



## Newsletter of the Chess Arbiters Association

November 2019

Issue 38

**AGM:** The AGM will be held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019 at 2pm. The venue is Quality Hotel, Birmingham Road, Dudley DY1 4RN. This is the same venue as the Castle Chess Congress, with thanks to Tony Corfe.

### **Agenda:**

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Matters Arising
4. Reports including Finances
5. Election of Office Bearers
6. Membership Fees
7. Arbiter Fees for Events
8. Fair Play Regulations
9. ECU Arbiter Decisions
10. AOCB

(This agenda may have further additions.)

It is important that the position of Treasurer, which is currently vacant, is filled. There is not a huge amount of work but it is vital for the Association that a suitable candidate is found.

## Cheating Follow Up

Some further info on the 19 year old Dutch player caught cheating. As reported in the previous issue his recent performances after an indifferent start to his 'career' had alerted arbiters to a possible breach of the fair play rules. Concern was raised by frequent toilet breaks, which coupled with a 373 rating point 'improvement' meant investigation was needed. In the year prior to this it had increased from 1444 to 1512. It is reported that the organisers had been trying to find a metal detector but it took them until the second last round to do so. If true, that does not reflect well on the team involved. Tournaments and arbiters **MUST** make sure **BEFORE** the start of the event that they will have access to such a device.

In round 4 the player was asked to empty his pockets which he did and nothing was found. Only then was a scanner ordered on the Internet. Its arrival was delayed. During the 8<sup>th</sup> round Boons was stopped after a toilet visit and was asked to undergo a scan. He refused and was taken to the Arbiters' Office. The situation was explained to him. Presumably he then realised that he would be excluded if he continued to refuse the scan. He then admitted to possession of a phone but denied it had been used. The arbiter reveals that the phone was switched on. The phone had chess apps on it. His current game was not found on the phone.

The phone would have been easily detected by the scanner. It was in an additional pocket inside his trousers. The Dutch Chess Federation has a procedure for such cases and will investigate it. The decision reached will be passed on to FIDE. Chess Scotland, too, has its own procedures for investigating allegations of cheating. I believe it is the only home association which does.

## More Cheating

An unusual form of cheating is believed to have taken place at an International event for juniors. The games were being recorded on sensory boards. One of the players (A) left the board. While he was away his opponent (B) made a move but not content with just the one move also made a reply for the absent player A. This reply, which would mean an almost immediate loss if it was actually played,

was retracted before the absentee returned. When A did return he played another, much stronger, move. At this point B claimed that it was A who had played the retracted move and had actually tried to change it when he realised how bad it was. The arbiter was summoned. Normally B's claim would be dismissed as there was no supporting evidence of a touched piece violation. However in this case (and possibly at B's suggestion) the live



board computer was consulted. The computer showed that the rook move had indeed been played and so the arbiter ruled in favour of B.

Arbiters should be aware that the evidence given by sensory boards in tournaments that they are controlling is capable of having been falsely manufactured. A DGT Sensory Board will be useful, particularly for draw claims, but may have limited use when deciding a touch move dispute.

## **Arbiting at the British Chess Championships By John Wickham (originally in his Newsletter)**

I thought I would share with you my experience at this year's British Chess Championships in Torquay. In previous years I have done the morning sessions which were some of the Junior championships, AM Open and three rated sections. This year I did the afternoon session which consists of the Championship and Major Open (both 9 rounds) and the Over 65, Over 50 (both 7 rounds) and 3 rated sections (all 5 rounds). I also did the Rapidplay on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August which was 9 rounds.

The Championship and most of the Major Open were played on live boards and could be followed live via the ECF website and on chess24.com. The top 4 boards were to one side of the other boards and had a TV screen each showing the board position and the last 6 moves played. Setting all this up occupied some time on the Friday morning before the start of the Championship. It is not a simple process as you must link all the boards together so that they all worked. If one link fails, then it knocks out several boards after it. Matt Carr had several nervous moments when such failures occurred or when tables moved putting strain on the wiring.

### **Riviera Centre**

The venue this year was one that had hosted the Championships before, the last time being the 100<sup>th</sup> in 2012, prior to my involvement with the British. It is an excellent venue with two large rooms linked by a short lobby area between. This arrangement allowed the events with a longer time control (90 mins + 30 mins and 30 secs increment) - Championship, Major Open, Over 65 and Over 50- to be in the main hall and the 3 rated sections with a shorter time control (90 mins plus 30 second increment) to be in the other. As players could be crossing from one room to another, we designated the lobby area to be mobile free and a silent area (more on this later). The players toilets were accessed at the far end of the hall well away from the entrance This was a far better arrangement than at Hull where players went through a public lobby area with people on phones or laptops following games or with chess engines open.

### **Spectators**

One difference with our local congresses is the number of spectators as there were those local players interested in chess, some who had travelled to watch the games live, players from the morning events, parents etc. Seating was provided in front of the 4 top boards though it was surprising how many people chose to stand behind the chairs (and close to

the other boards) or near the ropes and thus near the other players. Nevertheless, there was plenty of room in the main hall with large gaps between tables.

The problem with spectators was talking when watching the games (quickly and easily controlled) and bringing mobile phones into the seating area and playing hall. The latter we controlled by large signs where the spectators came in, but we had some that thought a phone on silent or being used with headphones was OK. After I had explained that the phone must be switched off, they did comply.

The area where I had the most problems was in the lobby area. We had several signs indicating no mobile phones and that it was an area to be silent. It seems that people cannot be without their mobiles these days as I was constantly having to remind them by pointing at the sign. Talking in that area was also a constant battle as well. When all the junior games had been completed and the parents had left there were few problems, except on one occasion on the final day. I saw a tall ginger haired male looking down at his phone and to attract his attention silently I tapped him lightly on his shoulder to be told aggressively that it was inappropriate and that I should learn to conduct myself better. I was concerned that he had some issues and explained what he was doing wrong and asking him to leave. Although he argued he did comply.

When doing the Rapidplay I announced that spectators must not have phones on but again this was ignored, and I had to ask some several times to turn them off. In the end I had to ask any offenders to leave. One person I noticed with his son and both were looking down at something which I discovered was a mobile phone. As he was clearly trying to conceal it, I asked him to leave something he did reluctantly. [*Ed – At one event I caught a woman, a spectator, texting from a phone in her handbag. She tried to say that she didn't know it was banned. I can only assume, therefore, that she expected me to believe that this was her normal procedure for texting.*]

One spectator came into the room and stood by a board in the Championships and spoke the word "rubbish" loudly and pointed at the board. I was sitting at my desk and did not spot who it was at first, but Stephen Orton pointed him out to me. He was a largish chap wearing an orange top and a baseball cap. When I went up to him, he made a hush sign and then as though he was closing a zip over his mouth. One of the players told me he had disturbed all the games near him, so I tried to escort the chap out. Unfortunately, he kept saying loudly "I know I should be quiet" and "I will be playing next year and will beat all of them". It was then that I realised he had some mental health issues and he did leave the venue when I asked him. He turned up again later in another part of the venue and was escorted out. Apparently, he was known to the centre staff and does have mental health issues.

### **The Players**

One amusing incident occurred. A player came up to me stating he could hear a beeping noise and that it was disturbing him. I went to his board and I could hear it faintly, the player suggesting it was coming from the lighting overhead. My thoughts were that it was nearer the board and when I walked away from the board you could not hear it. As it was

on a live board I checked with Matt Carr if any of his equipment could cause the beeping, but he said not. He then went to investigate as did another of the arbiters after I explained the problem to him. In the meantime, the player then complained to David Eustace who was the chief arbiter for the afternoon, so he was also looking and listening. The other players were wondering what was going on. I then went to the board and saw under the players chair was a bag which when I leaned down to listen was the source of the noise. On searching his bag there was a laptop and mobile phone (both switched off) but also a chess clock that was making the noise. By this time, I had paused the opponent's clock and we agreed to given him 5 minutes in view of the disturbance. I was thanked by the player who complained but did not receive an apology!

A more serious incident involving an IM which illustrates my comments in previous articles that even strong players do not understand the Laws of Chess though in this case you may wonder why. Under Article 11 of the Laws of Chess a player must not have a mobile phone in his possession while playing. The player can place it in a bag and place it under his chair but must not touch that bag at any time during the game. The penalty of having a phone on his possession, whether in a pocket or in a bag, while in the playing venue is loss of the game. This is all repeated in the announcements before each round so there should be no excuse for non-compliance.



Imagine my surprise when I was approached by a player on Board 15 of the Championship to advise that he was concerned as his opponent had left the room with his bag. I went out and met him as he was coming back with a tea he had just purchased when I commented on him taking his bag from under his chair, he said he had to as it had his wallet. Then he admitted, when asked, that he had his mobile phone in the bag. When I explained that I would have to default him he claimed to be unaware of the rule and that he did it all the time at the 4NCL (he was lucky to have not been caught there). I was asked to check with those in the café area to confirm that he had not used his phone, but I explained that is irrelevant and that it was a part of the Laws where the Arbiter has no discretion. I did stress that there was no suggestion of cheating but that the Laws are clear that having a phone on your

person is a loss. At this point he involved someone else who queried my decision and asked if we applied this strictly and to everyone to which I confirmed we did. Another Arbiter then came out and got involved and confirmed my decision. Although I had mentioned several times that he was to lose the game and lose rating points (as they had played enough moves for the game to count) he kept asking us to reach a decision. Having repeated the decision again he decided to confront his opponent after which things were

said that were unpleasant, so we had to separate them. The outcome was that he withdrew from the Championship and later indicated on social media that he would not play in FIDE rated events in the UK. That is sad and I would hope that after reflecting on this he will change his mind. However, most replying to his comments on social media could not understand why he was not aware of the rules.

Article 11 reads:

*11.3.2.1 During a game, a player is forbidden to have any electronic device not specifically approved by the arbiter in the playing venue. However, the regulations of an event may allow such devices to be stored in a player's bag, provided the device is completely switched off. This bag must be placed as agreed with the arbiter. Both players are forbidden to use this bag without permission of the arbiter. 11.3.2.2 If it is evident that a player has such a device on their person in the playing venue, the player shall lose the game. The opponent shall win. The regulations of an event may specify a different, less severe, penalty.*

The Championships had not specified a lesser penalty and 11.3.2.2 is clear that the player loses. *[Ed – Because of the nature of the event as a national championship, the anti-cheating regulations would prevent a lesser penalty being allowed even if this had been thought appropriate.]*

As it was a large FIDE rated event the British Championships were operating under the FIDE fair play rules. At the start of each round a board from either the Championships or the Major Open was selected randomly for a scan with a device that will detect electronic devices, metal objects and wires. This was accepted by all players as necessary particularly with some recent high-profile cases (one involved a Czech GM who was photographed using a mobile in a toilet cubicle) of cheating. In round 8 the game between Neil Bradbury and Keith Arkell was selected and after the game Keith wrote on his Facebook page what a good idea this was and how it sends a positive message when the top players are scanned. Nothing was found by the way, except Keith's room key. These scans have not, as far as I am aware, found anything at UK events but is the deterrence effect, in view of the random element, which will prevent any attempts at cheating.

Normally the scans are at the start of the round, but we found another use in the last round when someone in the Major Open was concerned that his opponent was going to the toilet a lot. I kept a watch and while the person went to the toilet, he only spent up to 2 minutes in there and after spent time walking round the room watching other games. When I advised the player that I could not see any reason to be concerned he stated that he was about to lose, and could we check his opponent after. At the time I said we could not on such flimsy evidence but Alan Atkinson, who was doing the fair play checks, said he could do it as a "random check" and scan both players. He did so and found nothing. I think the player became paranoid about what his opponent was doing and failed to concentrate on his game. Incidentally, this game was on board 19 so if the opponent was cheating then he was not very successful (this was another reason for my initial conclusion).

Now, an example why as an Arbiter you should not interpret what you are asked too narrowly. A player came up to me and asked if, after he has made his move, he can change it before he pressed his clock. Thinking he must have made an illegal move I said yes and then realised my error when he said that his opponent will not be pleased as he has just put his queen en prise. I then followed him to his Board and apologised, then explained that it is only in the case of an illegal move (that can be corrected) where you can correct the move after you have made your move but before you have pressed your clock.

Next one that highlights players confusion over the Laws. During the last round a player from the Over 50 section came up to me and asked for 2 minutes as his opponent 10 minutes after making his move offered a draw. I explained that this is not one where I could award 2 minutes automatically as while it is the incorrect procedure for offering a draw it is classed as distraction and I can only award 2 minutes if there are several such offers. Then his opponent came up and I explained that the correct way of offering a draw is to make the move and then offer the draw before completing the move by pressing the clock. However, the offer made was still an offer of a draw and could not be retracted. I gave the opponent a warning and indicated that further offers or distraction of the opponent will lead to extra time being given. *[Ed – John’s wording here may leave a misconception. There is certainly no automatic two minute penalty for a distraction but it is up to the arbiter which penalty to enforce. There is no need to work up in severity. In this case a warning was given. Other arbiters may feel that a time penalty is appropriate but this could be giving an additional 30 seconds.]*

For those interested the Article reads:

*9.1.2.1 A player wishing to offer a draw shall do so after having made a move on the chessboard and before pressing his clock. An offer at any other time during play is still valid but Article 11.5 must be considered*

11.5 refers to distraction of the opponent and the penalty available to the Arbiter is in 12.9 which starts with a warning and increases in stages.

Later we had the player making the draw offer state that he was claiming a threefold repetition of the position. He had written his move down and wished to claim the draw. When I mentioned this to the other player, he stated that we needed to check the position as his rook was not on the c file earlier but on the a file. On checking, this was the case and it turned out that the claimant had been looking at just the positions and moves of the opponent’s king and his rook. It must be that all of the position was the same not just part. So, his opponent then got his 2 minutes added in view of the incorrect claim.

The Article in the Laws reads:

*9.2.1 The game is drawn, upon a correct claim by a player having the move, when the same position for at least the third time (not necessarily by a repetition of moves):*

*9.2.1.1 is about to appear, if he first writes his move, which cannot be changed, on his scoresheet and declares to the arbiter his intention to make this move, or*

*9.2.1.2 has just appeared, and the player claiming the draw has the move.*

9.2.2 Positions are considered the same if and only if the same player has the move, pieces of the same kind and colour occupy the same squares and the possible moves of all the pieces of both players are the same. Thus positions are not the same if:

9.2.2.1 at the start of the sequence a pawn could have been captured en passant

9.2.2.2 a king had castling rights with a rook that has not been moved, but forfeited these after moving. The castling rights are lost only after the king or rook is moved.

### Comment

At our Congresses I always praise the players for not causing the Arbiter any problems. With the number of players involved at the Championships I suppose it was inevitable that there would be some issues, but I seem to have attracted more than my fair share. Perhaps the explanation could be that my FIDE ID Number ends in 666?!

Despite the issues I enjoyed controlling at this year's Championships. In the Rapidplay I was to obtain my final FIDE Arbiter norm and felt that I had earned it. With the paperwork done and passed to FIDE it remains for them to confirm the title.

Next Year's British may be earlier as there is an Olympiad that starts on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020. It could mean the Championships and some other events starting Mid July and the Juniors etc played later. The venue is still to be decided as the one they had set up fell through just before this year's British Championships. There will be an announcement during the next couple of months. *[Ed - The dates and venue have now been confirmed with a return to Torquay. The event will return to a 2 week format with the Championship in the first week and junior events in the second.]*

### FIDE/ECU News

At the meeting of the FIDE Presidential Board in Budapest in September several Commissions were criticised. The three Commissions were Technical, Rules and Arbiters. The criticism of Technical concerned the quality of its report which was described as poorly structured. Rules had its knuckles rapped for not considering topical issues. It was, however, the Arbiters Commission which received the most severe comments. Areas which are to be considered, and which will affect all arbiters with a FIDE title or seeking one involve training, retraining and recertification. It may be that the minutes however, although correctly indicating the concerns do not reflect accurately the actual discussion.



There has also to be training given to those being considered as arbiters at the next two Olympiads and to construct pools of arbiters for other major events. At the time of writing I believe 4 such courses have been held.

From the Presidential Board comments it seems very likely that arbiter assessment will be introduced in the near future. Probably initially this will only apply to those wanting to do major events but could be extended to cover those doing



any FIDE rated event. David Sedgwick attended, and passed, such a refresher course held in Italy.

The European Chess Union Arbiters Commission has been successful in getting criteria passed regarding the number of none local arbiters used in ECU events.

## Disabled Players

The Laws of Chess are quite good at directing what should happen if one of the players is blind. Unfortunately, they are not specific for other types of disability. Indeed, the Laws are totally silent with the exception of the following two exceptions.

*6.2.6 If a player is unable to use the clock, an assistant, who must be acceptable to the arbiter, may be provided by the player to perform this operation. His clock shall be adjusted by the arbiter in an equitable way. This adjustment of the clock shall not apply to the clock of a player with a disability.*

*8.1.6 If a player is unable to keep score, an assistant, who must be acceptable to the arbiter, may be provided by the player to write the moves. His clock shall be adjusted by the arbiter in an equitable way. This adjustment of the clock shall not apply to a player with a disability.*

This does not specify what the disability is and both rules only apply to the setting of the clock.

A slogan which has been appearing regularly recently is “Not All Disabilities are Visible”. This does not apply only to mental disabilities. There are physical disabilities which cannot be seen. There are other cases where it is impossible for the arbiter to know the full extent of a disability. For example, a player walks with the aid of stick. From this it may not be obvious that the player has a mobility issue which makes turning and bending painful.

These make the arbiter’s task of ensuring that the rules are complied with even more difficult. Should the arbiter insist on a medical certificate and even if this is demanded where would the arbiter be able to confirm the extent of the disability.

When a player asks for special conditions, provided these are not unreasonable and do not unduly affect the opponent, then it is acceptable in most events to adopt the player’s suggestions. The alternative would be to use an assistant. For high profile events the use of an assistant is probably the best course of action. It is very unlikely that a player would fake a condition or lie about it. However, this is a possibility so when a dispensation has been granted extra supervision should be employed to make sure that no advantage has been gained.

Note that both Laws (6.2.6 and 8.1.6) state that it is the player who should supply the assistant but that the arbiter must approve the assistant. This raises another matter which needs consideration. When might an arbiter reject the assistant?

I am unaware of an arbiter rejecting an assistant before the start of a game but I do know of situations where the player was told that the assistant would not be allowed in future.

In these cases the assistant was either absent from the board for prolonged periods (and therefore effectively useless) or caused disturbance at the board.

A growing number of arbiters and players feel that the Laws of Chess should cover disability in greater detail.

At an Australian event there was a young player with what appeared to be a form of Tourettes. To the annoyance of his opponent and the other surrounding players he would utter grunts throughout his game at random periods. There is no ideal solution to this situation. Banning such a player could lead the tournament organisers into serious legal problems. The best solution is to play his games in a different room and if this is not possible have his board as far from others as possible. Neither situation will satisfy the opponent but will minimise the disruption to others. It may also be worth remembering that players can be given extra time if they are disturbed. The Laws properly prevent a disabled player from having their time reduced but they do not prevent the opponent, if the situation merits it, from having their time increased.

### **That looks familiar! (Arbiter Errors?)**

At the FIDE Grand Swiss tournament in the Isle of Man, Chief Arbiter Alex Holowczek and his team, faced the problem of games on adjacent boards having exactly the same moves played on them. One of these 'twin-games' was moved to another



**Now either wear these blinkers or I will move you to another room.**

room to avoid allegations of cheating.

Perhaps the most surprising thing is that this situation occurs so infrequently. Certainly having it happen on adjacent boards is very unusual but there are famous cases from history of twin games

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The most famous case is from round 14 of the 1955 Interzonal in Gothenburg,

Sweden. Here three games initially followed the same lines. Although the games were not on adjacent boards all three were on demo boards (remember these?) so the players could see the positions as they occurred. In rd 14 on 7 September three Russians were drawn against three Argentinians. All three games started in the same way. They were **Efim Geller vs Oscar Panno, Boris Spassky vs Herman Pilnik and Paul Keres vs Miguel Najdorf**. The Argentinians were smarting after Keres destroyed Panno in r12 with a novelty against the Najdorf.

The three Argentinians, including the opening's namesake, Miguel Najdorf, had all prepared to use what was then a bit of a novelty but they were wholly unprepared for 7. f4, instead booking up on 7. Qf3, the main line at the time. At an 'emergency meeting', they prepared a reply that they decided would equalize and give Black a good game. All three of the Soviets had White, all the Argentinians had black, and all the games started in exactly the same way: 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Bg5 e6 7. f4 Be7 8. Qf3.

Geller writes in his book *"By playing f4 before Qf3, White squeezes Black in the centre and can easily launch a dangerous pawn storm on the kingside with g2-g4 should Black place his king there. Here the Argentinians had prepared the following clever little maneuver: 8. ... h6 9. Bh4 g5 10. fxg5 Nfd7*

*Cute, huh? White's pawn on g5 is pinned and Black will take it back within two moves; meanwhile, the pawn break has freed the wonderful e5 square for Black's knight, on which it will be the best-placed piece on the board."*

Unfortunately for the Argentine players, there was a flaw in the plan. Geller spotted it, and he reportedly did so instantly, banging out 11. Nxe6!

Geller capitalised on the fact that Black's light-squared bishop is no longer defending e6. After some thought (and perhaps to have the reassurance of seeing the Geller game progress), Keres and Spassky played the same move on their boards.

The intended 11. ... Ne5, does not work as after 12. Nxd8 Nxf3+ 13. gxf3 Kxd8 14. Rg1 White comes out two pawns ahead. The Argentinians had apparently prepared for 11. Nxe6!. 11. ... fxe6 12. Qh5+ Kf8 13. Bb5!

The games diverge at this point possibly because the Geller–Panno game was moving the fastest, and Pilnik and Najdorf wanted to avert the disaster that was unfolding on their national champion's board.

Panno played 13. ... Ne5 and Geller won quickly.

Pilnik and Najdorf both chose to play 13. ... Kg7 instead, hoping to avoid Panno's fate. Their games continued with the same moves until move 22.

Were the arbiters at this event right to allow the games to continue. Since they were not on adjacent boards it would be difficult to fault them for not moving the players. However the games were on demonstration boards and it is these that were being used by the combatants to keep track of the other encounters. In those days the demonstration boards were being operated by human beings so flicking a few switches and having delayed broadcast as such was not possible. With reflection there is a strong case that the

operators should have been asked to stop moving the pieces but keep recording the games until the chief arbiter allowed them to bring the games up to date.

In the Isle of Man situation the games were moved because one of the players in the 'second' game was becoming agitated by the situation. It is easy to see why a player would calculate his reply only to discover his preferred move had already been played on the other board. The player then has the quandary of playing a move he considers inferior or risk accusations of cheating. At the very least the game on the adjacent board was a distraction and in the worst case scenario it was a source of information which could be used by a cheat.

There has been some debate as to whether the situation is covered by Law 11.1 (bringing the game into disrepute) or 11.3.1 (using notes). Either would do, as indeed does the Preface to the Laws. It has been established that the main reason for moving one board was the distraction that the adjoining board was causing. This is no different from moving a game under a fan, or in direct sunlight to a more comfortable position when nothing can be done to rectify the situation otherwise.

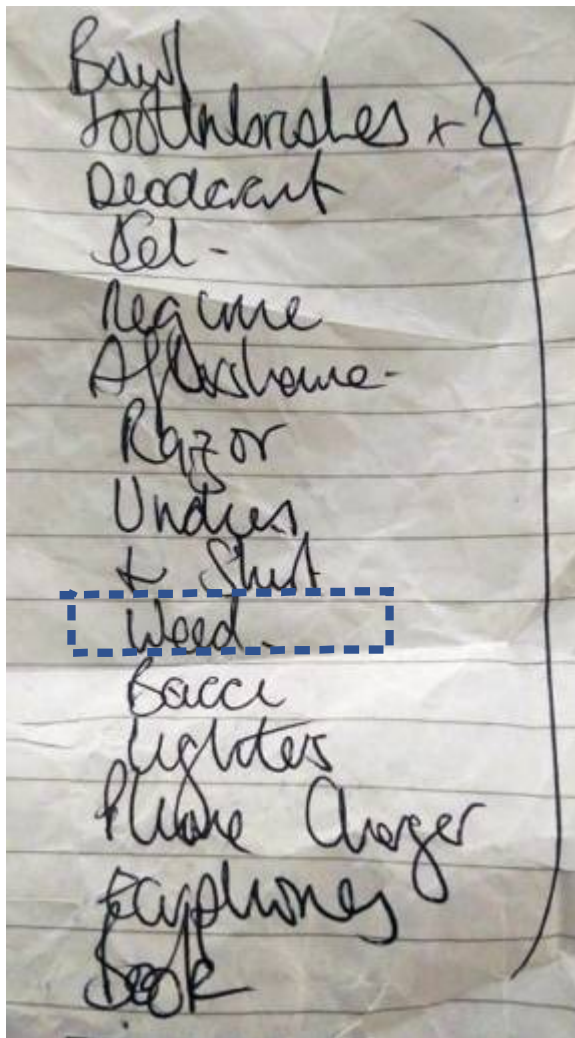
## Scarborough

Two result slips are handed in with differing results. Nothing unusual in that. The result slip had one player winning and the other drawing. That is much less common as most wrong results are 1-0 v 0-1. Making this situation much less common is that the player who had filled in  $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$  on his slip was the one given a win by his opponent. When it was noticed that two different results had been handed in only the player who had recorded the draw was still in the venue. He confirmed that it was a draw and that result was duly recorded. During the night following this that same player then contact the arbiter to confirm that he had got it wrong and he hadn't drawn but had won. Further investigation showed that the opponent had resigned in a lost position but that the player on being offered the resignation had assumed the player had made a correct claim of draw by repetition. To further confuse things, even if a draw by repetition had been claimed it would have been rejected on the grounds that the position had never actually been repeated!! *You genuinely couldn't make this up!*

Round 3 and after 25 minutes board 19 still has no player at it. It is noted that the clock, which had been started by the arbiter was no longer running. The game had not been agreed a quick draw as both scoresheets were still there. The players were found happily playing each other on Board 25. (Neither player even had that as a pin number.) When asked why they were at the wrong board one of the players replied "Isn't this the right board?". The other explained that he had been sitting in his designated seat but saw his opponent at a different seat so assumed that he had got it wrong.

Just after 9am and the arbiters are trying to print out paper copies of the draws when the electricity goes off and the tannoy system plays the recorded message "There has been an incident. Please stay where you are until told to evacuate." Fortunately it only lasted about 5 minutes before normal service was resumed and printing continued. The power

going off is apparently part of the safety measures. Torquay also had safety measures in place which seemed designed to frustrate the arbiters. There, when the fire alarm was triggered vents in the roof opened to allow the smoke to escape. Unfortunately when the alarm was triggered by some local youths with nothing better to do it coincided with a day of continuous downpours. The result being that about 40 boards placed under the vents were soaked and the table cloths had to be changed and the boards mopped. Fortunately, this happened in the gap between morning and afternoon events.



An interesting packing list was found on the floor at Scarborough. No-one reclaimed it. It is given opposite.

The item below t-shirt is of some interest.

The last round at Scarborough produced one of the most unbelievable incidents I have seen.

A player is on the 4<sup>th</sup> board of one of the sections, so although not leading is in with a chance of a prize. On the move, he gets up, puts on his jacket lifts his bag and exits the building (his scoresheet, pen and an umbrella remained). The opponent reports this to the arbiter who decides to wait for a bit and to see what happens. The missing player is currently a pawn down and in a knight fork which will cost him more material. After about 20 minutes the arbiter informs the remaining player that he has waited long enough and awards him a win. 5 or 10 minutes later the 'missing' player returns. He admits that he has gone for a walk and took his bag as he wanted his valuables, including a mobile phone with him. He claimed it was not his move when he left, it is perfectly acceptable to go for a walk around town when stressed, he had never used his phone during

that time and that he had only been gone for 15 minutes. His game should therefore

never have been forfeited. Not one but three strong reasons to forfeit the player, but still he claimed he was being unfairly treated and other tournaments allowed him to do this!! Alex Holowczak informs me that at another event a player was spotted in jogging kit running past the window during a game. Neither his opponent nor the arbiter had missed him until this point. It appears he was gone for 10 minutes and had left his normal clothes behind. This may explain some of the odours at chess tournaments. And last, but by no means least was the player who decided to withdraw, probably on his way home from a nightclub, at 4.30 am!!! The beep of the text message awoke the congress organiser from her badly needed beauty sleep.

## **FIDE ARBITER COURSES**

The 69th Internet based FIDE Arbiters' Seminar is going to be organized from 30/11/2019 to 01/12/2019 and from 07/12/2019 to 08/12/2019 by the Chess Federation of Canada, under the auspices of FIDE.

The Lecturer will be IA/IO Hal Bond (CAN), FIDE Lecturer, the Assistant Lecturer will be IA Shohreh Bayat (IRI) and the Technical Organizer will be IA/IO Patrick McDonald (CAN). The language of the Seminar will be English.

The Seminar will give norms and titles of FIDE Arbiter, according to the Regulations for the titles of Arbiters.

A FIDE Arbiters' Seminar is going to be organized from 31/01/2020 to 02/02/2020 in Dublin, Ireland, by the Irish Chess Union and Moves for Life, under the auspices of FIDE.

The venue of the Seminar will be Gonzaga College SJ, Sandford Road, Ranelagh.

The Lecturer will be IA Alex McFarlane (SCO), FIDE Lecturer and the Assistant Lecturer will be IA Gerry Graham (IRL).

The language of the Seminar will be English.

The Seminar will give norms and titles of FIDE Arbiter, according to the Regulations for the titles of Arbiters.

There may also be one held by the ECF at Millfield School in Street or in Hull. Both have expressed an interest in staging one.

Details of the first two are on the FIDE website.

## **BAD BEHAVIOUR**

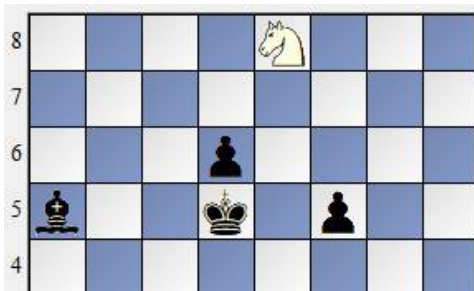
An incident occurred in a New Zealand tournament which is worth relating here.

It took place in the last round of the Merv Morrison Memorial. The time control was all moves in 90 minutes with 30 second increments.

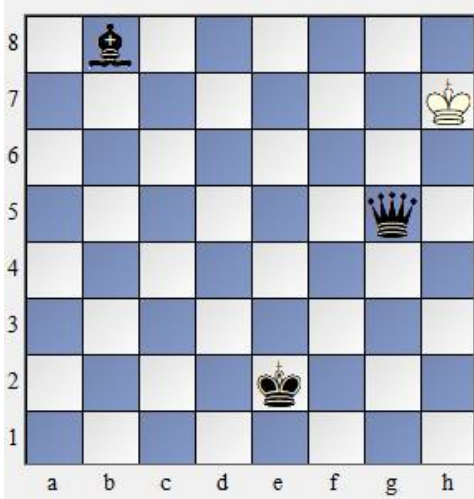
One player was a 12 year old (rated 1582) and the opponent was about 30 (rated 1926). However it was not the boy who acted in a childish manner.

The 'adult' was white in the position given. When this position arose White had 1 hour and 45 minutes on his clock – yes 15 minutes more than he started with.

He sat for more than an hour and a half. Some moves were then played and the second position reached. No further moves were made and white's time was allowed to run out.



The arbiter of the event states the following. "Such bad behaviour must be put on public record." He then names the player. "The only thing that allowed this incident to drag on for so long were other games still being played, the last of which was critical in deciding a major prize. Otherwise this nonsense would have been stopped much earlier."



The arbiter did record the result as a win for black whilst the game was still in progress.

The arbiter continues. "This was after Black informed me exactly what moves he would play in reply to White's only remaining 2 legal moves before forced checkmate.

Not only were the results written down, but Black signed the scoresheets on my instruction and then it was simply a matter of waiting for White to either run out of time, or resign, or play remaining 2 moves to checkmate."

"If this incident had happened in an earlier round, the game would have been forcibly ended at least an hour earlier with expulsion of offending player from event. Such

unsporting behaviour ruins the chess event for everyone. We had gone far beyond expected tolerance for this sort of behaviour in this case.

While there is nothing wrong with playing on however lost the position may be, the player with the "lost position" needs to make moves efficiently and not blatantly waste time. Just sitting there not making moves while running down own clock is just plain rude and disrespectful to opponent and everybody else involved in the event. "

This situation is definitely covered by the term 'bringing the game into disrepute'. I find it somewhat odd that the arbiter asked black what he intended to play and awarded him the win on his answer but still allowed the game to 'continue' until flag fall. It could even be alleged that the arbiter encouraged the black player to break the Laws of Chess by discussing a game in progress. In my opinion the arbiter would have been within his powers to have stepped in much earlier and warn the player that he was considering defaulting him and to have done so if he still did not move. But to perform the way he did was not acceptable.

## Incidents from the Women's 4NCL

This tournament had a significant number of younger female players. One, clutching her soft toy, was being jokingly accused by others that it was only there to give her advice. One other challenged that it was to disguise a mobile phone. To the amusement of everyone around the arbiter then proceeded to scan the stuffed bunny with his metal detector and declared it innocent.

The same male arbiter on a visit to the toilet heard a phone beep in one of the cubicles. His first thought was that he would have to wait to see if it was one of the players. Fortunately it only took a few seconds to remember which event he was at.

### 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



**Items for inclusion in future issues should be sent to Alex McFarlane  
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