Appeal No. 2
Russia v South Africa

Appeals Committee:
Jean-Paul Meyer (Chairman, France), Rich Colker (Scribe, USA), Jim Kirkham (USA), Dan Morse (USA), Mario Reis (Portugal)

Bermuda Bowl, Round Robin

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vulnerable.

	♠ ---	
	♡ 8	
	♢ K Q 9 6 5 2	
	♣ Q J 7 6 4 3	
♠ A 9 6 5		♠ 10 8 7 2
♡ J 10 6 3		♡ A K Q 9 4 2
♢ A 10 7 3		♢ ---
♣ A		♣ 10 9 2
	♠ K Q J 4 3	
	♡ 7 5	
	♢ J 8 4	
	♣ K 8 5	

West	**North**	**East**	**South**
C. Castelein	*A. Gromov*	*A. Hughes*	*A. Dubinin*
	1♡	1♠	3♠
Pass	4♡	All Pass	

Comments: Three spades was Alerted on both sides of the screen. East explained the bid to North as a splinter. South did not inquire about the bid during the auction and West initially said nothing. When the auction ended West volunteered to South that he had intended 3♠ as a hand too good for 2♠ with slam interest and a spade control (the ace), but after now believed they played as a splinter.

Contract: 4♡ by East.

Result: Made four, +420 for E/W.

The Facts: North called the Director after play ended when he discovered the different explanations of the 3♠ bid on the two sides of the screen. He noted that although splinters were noted on E/W's convention cards they did not indicate in which auctions they applied, and thus were not evidence that they applied in this auction. In fact, East's signoff in 4♡ seemed to be evidence that E/W did not have an agreement to play splinters here (else East would have cue-bid 4♢). North said if he knew West had shown a spade control -- and thus length rather than shortness -- he would have placed South with fewer spades and more minor-suit cards, and thus bid 4NT for the minors and found the good save against E/W's game.

The Director: The Director noted that splinters were listed in two places on the E/W convention cards, both E/W players (eventually) explained 3♠ as a splinter, and jump cue-bids are almost universally played as splinters in auctions like this one.

Ruling: Table result stands.

Relevant Laws: Laws 40 and 75

Appellants: North/South

Present: All four players and both team captains.

The Players: North reiterated what he told the Director at the table, adding that he believed East's action, by bidding 4♡ over 3♠ when any other player in the event would have cue-bid 4♢, indicated that E/W did not have an agreement that 3♠ was a splinter. Thus, he believed he had been misinformed and should be allowed to find the good save in five of a minor.

East said he had minimal high cards for his opening bid (9 HCP) and thought West needed to be able to make another slam try over 4♡ before he would be justified in cue-bidding for slam.

The Committee: The Committee was convinced, for precisely the same reasons the Director mentioned, that this partnership played 3♠ as a splinter. This was especially likely given that both E/W players, despite West's initial confusion, independently explained the bid as a splinter.

The Committee's decision: The Committee upheld the Director's ruling and allowed the table result to stand. The Committee also discussed the merits of this appeal; some members believed strongly that this appeal should not have been brought.

Deposit: Returned