be unnatural in this position from a passed hand. Further, the play of the first tricks had established substantial values in the West hand, and it was naïve to expect West as a passed hand to also hold cover in the majors.

The Director ruled that North-South had been damaged by the misinformation (Law 12B1), and thus adjusted the result (Law 47E2b, Law 12C1) for East-West to 4Sx by South, NS +590.



However, the Director also ruled that subsequent to the infraction, South contributed to **their own** damage through a serious error (Law 12C1b); namely, not being aware of West's original pass. The table result was therefore allowed to stand for North-South, 4Sx-1 by South, NS -100.

The appellants: Argued that, while South had simply not been aware that West was a passed hand, declarer was entitled to assume that the bid was natural after it had not been alerted, and should not be required to ask or to "work it out". South stated that she never asks if a bid is not alerted, as she believes it is not necessary.

At the hearing, South also noted that West had, by trick 5, shown only the diamond ace and king and the club queen. Adding the spade king to that would only bring the hand to a total of 12 points, on which South believed some players may have chosen to pass.

The respondents: Believed that South should have been aware of West's original pass. West also queried the reported order of play, believing that the first tricks had been DK (count), CQ (overtaken with the CA), a diamond return and a third diamond. However, little turned on this, and all players agreed that declarer led a small spade from hand at trick 5.

The appeals committee: Confirmed that East-West did have an agreement about the nature of the 2NT bid; this was strengthened by their agreement that 2NT by an unpassed West hand in this auction would also show a two-suited hand. The committee also confirmed that no questions were asked about either the 2NT or the 3C bid prior to play.

The committee agreed that, on the assumption that West had the spade king, declarer's play at trick 5 was reasonable — crossing to dummy in hearts to take the spade finesse might have exposed declarer to a ruff, and ruffing the third diamond in dummy to take the spade finesse may have been problematic if spades had broken 4-1.

The committee's discussion therefore focused on the question of whether being unaware of West's original pass was a serious error. The committee noted that the non-alerted, non-forcing 3C bid and the final double of 4S were both consistent with the layout South had in mind — for example, playing 3C as natural and non-forcing over a strong balanced 2NT bid would be reasonable as North had shown both majors. It was observed, however, that both actions were sufficiently unusual that they might have prompted South to reconsider the auction and realise that West had passed originally.

South was an experienced player who had, for example, previously qualified for Stage II of the Australian National Championship Open Butler Pairs. Ultimately, the committee decided that it was a serious error for a player of South's standard to have been unaware of the entire auction, including West's original pass, particularly when reinforced by other elements such as the unusual non-forcing 3C bid in response to what South believed to be a strong balanced hand.

The committee therefore allowed the Director's ruling to stand: for North-South, 4Sx-1 by South, NS -100; for East-West, 4Sx= by South, NS +590. The appeal was also found to have merit.