



Newsletter of the Chess Arbiters Association

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Issue 36

FIDE has updated its Arbiters' Database. This has involved merging several files each with almost 13,000 records. With such a huge task it is possible that errors have been made. Arbiters are advised to check the list to make sure their entry is correct.

<http://arbiters.fide.com/arbiter-database.html>

If there is an error contact your national federation to ask FIDE to correct it.

In time this information will appear on your FIDE profile.

FIDE is also looking at having an official policy on appointing arbiters to FIDE events. I am happy to pass on any comments or suggestions that members have on how this policy should be implemented. It could mean more British arbiters being appointed to prestigious events.

The FIDE Arbiters' Committee is also looking at standardising the FA exam (see page 6).

All of the above changes have been implemented by Laurent Freyd who was recently appointed Chairman of the FIDE Arbiters' Commission. Also in production, with an intended publication date in July, is a new version of the FIDE Arbiters' Manual. Previous versions of this, despite the efforts of Stewart Reuben, have had problems with the quality of the English used. An early version that I have seen leads me to think that the 2019 version will be considerably improved in that direction.

A recent case of alleged cheating in Ireland has highlighted the fact that arbiters often do not know what to do if a player is caught. The actions taken against the culprit are usually fairly obvious or easy to find out but what happens to the opponents is less well known. The article on page 3 should give some advice on what to do.

You are the Arbiter



In the following position White, to move, has just over 5 minutes. His opponent is down to about 2 seconds. There are no increments.

White played 1 Kb7 and released the piece. Realising that he was now in check he played the king to b8 and pressed the clock. 1 ... Nc4 2 a5 followed and Black's flag fell.

Both teams now discussed the situation.

Does White win?

Should Black have had an extra 2 minutes after Kb7?

The game ended with both players agreeing a

draw.

In a different league, but in a similar situation, the player short of time called out "Draw" before the flag fell. What should happen here? Was the cry of "draw" a claim or an offer?

Before discussing the Laws, it should be noted that with an increment, even a very small one, neither situation would have arisen.

Answer: As the clock had not been pressed after Kb7 was played it does not count as an illegal move. White was therefore entitled to play Kb8. It is possible that Black could have claimed that he was distracted by White's actions but that would have had to be done immediately and not after the game. Without an arbiter the claim of distraction would have been difficult to enforce. As White had a pawn which could be promoted the game would correctly have been awarded as a White win even though such a result under normal play would have been extremely unlikely.

In the second game the claim of "Draw" is unclear as to its meaning. It is perfectly reasonable for it to be assumed to be only a draw offer to the opponent. If claiming a draw it should be made clear that is what was intended. If "Draw" was stated, followed immediately by a clarification such as "I claim a draw.", even if the latter part was stated after flag fall then the balance of probability has moved significantly in the direction of the initial exclamation being a claim.

More Cheating – But what happens afterwards?

In the Irish International tournament held at Easter time there was a player who was ejected from the event after 5 of the 9 rounds.

The player in question is in his early 20s and a foreign student studying in Ireland. There had been suspicions expressed following his rounds 1 and 2 games which he won against much stronger opponents. His round 3 game was also won but here the situation was less clear as the opponent could have fallen into a known line. Even in round 1 he won after his opponent played a 'bad' move. In round 4 he lost to a GM. In round 5 he again won but this time the Chief Arbiter intervened and the result of that game and those in rounds 1 to 3 were reversed on his instructions.

The FIDE guidelines state:

“Effect on the games of the tournament where a breach of the anti-cheating regulations has occurred. *The ACC (Anti Cheating Commission) recommends that for events where a breach of anti-cheating regulations has been proven (either during the tournament itself, immediately after the end of the appeals procedure, or upon waiver of appeal by the defendant), the FIDE Qualifications Commission should implement the following policies: All games by the offender in the tournament shall not be rated, with exception that in cases where a forfeit was assessed during a game, pending the further process, the rating of the game as a victory for the opponent shall stand. Additionally the following shall apply: In an individual Round Robin event, all games by the offender shall be counted as having been lost, and counted as unplayed wins for all opponents. The tournament shall remain valid for norms. In an individual Open tournament, the offender shall be excluded from the final ranking. Each of the offender’s games shall be considered a loss, but the score for the opponent shall remain unchanged. All games shall be reported as unplayed. In a Team event, the team of the offending player shall be excluded from the final rankings. The results for the opposing teams shall remain unchanged. Each of the offender’s games shall be considered a loss, but the score for the opponent shall remain unchanged. All games shall be reported as unplayed. Any title norms that would have been achieved by the offender shall be disregarded.”*

The FIDE recommendation is quite clear that completed games shall not be rated, will count as a loss for the person caught cheating and, unless he was caught during a game, the opponent’s score will not be changed. Where a player is caught during a game in progress the opponent shall be awarded a win and the game rated accordingly. What the guidelines do not do is to say what happens when the cheat has lost or drawn with a lower rated player. I would suggest that an arbiter in this position should include the

incident in the report and strongly suggest that there was no evidence of cheating in these games and that they should be rated as normal. It will be up to the Qualifications Committee of FIDE to decide how the games are treated. The players who have lost because of the cheating are unlikely to be happy that their score in the (Swiss) tournament has been adversely affected. (Alternatively, if they were given a 'free' point other players may not be happy that these players have effectively been downfloated in previous rounds.) When cheating occurs, clearly there are no winners. Even players who are happy that a cheat has been caught may question why it took so long to confirm the offence.

There is a third situation which might cause the arbiter difficulties. Unless certain that cheating is going on arbiters are advised not to interrupt a game to carry out a search but to do so immediately after the conclusion of the game. If the investigation at this point proves that cheating has happened then what should the score be? In such a situation, where there is a search or scan planned for immediately after the game because of concerns then, it may be advisable for the arbiter to step in before the scoresheets are signed. It can then be argued that the game is still in progress. Certainly the result has not been 'officially' agreed. Even without this action, it seems reasonable to rule that the illegality was during the game and act accordingly.

Anyone who makes an allegation of cheating should be asked to fill in a form. FIDE, through the national federation, should be informed of anyone caught cheating. If an accusation of cheating is believed to be malicious then FIDE should also be informed of that.

Returning to the Irish tournament. How was the cheating being carried out and how was it discovered? The method was not too complicated. Friends simply looked at his board and used a chess engine to analyse the position. They then returned to the playing hall and, using hand signals, indicated the move to play. His loss occurred when he reached the top boards which were on a stage with the games displayed on monitors. When suspicions were raised the monitor of his game was switched off and his accomplice was unable to see the board. It is reported that he lost quite quickly after the monitor was disconnected.

Arbiters have been advised to watch players who constantly leave the playing hall. Added to that now is that spectators, particularly those with an interest in only one or two games, should also be monitored closely. Those who are paying attention to a player who is performing well, even though they may be doing so for legitimate reasons, have to be observed and even have their presence recorded.

It is easy to forget that the player does not need to get advice directly from an electronic device. Getting advice from an associate has been a way of cheating since the early days.

Fitbit Trouble



There has been a growing trend for people to wear on their wrists devices which monitor their activity. Arbiters should be aware that advanced versions of these are able to receive emails and text messages. As such they should not be allowed to be worn. At the recent World Senior events, both individual and team, it was announced that these were to be treated in exactly the same way as phones. Unfortunately for an English junior at the World Schools Championship in Turkey no such announcements appear to have been made. The junior was warned in

one round but unfortunately not in English and not in the presence of an adult about wearing such a device. At the end of his following game the arbiter who had previously warned him defaulted him for still wearing it.

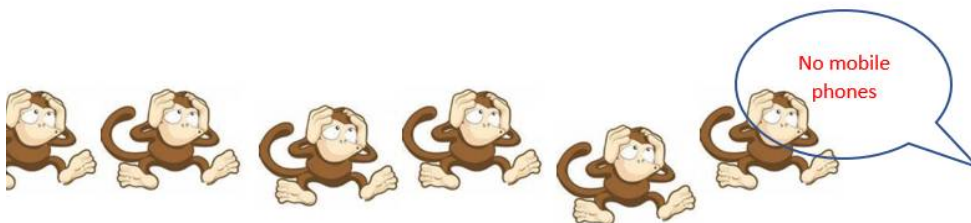
Fitbit is a trade name and other similar devices are available.

And Still They Carry Phones

One of the top Australian events is the Doeberl Cup, a 9 round 5 day event with norm possibilities. One of the IMs taking part had what might euphemistically be called a 'bad day at the office'. In the morning round he lost his game to an untitled player and then in the afternoon at move 15 of his game he was found with a phone in his possession. Although there was no question that the phone was off and had been during the game the opponent was awarded the win. The IM then withdrew from the tournament. Although the arbiters carried out their duties properly a forum has been populated with posts attacking the arbiters for following the Laws. It has been confirmed that the arbiters announced the phone regulations before every round.

The adverse reaction to the decision emphasises how the chess playing public still needs to be educated to the problems that mobile phones can cause even when switched off. The two problems being that they can be switched on again with a chess engine running

and, perhaps by far the most frequent, is that the opponent is distracted by having concerns that the phone owner may be tempted to get outside help.



FIDE Arbiter Exams

There can be no doubt that the introduction of the necessity to attend a course and pass an exam has increased the competence levels of new arbiters. But one of the problems of the system is that each arbiter lecturer constructs their own exam with no guidance from FIDE. The new Chairman of the FIDE Arbiters' Commission, Laurent Freyd, is attempting to rectify that situation. A sub-committee has been set up to review recent exams and to suggest appropriate marks for each topic covered. The committee has been formed with the intention of covering the main languages used. Alex McFarlane is a member, allegedly because of his knowledge of English and activity as a Lecturer.

Only in the USA

For some time it has been possible to enter a tournament in the USA, withdraw, and re-enter the same tournament but with a faster time control. A possible format would be 9 rounds at one round per day with another section merging for rounds 7-9. The other section would be a 5 day format with 3 rounds on the first two days. But Grandmaster Timur Gareyev has taken this to a new level. He entered two tournaments with a clash of dates which were 25 minutes/5 miles apart. He played in the US Championship (organised by USCF) which was 11 rounds each round starting at 1pm. The other event entered was the Mid-American Open organised by the Continental CA) which had rounds on the Fri 7pm, Sat 11am and 5pm and Sun 10am and 3.30pm, with a default time of 1 hour. The GM played in round 1 of the CCA event took a bye in round 2 but defaulted round 3 as his game in the USCF event went on longer than he had anticipated! The organisers of the CCA event then withdrew him from their tournament.

A USCF Official was asked beforehand if the dual entry was acceptable. His decision was that as (1) there is no FIDE or US Chess rule against playing multiple US Chess tournaments at the

same time; (2) there is a Continental Chess Association rule against playing multiple games at the same time but Mr. Gareyev's intended schedule did not violate that rule; and (3) there is no provision in the player contracts for the 2019 US Championships prohibiting play in a concurrent event; there was no 'legal' reason to prevent his actions. The same official did try to dissuade the GM from playing in both.

It should be noted that some events do allow players to play in one section in the morning and another in the afternoon. However, these events are at the same venue and the morning tournament has a schedule which allows dual participation, usually by the morning event having increments of 10 seconds or so and a gap between the predicted end of the morning session and the start of the afternoon one.

(It is not just players who over commit themselves. In my younger days I controlled simultaneously at two tournaments 50 miles apart. I started at a rapidplay where I did three rounds, then drove to the second one where I arrived in time for time-scrambles in round 4 of a normal congress and to do the final round draw. I then returned to the initial event for rounds 4 and 5 [round 3 pairings having been done by another arbiter over the lunch break]. It was then back to the other event for the final round time scrambles and prizegiving – Ed.)

... But not just in America

A spectator was asked to leave the playing hall when his phone beeped. He did this and was followed out by the arbiter who informed him that he should not return as his phone had rung. He then handed the phone to the surprised arbiter and walked past him attempting to return to watch the few remaining games. When questioned by the arbiter about both of these actions his reply was "But I've given you the phone. I don't have it." He seemed very surprised that despite this act of generosity the arbiter simply returned his phone and continued to deny him access.

Two players arrived at 10.37 to be informed that they had lost their respective games by default, the round having started at 10.00 with a default of 30 minutes. Despite the fact that everyone else was well into their games one of the players tried to argue that his version of the entry form had given a 10.30 start. His colleague persuaded him that his argument, based on the existence of a unique entry form, may be flawed.

A GM who had been given a second black in round 3 (wbb) queried why her opponent was not black instead of her (the opponent had b-w), winning in round two by default (see previous paragraph!). The GM's logic seemed to be that winning by default equated to having had a white, indeed almost a white plus. She failed to appreciate that her 1w and 2b was less unequal than the 0w and 2b she insisted her opponent should have.

An organiser of an event assured the control team that the Internet problems of the previous year had been resolved and that the live games would be broadcast. As you may have guessed the problems had not been solved. This meant that instead of downloading directly from Chess-Results each arbiter had to get the files on a memory stick. It also meant that an email, sent 3½ hours before the start of play, indicating that three players were unable to get to the venue that night was not received until after the round 2 pairings had been made.

A player asked for two byes in a 5 round event. He insisted that both should be half point byes as it would be unfair on his opponents if the second was zero points. It is not clear why it would be detrimental to his round 5 opponent (the only one directly affected by the second bye). He was given the second half point bye but this decision was more a matter of policy than on the strength of his argument.

Quick Draws

A County Championship is run as a one round a month event with the venue of a game and its date set by the players involved. This year there has been some disquiet when the titled was shared. Two players went into the last round a point ahead of everyone else and having drawn in the previous round. The game of one of the players was agreed drawn after 14 moves. The other player, whose game was 'played' at a later date proceeded to draw in only one move. This engendered a significant amount of ill feeling with other players and the organisers. As there was no proof that the players had colluded no action was taken. Indeed such collusion would have required the co-operation of 2 addition players, their last round opponents.

At a meeting of the County's organising committee the idea of insisting on a minimum number of moves being played was rejected. Although not known of at the time the following game provides a very good reason for that decision.

Karpov, Anatoly – Matlakov, Maxim

Russian Team Championship 08.05.2019

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Qc2 O-O 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. Qxc3d5 7. Bg5 dxc4 8. Qxc4 b6 9. Rd1 Ba6 10. Qa4 h6 11. Bh4 Qe7 12. Nf3 Rd8 13. e3 Bxf1 14. Rxf1 c5 15. Ke2 Nbd7 16. Ne5 Nxe5 17. dxe5 g5 18. exf6 Qxf6 19. Bg3



Qxb2+ 20. Kf3 Qf6+ 21. Ke2 Qb2+ 22. Kf3 Qf6+ 23. Ke2 Qb2+ 24. Kf3 Qf6+ 25. Ke2 Qb2+ 26. Kf3 Qf6+ 27. Ke2 Qb2+ $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$


The position shown has occurred 5 times and so the arbiter must declare it drawn.

What may happen in future at the County event is that, if there is a tie, a number of tie break methods will be put in individual envelopes and one chosen at random. That method will then be used to decide the winner. The reason for considering doing it in that way is so that no player will know for sure going into the last round if a draw is good enough to secure the title on tie break. The hope being that this lack of certainty will encourage fighting chess.

Player Registration

It is unusual for an event in Britain to have players registering before the start of play as they do in many foreign events. It is only after registration is complete that the draw for the first round is made in some events. Anyone who has failed to register is not included in the draw and is allowed to play only if a suitable opponent is found, usually someone else who was late to register. If no suitable opponent is found then the player is given a bye of either $\frac{1}{2}$ or 0 points. The benefit of this system is that everyone who turns up on time gets a game. The disadvantage is that very often the start is delayed while the administration of checking entries against arrivals is carried out. In a FIDE rated event a player is entitled to refuse to be repaired. (This decision by FIDE was introduced when GM Nigel Short was repaired at an event on the Isle of Man. He refused to accept the repairing and withdrew from the tournament.)

With the growing number of FIDE rated events and an increasing number of players refusing to be repaired, even in the first round, should more British tournaments be insisting on players reporting their presence in advance of the first round being published?



I'm not playing -
And you can't
make me

For one round a day events this is not too difficult to do, but for a weekender may be a more significant burden on the control team.

At the Scottish Championships which is one round a day players are expected to report in 2 hours before the start of play. This can be done in person, by phone or by email. A provisional draw has been made the night before and it is stated that in the absence of, or failure to register by players, only the

Who to Believe?

Alan Atkinson has sent details of an interesting situation which arose in an event at which he was an arbiter.

Before considering his specific case, which involves the arbiter having to decide which player to believe, it may be useful to consider other situations.

Probably the most common situation in which arbiters receive conflicting statements from the players is when an accusation of touch move is concerned. One player accuses the other of touching a piece before moving another and the accused denies the offence. In such an instance the arbiter will allow the move to stand but indicate to the player that the decision was reached, not because one player was believed over another but, because there is no evidence available to support either player. Effectively, the arbiter can do nothing when it is one player's word against another.

In Alan's case one player had just been mated. This player then claimed that his opponent's last two moves had been illegal. He was not claiming a win because of two illegal moves but wanted the position taken back two moves. He claimed that the previous moves from his opponent were Qe3; then Qg4; then Qxf7 mate, using his scoresheet as proof. The opponent, who had been short of time and not recording, claimed that Qf4 was played rather than Qg4. The arbiter adopted the approach that there was no real proof that an illegal move had been played. The fact that the game was decided immediately by the decision made it harder for the arbiter to make. In this case the arbiter also had to consider that the Qg4 move recorded on the scoresheet looked like it may have been changed and the consideration that the first 'illegal' move had not been claimed immediately, though this could have been mitigated by suddenly seeing an unexpected good move. (It has been known for a GM to be so shocked at 'overlooking' the power of an illegal move that he resigned. The reverse is possible.)

The balance of probabilities is that the losing player was wrong, and was possibly even trying to make false allegations to save the game. But even without this the arbiter had little choice without clear supporting evidence.

Going Nuts in Brazil

We are used in this country to having Open and Women's events. There are even Junior events where the winner gets the title and the highest placed player of the opposite sex is awarded the title of Boy or Girl Champion as appropriate.

In the Copa MedChess tournament held in Sao Paulo, Brazil the top three places were taken by women. This in itself was not a problem until it came to awarding the trophies.

Initially it was intended that the 'main' trophy would be awarded not to the winner but to the highest placed man. After some disagreement with the winner, who was only going to get the Women's trophy, it was agreed that she could receive the 'open' trophy too. Under the circumstances the reported speech by the Chief Arbiter was perhaps a little unwise, even if intended as a joke. It is alleged that when presenting the trophy he thanked the male players for "letting the girls win".

Double Whammy

Q v Q+2P and the position is repeated for the required number of times to be drawn. The player claims a draw but the opponent denies it and asks the player to move. The player does this and only then asks the arbiter to confirm it is a draw. The arbiter confirms that the player has actually moved before claiming and therefore rejects the attempted claim. The game continues and a pawn is lost. It continues more and the queens are about to be swapped off. The claimant resigns. However, after the queens come off he was able to stop the remaining pawn from queening – he resigned in a drawn position. He has been advised that buying lottery tickets is a waste of his time and money.

CAA Officials

Chairman - Lara Barnes

Secretary – Alan Atkinson

Treasurer – Lara Barnes (Acting)

Chief Arbiter - Alex McFarlane

Information officer - Alex McFarlane

Committee - David Welch, Kevin Staveley and Mike Forster.

ECF Delegate - Mike Forster

Chess Scotland Delegate - Alex McFarlane

Welsh Chess Union - Kevin Staveley

Independent Examiner - Richard Jones

Safeguarding Officer – Lara Barnes



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