



Newsletter of the Chess Arbiters Association

December 2019

Issue 39

David Welch (30.10.1945 – 09.11.2019): It is with great regret and sadness that we heard of the death of founding member and the first Chief Arbiter of the CAA, David Welch.

GM Nigel Short described David as “A great servant of British chess.” A very accurate statement. David Sedgwick adds to this. “He loved arbiting at all types of chess events, whatever the format and whatever the strengths of the players.”

See page 2 for Dave’s obituary and also the CAA website.

The funeral will take place at noon on Friday 6th December at Landican Crematorium, Park Road, Woodchurch, Wirral CH49 5LW.

His wake and a buffet will follow at the Grove House Hotel, Grove Road, Wallasey, CH44 4BT. Anyone wishing to attend this should contact Peter Purland.

AGM: Unfortunately the AGM did not have a quorum. It has therefore been rearranged for Friday 3rd January at 11am at the Caplin Hastings Congress, Horntye Road, Hastings TN34 1EX

Those present had a short discussion about a number of topics. Lara has indicated that a new Chairman should be found to take over from her.

The agenda will be the same as in AMToo 38. The possibility of an additional item still exists.

ECF Manager of Arbiters: Tom Thorpe has resigned as the ECF Manager of Arbiters. A replacement is being sought.

Obituary David Welch (30.10.1945 - 9.11.2019)



David being presented with his FIDE Lifetime Achievement award in 2016

Dave, as he was known to almost everyone, was born in Brampton, Chesterfield and attended the local Grammar School before going on to Queens' College, Cambridge where he was the Librarian and Bulletin Editor for the chess club. He moved from Wallasey CC to Liverpool CC in 1968. He was eventually to become its President. He played a significant role in organising the Liverpool Chess Congress which in its day was a massive event.

He joined the arbiting team of the British Championships in 1981 eventually becoming its Chief Arbiter and Manager. Within the ECF (and its predecessor the BCF) he was the Manager/Director of Congress Chess and Chief Arbiter. He was awarded the ECF President's Award in 2007.

Internationally he was awarded the FIDE International Arbiters (IA) title in 1977 and the International Organisers (IO) title in 2010. He was awarded the FIDE Long Service award in 2016.

As well as being Chief Arbiter of the British and numerous local congresses, Dave had served as Chief Arbiter at the Gibraltar and Isle of Man Tournaments.

While in Gibraltar in 2017 Dave suffered a stroke which left him debilitated. As a result of this he was unable even to visit a chess event and passed away in hospital at 6am on 9th November.

The above are the bare facts. They do not come close to giving an indication of the tremendous amount of work and effort and success David had in promoting the game he loved. Dave was just as happy working on the Minor Section of a weekend congress as he was being arbiter of a Grandmaster event. He was always happy to pass on his knowledge to less experienced arbiters who showed a willingness to learn.

Dave had no immediate family in the normal sense but he has left behind his family of chess players who will miss him greatly.

Peter Purland - David was born in Chesterfield on October 30th 1945. He was educated at Chesterfield Grammar School where he both played and organised chess which his father had taught him. After a successful career at school he moved on to Queen's College Cambridge to study Physics. There he played for Queen's at chess and, believe it or not, was a cox in the College eight. After four years at Cambridge he qualified with an MA and got a job at Liverpool College as junior physics teacher in the Upper School (current Y9 and above). He started in September 1968 which was also when I started. I taught History and Sport, especially Rugby and Swimming, in the Lower School (Ys 5-8) so at first we did not see a lot of each other. I had played chess at University and agreed to start some teams in the Lower School in 1969. I remember meeting Dave at "The Tram" the staff pub, and we both mentioned that we would be able to drive the minibus after half term. It was then we found out we were both born on the same day – but in different countries. David was living in a College Flat in Croxteth Road and when Ann and I got engaged I was lucky enough to get the flat above Dave's. Dave remained the owner of his flat until his death although I moved to Wallasey in 2008.

After a couple of years running school chess during which time Dave became a BCF Judge he persuaded me to start doing Adult Congresses and I followed him down the path of International Arbiter and BCF Senior Arbiter. I remember Stewart Rueben saying that there would never be any law disputes when Liverpool College were playing! I am afraid I do not remember the exact dates when David moved up the arbiting ladder but he did become chief arbiter of the British Championships and also chief arbiter of the BCF (later ECF). We also started taking holidays together and travelled to Ethiopia, Libya, Jordan, Guatemala, Honduras, Crimea, Lithuania, Finland, Estonia, up the Hurtigruten, Rumania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and many other places. We also took school holidays – Dave did the finance and was very cheersed off when the Euro arrived as it was far too easy! David retired due to ill health in 2000 but this did not stop him travelling or running chess. He did go to Azerbaijan for the Olympiad. Both of us had been involved in chess at Gibraltar from the start of the tournament and visited over 65 times. Sadly it was in Gibraltar in August 2017 that Dave suffered a severe stroke. He survived it but was left totally paralysed down the right side. He went in to Arundel Park Care Home where his many friends visited him. Gradually his health deteriorated and on 7th November he was rushed in to Royal Liverpool and passed away peacefully on Saturday 9th November. He will be remembered as a true gentleman, polite, caring, hard working and with an excellent brain. His contribution to English Chess has been immense and he will be sorely missed.

Alex McFarlane - Dave was a great inspiration and mentor to me. I first met him in 1985 at the British in Edinburgh. We worked together every year after that at either the

British, Blackpool or Hastings until his stroke in 2017. At one of the British Championships at Eastbourne we were using a complicated Swiss pairing system which was reserved for the British Championship only. The system was supposed to produce a unique pairing. We both came up with different pairings on one scoregroup. A check showed that both pairings satisfied the rules. When David saw my solution to a problem he thought it neater than his but not content with that he applied the same logic to a different scoregroup where a similar problem had existed. The outcome was a third version which became the published version. The special rules were abandoned at the end of that event!

David also had a love of beer. When we were at the Olympiad together in Baku I would go out and get some nice dark beers which we both preferred to the mass produced lager that was on sale in the hotel bar. We sat together most evenings, downing a beer or two, chatting and putting forward suggestions for revisions to what was to become the 2017 Laws of Chess. One of these suggestions, regarding illegal positions, appeared in draft version 7 only to disappear in draft 8 which appeared only a few hours later and before we had finished our beers!

AGM Report

The AGM did not have a quorum. The 5 members who did attend acknowledged the loss of Dave Welch.

There followed some discussion on various arbiter related chess topics. The main points of interest were

- a) the ECF is actively seeking a new Manager of Arbiters;
- b) the FIDE Ethics Commission has returned the resolution of the case resulting from a 4NCL Congress to the ECF. The ECF will now have to consider forming a group to deal with the matter and any similar cases. As has been reported here previously, FIDE would be swamped with similar cases and so has required national federations to deal with such incidents and inform FIDE of the outcome;
- c) remuneration for arbiters was discussed. The concern that some events would use unqualified arbiters rather than cover costs of qualified arbiters was discussed. Several arbiters had indicated that they would prefer to be out of pocket than jeopardise the integrity of a chess event they have had an association with. It was suggested that one way forward would be for the ECF (and other federations) to insist that for an event to be graded it required at least one qualified arbiter to officiate. This is in line with the FIDE regulations which, going further, insist that all arbiters at a FIDE rated event are licenced;

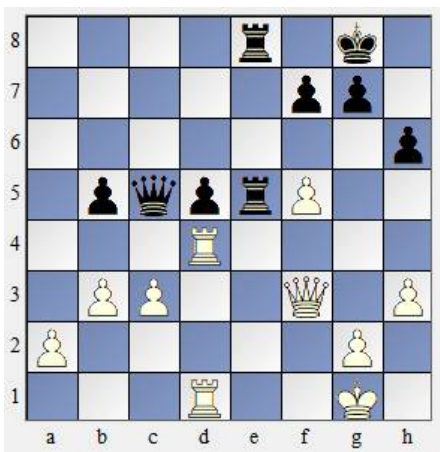
d) organisation of arbiter courses was discussed along with the problems of the ECF having so few assessors and lecturers;

e) John Shaw has indicated that he would be willing to take on the position of Treasurer. The meeting suggested that the Exec Committee should ask him to take up the post of Treasurer until he could be formally appointed.

Touch Move

The following article is from the NCA Bulletin, the ECF's Magazine of the Year 2019. Everyone knows the touch move rule don't they. If you touch a piece then you must move it. Simple!

However, this move can be a bit more complicated than some players realise. The following position arose in a Northumberland League match.

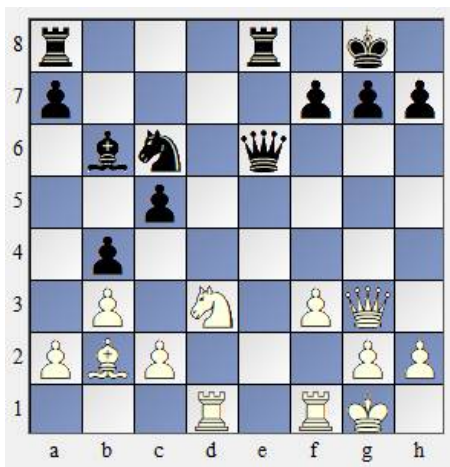


White played Rxd5. This move leaves his own king in check. The opponent was originally taken by surprise by what was an unexpected move. It can take a bit of time for a player to realise why the move was unexpected. Indeed, players have resigned as a result of the surprise effect caused by such an illegal move.

In this case the opponent did point out the illegal move. The clock was reset giving Black an additional 2 minutes.

At this point Black, an experienced arbiter, announced that the touch move rule applied and restarted White's clock.

White correctly pointed out that the rook could not move and therefore considered himself free to make any legal move. When Black pointed out that the pawn too had been touched White did not deny it (indeed that move was written on the scoresheet) but didn't accept that it had been deliberately touched with the intention of moving it. Unfortunately, no copy of the Laws was available (all clubs should have one stored with their equipment) and so the two captains had to be involved. The White captain agreed that Qxe5 had to be played. White resigned as the queen is lost.



The second diagram shows another similar situation where it is easy to forget the touch move rule. Here Black plays 1 ... c4 and White plays 2 Qxg7 thinking it is mate.

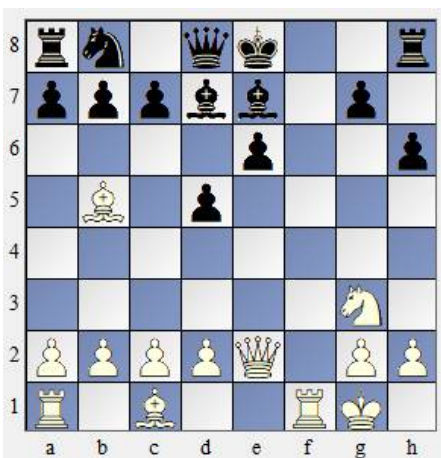
Black quickly points out that White is the victim of a discovered check so cannot make that move. White then plays 2 Nf2 (or 2 Rh1) blocking the check.

However this contravenes the touch move rule. An arbiter would insist on 2 Qf2 being played.

Black however claimed that 2 Nf2 was a

second illegal move and wanted to be awarded the game. Although the knight move is not allowed it is not considered as an illegal move. The claim of the game is dismissed.

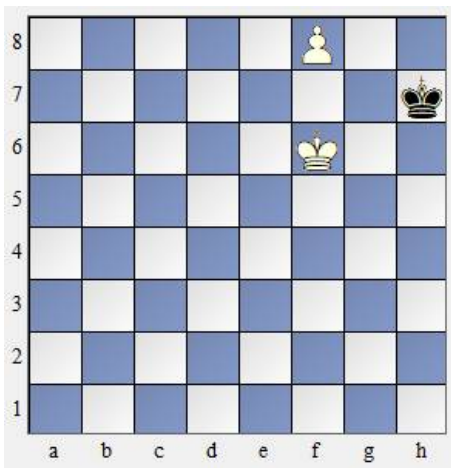
Situation 3. A player castles by lifting the rook with his right hand and moving it to f1. He then picks up his king with his left hand and moves it to g1. The opponent immediately claims that White has played an illegal move as he has used both hands. Using two hands to make a move is indeed illegal but as the player has not pressed his clock he would, under normal circumstances, be allowed to reposition the rook and king on their original squares and then castle using only one hand. But here there is another complication. The player touched the rook first. He is therefore not allowed to castle. Castling is a king move, so the king should be touched first. In this case the move Rf1 must be played.



Another castling problem that can arise in novice events is shown in the third diagram.

Here Black tries to castle but it is illegal since the king crosses f8 which is under attack. The king cannot move. White claims that since the rook was touched after the king it must still go to f8. The White claim is rejected. As castling is defined as a king move, the rook does not have to move at all. Black is free to make any move that he wants.

Another situation which can cause trouble with the touch move rule is promotion. The fourth diagram shows a very simple position.



- Here White is about to promote. Promoting to a queen will mean stalemate. In how many of the following situations must White promote to a queen?
- White lifts a queen from the side of the board but changes it to a rook before putting it on the square;
 - White lifts the queen and places it on the board but before releasing it changes it to a rook;
 - White announces queen but instead promotes to a rook;
 - White announces rook and presses the

clock.

Answers on back page.

Antipodean Antics



The arbiter marks up the result but allows the game to continue!

An incident from New Zealand was reported in the previous issue. A player sat for two lengthy periods of inaction against a young opponent before eventually running out of time. This has provoked some discussion. Firstly, it should be stated that in most cases where a player 'stalls' and apparently refuses to play there is little that the arbiter can do as it is the players own thinking time which he can use as he likes.

Provided the player does not leave the playing hall there is seldom any action the arbiter can take. There is nothing specifically in the Laws which prevents a player taking as long over a move as he likes. Nor is there anything in the Laws which allows the arbiter to

force the player to stay at his board until he moves. If he does not do so however then that strengthens the 'bringing the game into disrepute' argument if that is going to be used. If the position is complicated then the player may have a defence to his tardiness. In a simple position that defence is weakened. In this case however the arbiter did take action on the second occasion of the game 'freezing'.

The picture shows the arbiter recording the score as 0-1 but allowing the game to continue until flagfall. The arbiter did this after consulting with the opponent and discussing the game in progress. In this case the young opponent could easily explain what he was going to play but what would the arbiter have done if the player's analysis was wrong e.g. it led to stalemate. In that case inaction by the arbiter would have amounted to giving advice. It is difficult to understand why the arbiter went down this route. It is even more difficult to understand why he recorded a win but allowed the game to apparently continue. By asking the young player to discuss the moves he was going to play, the arbiter risked giving the staller grounds to appeal his decision. His opponent had been discussing his game while it was still in progress. Although unlikely, an Appeals Committee could overturn the result on the grounds that only the youngster had actually broken the Laws of Chess!!

It should also be remembered that there have been games decided by a strategic 'long pause'. If the opponent is short of time it has been known for players to allow time for the adrenalin to stop pumping and then resume the game at a reasonably quick pace. Stunned by this turn of events the opponent has been known to make an error. There have also been cases without increment where a player has decided his only chance is to blitz his opponent and to do that must let his clock run down to less than 5 minutes. A third situation is where the player hopes to catch the opponent out with a trick which is not 100% sound, usually involving a sacrifice. If the opponent assumes that it was a bad move played in time trouble they may not analyse the line properly. All of these are legitimate reasons to let the clock run down.

Promotion Confusion

At the 4NCL Hull event I witnessed a rather strange promotion. The player pushed his pawn to the far end of the board and then moved his hand over the queen that had previously been captured. It hovered there for a few seconds as his eyes diverted to the extra queens. I can only guess he felt that he was compelled to use these queens because his hand then rapidly moved from the initial queen to the alternative which was then lifted and put on the board. Perhaps he felt his original queen had already done its

fair share of work! The player seemed to take almost as long in deciding which queen to use as he did in deciding which move to make.

At the same event a round 4 game went on until 5 minutes before the scheduled start of the last round. This caused a couple of additional complications. Water spilled at the next board requiring the change of a tablecloth. This couldn't be attempted until that game finished and a printer which had worked reliable all weekend chose that moment to act up meaning that the draw could not be printed for the bottom two sections. If the printer problem had happened at any other round there would have been adequate time to solve the problem or print it out elsewhere. The draw was read out and displayed on a computer screen.

Ask the Arbiter

The following occurred in a league match with no arbiter present.

A player made a move which would have cost him his queen. He asked the opponent to allow him to take it back. To the apoplexy of his captain the opponent agreed to allow the move to be retracted. The question which arose was what, if anything, the captain could have done about this.

On seeing this an arbiter would have stepped in. Could a Captain? This would depend on the league rules. Only if the captain has the full power of an arbiter could they do so. In the game in question the opponent won in any case. But could an appeal be made after

the game? This should not be possible. An analogous situation would be the case of an illegal move being discovered after the game had ended. In that case the result has been agreed and the Laws state that the result will stand. But what would have happened if the opponent was losing and

a) asked to take a move back but his request was refused; or

b) asked for the position before the take back to be restored.

In both cases the game should continue from the current position. In other words that claim should be denied. In (a) it can be

argued that the player is being unsporting but he has done nothing legally wrong. He is



The team captain responds calmly to his player's actions.

following the Laws of Chess. In (b) the player accepted the irregularity. This situation can be compared with a touch move infringement which must be claimed at the time. Law 4.8 could be applied which states that a player must claim an infringement before touching a piece.

It occasionally happens in a congress that an arbiter is called over by a player claiming that he allowed his opponent to touch a piece but move another and now the opponent is not allowing him the same 'privilege'. Since the arbiter is now involved he must enforce the Laws and insist that the player moves the touched piece.

Prize Distribution

Dave Clayton has had a couple of tournaments recently where the distribution of prizes has not been obvious. There has also been a thread on the USCF forum about the same issue.

In Britain it is the norm that cash prizes are shared and tie-breaks are only used to allocate trophies. It seems to be generally accepted that, with the exception of special prizes such as best junior or senior, no player should be able to win more than the top prize. This is often worded as 'no player can win more than one prize'. Some tournaments include the word 'normally' in front of that to cover the special circumstances which can crop up. What are these special circumstances? That should become obvious after a couple of examples.

Consider the following situation. We have a tournament where the prizes are 1st £200, 2nd £100, 3rd £50 and best U-1800 £60. There is no tie-break so prizes are shared amongst those on the same points.

Player A wins the event and gets £200. Three players finish third. So they will share £150 or £50 each. Straightforward so far. But one of those sharing second place is also U1800. How is the prize fund now distributed? There are several ways of doing this. The tournament conditions may prevent some of them applying.

Option 1: The winner who is Player A gets £200, 2nd Player B gets £50, as does Player C. Player D (who is U1800) also gets £50 but also an additional rating prize of £60, a total of £110. This means that player D gets more than one prize.

Option 2: Winner A £200, 2nd B, C, D £50 each Player E the 'runner-up' U1800 player gets £60.

This means that E gets more than D so is obviously unfair. This distribution though can work if the U1800 prize is subsequently shared. For example, Players E and F getting £30 each as a share of the rating prize.

Option 3: Winner A £200, 2nd B and C £50 each (a 1/3 share of the second and third prizes) D also gets his £50 share but this is enhanced by £10 to take it up to the same level as the rating prize he could have won. The remaining £50 of the original rating prize is then given to E as the next top U1800 player.

Option 4: Winner A £200, 2nd B, C £75 each, U1800 D £60

This is obviously unfair on D who is getting less than the other second placed players.

Option 5: Winner A £200, 2nd B, C, D £70 each

Here the U1800 prize is subsumed into the main prize fund and shared equally amongst the three players. An alternative logic is that D got the rating prize and 1/15 of the second and third prizes with B and C getting 7/15ths.

Which option is the best?

Options 2 and 4 can be seen to have flaws as far as player D is concerned.

Option 5 is, I believe, what the USCF wants to happen in American events. It has the advantage of being relatively simple to calculate and distribute. (The USCF system also ensures that a lone rating prize winner is guaranteed at least as much as the rating prize.)

Option 1 would not be possible unless D can win more than one prize. It also has a major disadvantage in that with some prize structures D could win more than the first prize. (E.g. 1st £100, 2nd £75, 3rd £50 Rating £30. If two players tie for first and one of them also wins the rating prize that player would win £117.50.)

Option 3 has the disadvantage that it requires more thought at a time when arbiters are being pressed to get prize lists produced. It has the advantage that it means more people win prizes and may be encouraged to return.

Now consider what happens if both C and D are U1800.

Option 1: B gets £50, C and D get £80 each (£50 + half of £60 each)

Option 2: Unchanged

Option 3: B gets £50, C and D get £60 each leaving £40 rating prize for E

Option 4: Unclear what happens. One possibility is that B gets £100 for second and C and D share third and rating getting £55 each.

Option 5: Unchanged

From the second example it can be seen that option 5 has the advantage of being consistent in different situations.

What is apparent is that there is no standard policy adopted in events and the final outcome is often left to the discretion of the arbiter. Whether this is a good thing or not is less clear.

Answers to quiz questions (p7)

There are two correct answers! But which two? The answers here are (b) and (d). The queen is only considered to be touched after it has made contact with the promotion square. [In this case that must be f8 but if the pawn was still on f7 the queen touching any of e8, f8 or g8 would make it active.] Therefore (a) does not require a queen promotion. Nor does (c). Announcing “queen” may be a distraction but it does not commit the player to promoting to that piece. In (d) White has played an illegal move by pressing the clock before promoting to a piece. In these circumstances the promoted piece must be a queen. That would still be the case even if White had immediately put the rook on the board after pressing the clock. As in (c) the announcement of the piece counts for nothing.

CAA Officials

Chairman - Lara Barnes

Secretary – Alan Atkinson

Treasurer – John Shaw (to be confirmed)

Chief Arbiter - Alex McFarlane

Information officer - Alex McFarlane

Committee - 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

ahmcfarlane@yahoo.co.uk

All of the above posts are subject to confirmation at the rearranged AGM. Lara has indicated a desire to stand down and Alan is willing to do so too if a suitable replacement is available. There is also a vacancy on Committee due to the death of David.