

Report of the independent committee examining the incidents concerning the accusation and conviction of cheating of Dr. E. Wladow and Dr. M. Elinescu

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A) Preliminary

For internal review and assessment in terms of bridge judgment concerning the accusation of cheating by the WBF against Dr. Entscho Wladow and Dr. Michael Elinescu in the final of the seniors' world championship in Bali 2013, the DBV launched an internal commission after the weekend 05./06.04.2014. The commission's members are Christian Schwerdt, Joerg Fritsche, Peter Jokisch, Michael Gromoeller und Wolf Stahl.

The subsequent material was provided to the commission by the German Seniors' Team Captain Kareen Schroeder or it was available in the web:

1. Hand-records and partially the bidding and play of all boards of the seniors' championship from WBF webpage and bbo-archive;
2. videos on YouTube of segment 5 of the final Germany - USA. Those videos contain full recordings of boards 1, 2 and 5-16; boards 3 and 4 are missing.

In the videos can be seen Dr. Wladow from the front, Dr. Elinescu from the right rear, Mr. Bates from the rear and Mr. Hayden from the front;

3. the official convention card of Dr. Wladow - Dr. Elinescu;
4. the record of Bertrand Gignoux from Cavendish 2013 in Monaco;
5. the records of segments 5 and 6 by Mrs. Donna Compton, Captain of the USA team;
6. an EXCEL-file with comments of not unequivocally identified german bridge players as to details of the videos;
7. the report of the WBF hearing.

During the course of the investigation Mrs. Kareen Schroeder provided the commission with additional material by e-mail:

8. on April 16th an answer to the question, whether a video is available for segment 6 (no, recording was stopped at beginning of segment 6);
9. on April 22nd a meticulous documentation of the videos by Bernhard Bussek including his own interpretation of his observations;
10. on April 26th an e-mail by Dr. Wladow and Helmut Haeusler, containing an hardly commented attachment of the description - author was US top player Kit Woolsey - of an appropriate method to investigate possible cheating. Those files and the corresponding boards can be found on public web at bridgewinners.com. At that time the commission already had knowledge of those documents.

The commission investigated from April 06th to May 1st using the following methods:

1. study of all the files;
2. repeated viewing of all the videos by all members of the commission;
3. examination of all the boards played by Dr. Wladow - Dr. Elinescu in the quarter final against Indonesia, the semifinal against France and the final against the USA. In addition control samples were taken of round robin matches where this pair was playing;
4. consultations with experts (personal friends) concerning the medical aspects of coughing;
5. regular discussions by e-mail and phone.

The goals of the investigation were:

1. getting an own clear-cut impression of possibly unauthorized information passed during both the bidding and play by analyzing the videos;
2. detecting abnormalities in terms of bridge judgement by examining all the boards of the knock-out phase played by the pair;
3. thus striving for an profound estimation as to whether Dr. Wladow – Dr. Elinescu used forbidden communication during the seniors' world championship 2013 in Bali.

B) Report of 5 different issues

I) Coughing in the videos

In the videos the commission detected coughing abnormalities as follows:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| - one cough | ➤ short ♣ |
| - two coughs | ➤ short ♦ |
| - one cough, another cough when pushing the tray | ➤ short ♥ |
| - two coughs, another two coughs when pushing the tray | ➤ short ♠ |
| - four coughs | ➤ short ♠ |
| - no cough | ➤ no shortage |

As to the 16 (14) boards the following results were reached:

♥-shortage in boards 1 / 5 / 7 / 10 / 13:

- one cough, another cough when pushing the tray, were done in all the 5 boards with ♥-shortage;

♣-shortage in boards 6 / 16:

- one cough was done in both boards with ♣-shortage;

♦-shortage in boards 10 / 12:

- two coughs were done in both boards with ♦-shortage;

♠-shortage in boards 2 / 8 / 11 / 12:

- four coughs were done in board 2 and 12 with ♠-shortage;

- four coughs were done before the lead in board 11 - ♠-lead;

- two coughs, another two coughs when pushing the tray, were done in board 8;

balanced distribution North, Dr. Elinescu: boards 2/6/8/9/11/14/15/16

- in all 8 boards not a singleton cough by him;

balanced distribution South, Dr. Wladow: boards 1/5/7/9/11/13/14/15

- in 7 boards no cough by him;

- in board 11 five coughs by him.

The cough-abnormalities corresponded nearly 100 percent to the distribution of the respective board.

Dr. Wladow and Dr. Elinescu did cough as declarer or dummy now and then. We don't see this fact as being particularly relevant and certainly not as proof in the direction that coughing during the bidding does not mean shortage.

Thus the commission established:

1. each player coughed in each hand where he had a shortage;
 - a) coughs for ♣- and ♦-shortage were without ambiguity;
 - b) ♥-shortage was always accompanied by a 1+1-cough with a time lag of 10 seconds up to 145 seconds between cough 1 and cough 2;
 - c) in boards with two shortages in one hand (10 and 16) both players only coughed for one shortage.

2. There weren't any coughs during bidding in boards with no shortage;

exception: Board 11, where Dr. Wladow coughed five times during the bidding having no shortage. This happened only after the tray was on his side for the 2nd time (and thus is probably meaningless).

3. At different instances each player coughed more than once:
 - a) in board 8 Dr. Wladow coughed twice during the bidding, after he had presumably already coughed his ♠-shortage and then bid a 5-5-hand with ♥ and a minor. His minor was ♦, which might correlate with coughing twice. This is the only observation as to this matter where it is conceivable that coughing showed length instead of shortage;
 - b) all other coughing occurred after the times of the recognized code transmission and thus presumably didn't affect it;
 - c) coughs directly before the lead happened in board 11 (four coughs and ♠ was led).

II) Other movements noticed in the available videos

The video of segment 5 of the final shows peculiarities concerning the movements of Dr. Wladow at the table.

Very often he takes his cards out of the board with lightning speed while the screen is still open. Wiping movements over the table are noticeable when his hand is very weak (boards 2 / 7 / 12). No "wiping" in other boards.

Lastly those gestures were too varied with too few boards available to regard them. The commission thus sees no sufficient proof as to unauthorized communication in this manner.

However all this conduct is certainly not proper and even if may not be connected with the code transmission it is extremely impolite and unworthy for a german international player. In the regarded video sequences no behavior of opponents could be detected which might in any way justify such a behavior by Dr. Wladow.

III) Report of Bertrand Gignoux from Monaco

The commission could not evaluate the report as there were no videos of the event. The report of Mr. Gignoux can however be seen as supporting the view that codes were transmitted.

IV) Results of consultations with a bridge-playing physician as to the medical classification of the coughing observed in the videos:

A nervous cough happens suddenly and unexpectedly and is mostly accompanied by body reactions - like a red head, leaning forward/nodding, twitching etc. Often the coughing is prolonged, a coughing attack repeats itself several times and is hard to stop.

Psychological or nervous coughs go in the same direction, however a trigger has to be there, something unexpected happens - bad distribution, strange bidding, someone drops something. Thus there is always an incident or a moment of shock or some trying to bridge ones amazement with some kind of displacement activity (scratching ones head, putting something on or coughing).

Anyone can imitate a hem or a slight cough without body reaction however, which thus can potentially be used to deceive.

V) Analysis of the boards from quarter- and semifinal without video material

Mr. Kit Woolsey of the USA stated on April 15th 2014:

"If one is going to look at the hands as evidence of cheating, it is meaningless to choose selected hands. Any good player or pair will take some unorthodox actions which succeed, particularly if they are having a good tournament. If you choose the right hands, you could make a strong case that any pair is cheating. In order to do it properly, one must look at all the hands."

Kit Woolsey is absolutely right. The ideal systematical approach to find a pair guilty of cheating would be to view everything from the very beginning.

Lacking that the commission was left to view and classify the actually available video material.

Nevertheless the commission did also inspect all boards from the quarterfinals of the championship on, examining the bidding, the leads and declarer play and the defense. Video records not being available the commission was not able to fully reconstruct what really happened at the table.

During this process some deals where possibly illicit communication took place attracted our attention. Some of the actions taken were seen to be unusual, some of them very unusual:

Quarterfinal against Indonesia

Seg. 3 / Bd.16, Teiler: W, Gefahr: O/W

	♠ KB10964 ♥ D3 ♦ A7 ♣ 1075		
♠ D8732 ♥ 10764 ♦ 10 ♣ B92	N W O S	♠ A5 ♥ AB82 ♦ D43 ♣ K643	
	♠ ♥ K95 ♦ KB98652 ♣ AD8		
West	Nord	Ost	Süd
	<i>Dr. Elinescu</i>		<i>Dr. Wladow</i>
Pass	1♠	X	XX
2♥	2♠	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♠**	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Knowledge of a north hand without a shortage might have prompted South's decision to bid 6♦ on his own.

Seg. 4 / Bd. 22, Teiler: O, Gefahr: O/W

<p>♠ 102 ♥ A10 ♦ AB1073 ♣ AD87</p>	<p>♠ 43 ♥ 74 ♦ 854 ♣ KB5432</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">N</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">W</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">O</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">S</div> </div>	<p>♠ K865 ♥ KB95 ♦ D96 ♣ 109</p> <p>♠ ADB97 ♥ D8632 ♦ K2 ♣ 6</p>	
West	Nord <i>Dr. Elinescu</i>	Ost	Süd <i>Dr. Wladow</i>
<p>2♦ 3♠ Pass</p>	<p>Pass Pass Pass</p>	<p>Pass 3♦ 3SA</p>	<p>1♠ Pass Pass</p>

A possible single cough by North might have induced the lead of the ♣6.

Seg. 5 / Bd.2, Teiler: O, Gefahr: N/S

<p>♠ D84 ♥ 7 ♦ 98765 ♣ B1064</p>	<p>♠ 7 ♥ K93 ♦ AKD3 ♣ 87532</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">N</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">W</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">O</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">S</div> </div>	<p>♠ AKB106532 ♥ AB2 ♦ 2 ♣ A</p> <p>♠ 9 ♥ D108654 ♦ B104 ♣ KD9</p>	
West	Nord <i>Dr. Elinescu</i>	Ost	Süd <i>Dr. Wladow</i>
<p>Pass Pass</p>	<p>4♥ Pass</p>	<p>1♣* 6♠</p>	<p>2♥ Pass</p>

A possible double cough by North might have induced the lead of ♦-J.

Semifinal against France

Seg. 5 / Bd.7, Teiler: S, Gefahr: alle

♠ KB73
 ♥ K95
 ♦ KD
 ♣ K985

♠ A4
 ♥ 1042
 ♦ A652
 ♣ AD64

N
 W O
 S

♠ D10652
 ♥ DB7
 ♦ 9
 ♣ B1032

♠ 98
 ♥ A863
 ♦ B108743
 ♣ 7

West	Nord	Ost	Süd
	<i>Dr. Elinescu</i>		<i>Dr. Wladow</i>
1♦	X	1♠	Pass
1SA	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♦

Knowledge of a north hand without a shortage might have influenced South's decision to play in a suit first bid by the opponents.

Seg. 6 / Bd.24, Teiler: W, Gefahr: keiner

♠ A854
 ♥ 8765
 ♦ 7
 ♣ B954

♠
 ♥ D3
 ♦ KD86432
 ♣ D763

N
 W O
 S

♠ KB1097
 ♥ AB92
 ♦ B10
 ♣ 108

♠ D632
 ♥ K104
 ♦ A95
 ♣ AK2

West	Nord	Ost	Süd
	<i>Dr. Elinescu</i>		<i>Dr. Wladow</i>
3♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

It is highly unusual to pass with 16 HCP in 4th position.

Final against USA2

Seg. 3 / Bd.16, Teiler: W, Gefahr: O/W

♠ B
 ♥ A85
 ♦ AB10742
 ♣ D82

♠ 8
 ♥ B109432
 ♦ D8
 ♣ B973

	N	
W		O
	S	

♠ A1076432
 ♥ KD
 ♦ 653
 ♣ 10

♠ KD95
 ♥ 76
 ♦ K9
 ♣ AK654

West	Nord	Ost	Süd
	<i>Dr.Elinescu</i>		<i>Dr.Wladow</i>
Pass	2SA*	Pass	3♣**
Pass	3♦	3♠	X
Pass	Pass	Pass	

It seems an unusual auction by South to bid non-forcing 3♣ after North showed 6+♦s or 5-5♣/♦s with 10-14 HCP.

Seg. 6/ Bd.19, Teiler: S, Gefahr: O/W

♠ 9753
 ♥ B6
 ♦ A832
 ♣ 982

♠ 84
 ♥ D32
 ♦ KDB75
 ♣ DB

	N	
W		O
	S	

♠ AD102
 ♥ K97
 ♦ 4
 ♣ A10743

♠ B6
 ♥ A10854
 ♦ 1096
 ♣ K65

West	Nord	Ost	Süd
	<i>Dr.Elinescu</i>		<i>Dr.Wladow</i>
Pass	1♠	2♣	1♥
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
3SA	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening 1♥ with 8 HCP and 5 3 3 2 distribution in 1st position can be seen as to be so unusual, that one might ask if South possibly knew more about North's hand (5 HCP)? ([see BII](#)).

Seg. 6 / Bd.20, Teiler: W, Gefahr: alle

♠ DB6 ♥ A742 ♦ 10952 ♣ 62	♠ 10853 ♥ B3 ♦ AD43 ♣ B85	N W O S	♠ AK ♥ KD1085 ♦ 8 ♣ AK974
	♠ 9742 ♥ 96 ♦ KB76 ♣ D103		

West	Nord <i>Dr. Elinescu</i>	Ost	Süd <i>Dr. Wladow</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♦**	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

A possible double cough by North may have induced the lead of the ♦-6. Leading from ♦ KB76 against a strong 1♣-opener seems very unusual.

**Indo./ Seg. 5 / Bd 13, Teiler: N,
Gefahr: alle**

♠ D72
♥ KD103
♦ 84
♣ K983

♠ A9
♥ A9742
♦ K932
♣ 75

[
N
]
W
O
]
S
[

♠ K3
♥ B865
♦ B1075
♣ D104

♠ B108654
♥
♦ AD6
♣ AB62

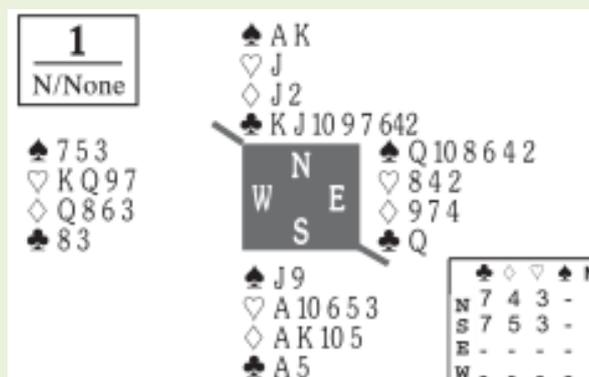
West	Nord <i>Dr. Elinescu</i>	Ost	Süd <i>Dr. Wladow</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	2SA	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

This could be seen as an exonerating board:

South opens 2♠ in 3rd position, Nord as a passed hand forces with 2NT, South bids 3♥ (responses to 2NT cannot be found on the convention card of the pair), North signs of with 3♠ and South raises himself to 4♠, making 5.

If North knew of the ♥-shortage with South because of coughing, he might have refrained from the invitation and might instead have given the opponents an opportunity to balance resulting in a possibly profitable penalty.

C) Diagnosis of boards 1-2 and 4-16 of segment 5 (Video)



West	North	East	South
-	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Video 2: 05:07 - 10:20

Dr. E.: 05:30 1 x

06:48 1 x code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough

code confirmed

The tray is already on the table, Dr. W. pulls it towards himself.

Dr. E. has ♥-singleton, he coughs 1+1. This happens when the tray comes and when it leaves again.

The evidenced cough by North may have influenced South's decision to conceal his 5 cards in ♥ and try 3NT with only J9 in ♠.

On the other side North's presumed knowledge that South knew of his ♥-shortage when bidding 3NT might have influenced his decision to pass despite his two additional ♣-tricks, instead of heading towards (at least) 5♣.

2
E/N-S

♠ 9864
♥ KQ105
♦ 94
♣ AQ3

♠ QJ52
♥ A2
♦ A105
♣ 9742

W N E
S

♠ AK107
♥ 98
♦ KQJ2
♣ K106

♠ 3
♥ J7643
♦ 8763
♣ J85

	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	3	4	-	4	3
W	3	4	-	4	3

West	North	East	South
-	-	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Video 2: 10:22 - 19:14

Dr. E.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: 11:59 four times

code confirmed

Dr. W. coughs four times the coughs sounding quite artificial. He is in 2nd hand and has a ♠-singleton.

3
S/E-W

♠ 3
♥ K43
♦ 73
♣ KQJ8643

♠ AQJ862
♥ 10952
♦ K8
♣ 5

W N E
S

♠ K1094
♥ A7
♦ AQ64
♣ A109

♠ 75
♥ QJ86
♦ J10952
♣ 72

	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	1	-	-	-	-
S	1	-	-	-	-
E	-	2	2	6	5
W	-	2	2	6	5

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass
1♠	4♣	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Video: does not exist

4
W/All

♠ J42
♥ K1092
♦ 87
♣ K1062

♠ A1093
♥ 65
♦ 10932
♣ A84

♠ Q5
♥ AQ743
♦ AJ6
♣ Q97

♠ K876
♥ J8
♦ KQ54
♣ J53

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-
E	2	3	2	2
W	2	3	2	2

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Video 4: 00:00 - 10:53 only play - no bidding

Dr. W. leads from ♣ J53 instead of ♦ KD54. Partner holds K1062 in ♣ and 87 in ♦. This is no proof, but it is unusual.

At the other table ♦ was led against 1NT (after opponents bid ♥+♠).

5
N/N-S

♠ K6
♥ 10
♦ AQ962
♣ KQ864

♠ A1073
♥ K9732
♦ 10
♣ 1052

♠ Q4
♥ AQ864
♦ J43
♣ A73

♠ J9852
♥ J5
♦ K875
♣ J9

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	2	4	-	1
S	2	4	-	1
E	-	-	3	-
W	-	-	3	-

West	North	East	South
-	1♦	1♥	1♠
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Video 4: 10:55 - 16:29

Dr. E.: 12:00 1x 12:11 1x code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough code confirmed

Dr. E. has ♥-singleton, coughs 1+1. This happens when the tray arrives and when it leaves again.

6
E/E-W

♠ A 8 4
♥ J 10 5
♦ J 10 6 5
♣ A K 10

♠ 10 9 7
♥ K Q 6
♦ 9 4
♣ Q J 8 7 2

♠ K 6 5 2
♥ A 8 3
♦ A 8
♣ 9 6 5 3

♠ Q J 3
♥ 9 7 4 2
♦ K Q 7 3 2
♣ 4

	♠	♥	♦	NT	
N	-	2	2	1	2
S	-	2	2	1	2
E	1	-	-	-	-
W	1	-	-	-	-

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♦	x	1♥
2♣	Pass	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Video 4: 16:33 - 23:55

Dr. E.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: 17:35 1x

code confirmed

Dr. W. has ♣-singleton, he coughs once.
Bidding and final contract are normal.

7
S/All

♠ A 10 6 2
♥ K
♦ K 7 5 4 3 2
♣ K J

♠ K 9 8 5
♥ A Q 8 7 6 4 3
♦
♣ Q 2

♠ Q 4
♥ 10
♦ A J 8 6
♣ A 10 8 7 4 3

♠ J 7 3
♥ J 9 5 2
♦ Q 10 9
♣ 9 6 5

	♠	♥	♦	NT	
N	-	1	-	-	
S	-	1	-	-	
E	4	-	3	1	2
W	4	-	3	1	2

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	Pass
1♥	x	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Video 4: 23:56 - 35:04

Dr. E.: 24:29 1x

26:09 1x

code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. E. has a ♥-singleton, coughs 1+1. This happens when the tray arrives and when it leaves again.

8
W/None

♠ 1076
♥ 865
♦ A543
♣ Q97

♠ 9532
♥ Q9
♦ 9
♣ A106532

N
W N E
S

♠ KQJ84
♥ A107
♦ QJ6
♣ J4

♠ A
♥ KJ432
♦ K10872
♣ K8

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	-	3	3	-
S	-	3	3	-
E	2	-	-	3
W	2	-	-	3

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♠	2♠
3♥	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Video 4: 35:05 - 43:59

Dr. E.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: 35:36: 2x 35:42: 2x

code confirmed

Dr. W. coughs 2+2, the 2nd time when pushing the tray, has ♠-singleton.
 Dr. W. has and bids a 2-suiter with ♥ and minor. Later, when it is Dr. E's.
 turn to bid, Dr. W. coughs twice again, showing the ♦-suit?

9
N/E-W

♠ AJ
♥ KQ1083
♦ J4
♣ J732

♠ K1074
♥ A4
♦ K9853
♣ Q4

N
W N E
S

♠ 52
♥ 7652
♦ A1076
♣ A86

♠ Q9863
♥ J9
♦ Q2
♣ K1095

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	2	-	1	-
S	2	-	1	-
E	-	3	-	1
W	-	3	-	1

West	North	East	South
-	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Video 4: 44:00 -53:05

Dr. E.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough

code confirmed

11 S/None	♠ Q 5 3 ♥ 10 7 3 ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ 10 5 4 3	♠ 10 8 4 ♥ Q 9 8 5 ♦ A J 10 4 2 ♣ J																									
♠ A 7 2 ♥ K J 6 4 ♦ K 8 ♣ K 7 6 2	N W E S	♠ K J 9 6 ♥ A 2 ♦ Q 5 3 ♣ A Q 9 8																									
		<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>♠</td> <td>♥</td> <td>♦</td> <td>NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>-</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>		♠	♥	♦	NT	N	-	-	-	-	S	1	-	-	-	E	-	2	3	-	W	-	2	3	-
	♠	♥	♦	NT																							
N	-	-	-	-																							
S	1	-	-	-																							
E	-	2	3	-																							
W	-	2	3	-																							

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
Pass	1♦	x	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Video 3: 00:00 - 11:05

Dr. E.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: 01:15 5x

fits into no scheme

05:24 4x

code confirmed

During the bidding (after Dr. W. passed the opponent's double of partner's negative bid) Dr. W. coughs 5 times.

No meaning identifiable.

Before partners' lead Dr. W. coughs four times and a ♠ was led, which was necessary to beat the contract.

Side Note:

The american player doesn't behave well. He doubles 1♣ and Dr. W. pushes the tray across. The double was already clearly visible on the other side of the table, but the American pulls the tray back again none the less.

The director is called and asks Dr. W. to convey how he alerted and if so how he showed the alert-card. Dr. W. demonstrates how he allegedly waved with the alert-sign. This is not true as is evidenced by the video material from 2 minutes earlier.

12
W/N-S

♠ 10 8 6
♥ K Q 9 5
♦ K J 10 9 3 2
♣ A K J 9

♠ Q 7 4 3 2
♥ A 6 4
♦ K Q 7 2
♣ Q

♠ 5
♥ 8 7 3 2
♦ 10 9 8 4 3
♣ 7 6 4

♠ A K J 9
♥ J 10
♦ A J 6 5
♣ A 8 5

♠	♦	♥	♣	NT
N	2	-	1	-
S	2	-	1	-
E	-	4	-	5 5
W	-	4	-	6 5

West	North	East	South
1♠	3♣	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♦	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Video 3: 11:09 - 19:13

Dr. E.: 11:52 2x

code confirmed

Dr. W.: 11:56 4x

code confirmed

Dr. E. coughs twice, ♦-void,

Dr. W. coughs four times, ♠-singleton.

13
N/All

♠ K J 7 5 4 2
♥
♦ 9 5
♣ Q 10 9 8 5

♠ 10 8
♥ 9 8 6 3
♦ A J 10 7 3
♣ 6 3

♠ 3
♥ K Q J 7 5 2
♦ K 8 2
♣ A K J

♠ A Q 9 6
♥ A 10 4
♦ Q 6 4
♣ 7 4 2

♠	♦	♥	♣	NT
N	2	-	-	2
S	2	-	-	2
E	-	3	5	-
W	-	4	5	-

West	North	East	South
-	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	2♠	3♥	3♠
4♥	4♠	Pass	Pass
5♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Video 3: 19:15 - 29:32

Dr. E.: 19:55 1x

20:05 1x

code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. E. has ♥-void (not ♠-shortage as the original report wrongly said), coughs 1+1. This happens when the tray comes and when it leaves again.

14
E/None

♠ K Q 3
♥ J 10 5 2
♦ Q 7 5
♣ Q 7 2

♠ 10 6 2
♥ A
♦ A J 10 8 4 3
♣ K 9 8

W N E
S

♠ A 5
♥ Q 9 7 4
♦ 9 6
♣ J 10 6 5 4

♠ J 9 8 7 4
♥ K 8 6 3
♦ K 2
♣ A 3

♠	♦	♥	♣	NT
N	-	1	2	-
S	-	1	2	1
E	2	2	-	-
W	2	-	-	-

West	North	East	South
-	-	Pass	1♠
2♦	2♠	x	Pass
3♦	Pass	Pass	3♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Video 3: 29:33 - 40:15

Dr. E: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough

code confirmed

Both hands balanced, no cough.

15
S/N-S

♠ 9 6 4
♥ A 7 6 4
♦ A J 10
♣ 10 6 4

♠ 8 7 3 2
♥ K Q J 3
♦ 8 7 3
♣ 9 5

W N E
S

♠ Q J
♥ 10 9 5
♦ 6 5 4
♣ A Q J 8 3

♠ A K 10 5
♥ 8 2
♦ K Q 9 2
♣ K 7 2

♠	♦	♥	♣	NT
N	1	4	2	4
S	1	4	2	4
E	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	2♣	x	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Video 3: 40:21 - 47:12

Dr. E.: no cough
2 x cough as dummy

code confirmed

Dr. W.: no cough

code confirmed

Both hands balanced, no cough

16
W/E-W

♠ 984
♥ 53
♦ 972
♣ KQJ73

♠ QJ3
♥ K1074
♦ K5
♣ A965

♠ 7
♥ AJ9862
♦ AQ
♣ 10842

♠ AK10652
♥ Q
♦ J108643
♣

♠	♥	♦	♣	NT	
N	-	3	-	4	1
S	-	3	-	4	1
E	4	-	2	-	-
W	3	-	2	-	-

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	2♦	x
2♥	x	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Video 3: 47:13 - 52:23

Dr. E.: no cough

code confirmed

Dr. W.: 47:43 1 x

code confirmed

Dr. W. coughs once, while it is partner's turn to bid in 2nd position.
He has ♣-void, but also ♥-singleton.

Dr. E. doesn't cough.

D) Conclusion

1. Coughing to show shortage, non-coughing with balanced hands

The supposed coughing code fits without any ambiguity to the coughs evidenced in the videos and to the corresponding boards. The commission assumes therefore an according agreement between Dr. Wladow and Dr. Elinescu and joins the conclusions of the WBF-commission concerning this issue.

2. Coughing for lead of a specified suit

There are not enough relevant boards in this video to prove the supposed coughing for a specific lead. In most boards there was no coughing before the lead.

Very interesting is the analysis by the american top-player Kit Woolsey, published at Bridgewinners.com. He presented all boards (about 100) from the quarterfinal, the semifinal and the final in which Dr. Wladow – Dr. Elinescu defended. He did this in three parts.

In part 1 the partner of the leader was asked, whether he wishes any specific lead. The basic assumption was that because of the presumed coughing code he would know whether his partner is balanced or instead has a specified shortage. This information was given additionally to the own hand and the bidding. 107 members of the forum took part.

In part 2 the leader was asked what he would lead with no additional information to his own hand and the bidding. 71 members of the forum took part.

In part 3 they were given the hand, the bidding, partners' pattern (balanced or a specific shortage), partner's lead-wish or the information, that he has no special wish. 43 members of the forum took part.

The answers were statistically analysed and only those boards were examined further, where

- at least 50% of all participants had wished a specific lead;
- there was a difference of at least 50 percentage-points between those who choose that lead without additional information and those who would lead that suit with the presumed unauthorised information.

Only those boards with a clear majoritarian wish for a specific lead-by partner were considered where the actually chosen lead seemed very improbable without additional information.

28 boards remained with those criteria. In those 28 boards Dr. Wladow – Dr. Elinescu chose the lead which partner would have wished 15 times.

Of those 28 boards that lead was chosen by an average of 14,3% of the participants of questionnaire 2 (the one without unauthorized information). The statistical probability of choosing at least in 15 cases out of 28 a lead, that only 14,3% of all other players would choose, is about 1:800.000.

The survey has some statistical inaccuracies, which were however all admitted by the author Kit Woolsey. In particular he stated „statistics can never absolutely prove anything. They can simply show what the probability of an event occurring is under certain assumptions. It is then a matter of judgment as to whether these assumptions are accurate“.

Neither this statistical analysis nor the boards examined by the commission prove without doubt that unauthorized information for the lead was given regularly. But there were many more boards, where an unusual lead was chosen which produced a successful result rather than a bad result.

Details of the described analysis including a detailed analysis of some boards can be found in the web at

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/the-opening-leads-conclusion/>

3. Further reasonable grounds for suspicion

The sweeping movements and various handlings of the tray can be seen in multiple boards, especially the sweeping over the table by Dr. Wladow with an open palm when holding 0-5 HCP. Such movements can be seen in boards 2, 7 and 12 (each 0-5 HCP), but never in the other boards where he wasn't that weak.

By means of other movements (like touching the board, shaking the tray etc.) a signal conveying strength may have been submitted, but this cannot be proven beyond doubt.

There is one board (final 5/8) where after coughing the shortage during the bidding and then showing a 5-5-distribution with hearts another two coughs occurred while tray was on the other side of the table. The 2nd suit was diamonds.

That might point towards an unauthorized code, but this is highly speculative.

4. Estimation in terms of bridge reasoning

There is no deal with regard to which it can be said that the action taken is inconceivable and must be attributable to unauthorized information. However, there are a great number of deals where the unusual actions taken would be more plausible if illicit knowledge of partner's hand in terms of distribution, lead preference or strength were to be assumed.

On the other hand there is no board of which can be said that the action taken is inconceivable assuming unauthorized information.

In our view there is only one possibly exonerating board.

Starting with the quarterfinal there are suspicious hands in every segment, if one assumes the agreed codes of 1) - 3). In this respect - regarding the bad start against Indonesia - no certain point in time is identifiable from which on the pair may have decided to use unauthorized information.

It remains speculative whether this pair had already used appropriate agreements before or that they only decided to use them at some point during the knock-out phase.

During the bidding as well when leading a bridge player is quite often confronted with situations, where the information collected so far doesn't offer an unequivocal solution for the right bid or the right lead.

An educated guess has to be taken as to whether A or B (or even C) is right. Especially the bidding decisions are often fifty-fifty-bets: pass or bid, double or pass, part score or game, game or slam. A top-pair guesses right more often than wrong. No pair - no matter how good - can guess right every time over many days, even less so at the end of a long championship.

The fact that the decisions of Dr. Wladow - Dr. Elinescu often deviate from those taken at other tables proves nothing in itself. Every member of the commission has played often enough against this pair in the last 30 years without having suspected the exchange of unauthorized information as reason for their (often) good decisions.

And everybody has also seen these extravagant decisions (compared with the mainstream) leading to absurd bad results.

In all analysed boards from 6 days of bridge there wasn't however a single absurdly bad result. Of course not every slam was made, not every slam was bid and not every beatable game was beaten. Even with the additional information as to partners' distribution, his strength or his lead preference plenty unknown factors remain.

Nor is it advisable to produce remarkable good results by the exchange of unauthorized information. Quite on the contrary, there are boards where you shouldn't make use of the information, because the action taken would just be too suspicious.

So not using information that could have been illicitly given wouldn't prove that no information was given. It would only show that a pair is intelligent enough not to overdo it. It seems reasonable therefore to restrict coughing for a lead to hands where it is seen to be absolutely necessary as well as possibly lucrative.

Dr. Wladow - Dr. Elinescu aren't a mediocre pair wanting to raise to the top by using these methods. They are an excellent senior pair, which in our opinion has illicitly boosted their chances on the occasion of the world championship by employing that extra bit of advantage against top opposition.

Not the spectacular results give you that advantage, but the few boards where a difficult decision is taken more successfully than at the other table.

On the assumption that the statements made by the U.S. players, tournament directors and BBO operators with regard to the non-video-recorded boards are correct and after considering all the boards involved, the commission is 100% convinced that unauthorized information was exchanged.

Even if only the 14 boards from the available videos are considered, the commission is still 100% convinced that information as to "shortage" or "balanced" was exchanged in each of these 14 hands.

The commission cannot think of another coherent explanation for the observed accordances.

5. Technical issues

Dr. Wladow told the German Bridge Federation he suspects a manipulation of the videos. The commission could not examine that technical issue.

Whether a cough was possibly inserted or cut out afterwards can only be checked by an expert on video technology.

However every cough heard is confirmed by corresponding facial expressions of the player. Thus we see no reason to assume a manipulation of the videos.

6. Further Proceedings

This report was written after careful and conscientious consideration of all available material, discussed finally and signed by all members of the commission.

It is placed at the disposal of the Steering Committee and of the Advisory Board of the German Bridge Federation (DBV).

Christian Schwerdt
Joerg Fritsche
Michael Gromoeller
Wolf Stahl
Peter Jokisch