



COLUMNISTS

*An Arbiter's
Notebook*
Geurt Gijssen

How to Get a Title?

Let me start by wishing all of you a very Happy New Year.

In my previous column I wrote something about the tournaments in Moscow. I would like to add that it was very nice to meet a lot of chess legends. I met Andor Lilienthal, 90-years old, but still there every day, following the games. Vassily Smyslov, world champion 1957-1958, 80-years old, still very active composing studies, was present. I saw David Bronstein, the Botvinnik's challenger in 1951, still sharing his opinions with everyone he meets. Yuri Averbakh, almost 80, was still active as chief arbiter of the World Chess Championships and Alexander Roshal, chief editor of *64* for more than 30 years, was active as press officer. To meet all these chess legends was really a fantastic experience.

But I have to add more about this event. On the Kasparov web site I saw two articles: an interview with Radjabov and an article by Vladimir Dvorkovich.

As I mentioned in my previous column, I was not present during the first rounds and did not attend the game Radjabov – Ehlvest. I wrote what people told me and Averbakh, the chief arbiter, and Nikolopoulos, the deputy chief arbiter, gave me most of the information. Before I published my column I showed both gentlemen what I had written and in their opinion, what I wrote was correct. As far as I can see, there are two main points to dispute: 1. Did the players know that the clock was installed wrongly or didn't they know? 2. What happened with the clocks in that particular game before the start of the round?

Furthermore I have to make one correction in my previous column. I wrote that the same mistake occurred in a game in the women's section and that the players discovered the mistake. I learned in the meantime that an arbiter noticed the mistake and took the necessary steps to correct these clocks.

In my previous column I also wrote about the decision in the Netherlands to declare the game lost by the player who captures his opponent's King in a blitz game. Nobody reacted. Does this mean that everybody agrees? Furthermore does this mean it is reasonable to propose it in the next FIDE Congress? Please let me know.

I have good news for the users of Swissmaster. A few days ago I received the first version of Swissmaster, Windows version. I have tested this new version with some arbiters and while a lot of things still have to be corrected, what I saw was very promising. I keep you informed.

Question Geurt Gijssen, Hello, If there was a arbiter overseeing the game and recording the moves, then he and only he is responsible for the clock operating correctly. Why did the arbiter not get thrown out of the event for failure to do his job?

Brian Carson (Canada)

Answer In my previous column I tried to explain the hectic state of a tournament with 192 players (128 players in the Men's World Chess Championship section and 64 players in the Women's World Chess Championship section). There were only 12 arbiters including the chief arbiter and the two deputy chief arbiters. But there were 32 tiebreak games; therefore a lot of other people were invited to act as an arbiter in these tiebreak games. I know that some from the pressroom were arbiters, and some spectators who are experienced players, but not experienced arbiters, wrote the moves. I hope you understand now a little bit better how many problems the staff of the arbiters had to face, especially in connection with the tiebreak games of the first round.

I made a proposal to the Presidential Board of FIDE that the tiebreak games should be played the day after the second game instead of the day of the second game. I had two reasons for this proposal: 1. In the actual situation it is possible that the players have to play in one day one normal game, two games (20 minutes + 10 seconds per move), two games (5 minutes + 10 seconds per move) and a sudden death game (White 6 and Black 5 minutes). This means 4 different types of chess. 2. The staff has more time for preparation.

Question I am 37-years old, understand the laws of chess well or quite well and would like to be an international arbiter. I speak 3 languages. It would be most appreciated if you kindly provided me the way to get the IA title without my national federation's help as they are not doing anything. **Ahmed Sharata (Libya)**

Answer The requirements for the title of International Arbiter are described in the FIDE Handbook:

Thorough knowledge of the Laws of Chess and the FIDE Regulations for chess competitions.

Absolute objectivity demonstrated at all times during his activity as an arbiter.

Sufficient knowledge of at least one official FIDE language. The official FIDE languages are Arabic, English, French, German, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

Experience as chief or deputy arbiter in at least four FIDE rated events such as the following: a.the final of the national individual adult championship (not more than two) all official FIDE tournament and matches international title tournaments and matches international chess festivals with at least 100 contestants

For applicants from federations who are unable to organise any tournaments listed in a. to d. above, the four events may not be FIDE rated provided the applicant has taken and passed an examination set by the Arbiters Commission.

The norm reports supporting an IA title application must be for at least two different types of tournaments and achieved in events with starting dates that fall within a five-year period.

Your own federation must submit the norm reports. I do recall that in some cases another federation submitted the applications. In all these cases FIDE did not award the title of International Arbiter to the applicant. It means simply you need the support of your own federation. I wish you good luck.

Question Dear Sir, at a recent team competition of our 3rd club team at the local Bezirksliga in Bielefeld (Germany) both players were very short of time from about move 30 on. Other players, one of them apparently writing down the moves, surrounded players of both teams, as the players in the game just made strokes. When the electronic clock showed a negative time for Black, White claimed victory on time. Black protested and both together reconstructed the moves 30 to 40, agreeing that 41 moves had been made prior to stopping the clock. The White player meant that his teammate writing down the moves could have claimed the win on time instead of the player himself. I objected that this was only legal for the team captain. White stated that every team member could claim a win on time and thus help his teammate. Is this true, and if so, is this a new rules amendment? **Ulric Thiede (Germany)**

Answer Let me quote some Articles of the Laws of Chess:

Article 6.9: *“A flag is considered to have fallen when the arbiter observes the fact or when either player has made a valid claim to that effect.”*

Article 12.3: *“Players who have finished their games shall be*

considered to be spectators.”

3. Article 13.7: *Spectators and players in other games are not to speak about or otherwise interfere in a game. If necessary, the arbiter may expel offenders from the playing venue.”*

Well, I think that these three Articles are very clear. There must be an arbiter, there are players, there are players who finished their games and there are spectators. Players who finished their games are also spectators. Only the arbiter and the two players who are involved may call a flag fall and nobody else. Therefore it is very important to appoint an arbiter, because he may interfere.

My advice is very simple: Before the start of the match the two captains agree who will act as an arbiter. In this case it is preferable that the captain is not a player, and if he is a player, it must be very clear what has preference: his job as an arbiter or his position as a player. By the way, in the lower leagues of the Dutch team competitions the home team must deliver a non-playing arbiter.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, I've got a question concerning the article quoted in your column: "A flag is considered to have fallen when the arbiter observes the fact or when either player has made a valid claim to that effect." Now, in a recent German junior tournament both of the players were in immense time trouble shortly before the 40th move. No arbiter was present when Black's flag fell on move 39. The other player did not notice it, but one of the kibitzers immediately indicated that the flag had fallen. The situation was then of course clear to White and he formally claimed a win. The game was registered as 1-0 and the spectator was expelled from the tournament hall. Was this the right decision? **Martin Tavakolian (Germany)**

Answer It is almost impossible for an arbiter to control spectators. And in a situation such as you describe, that a spectator indicates a flag fall is very unfortunate. After the spectator had warned the White player that Black's flag had

fallen and when it was clear that Black had overstepped the time, White had really the right to claim the win. Also the arbiter was right when he declared the game won for White. Finally the last decision of the arbiter to expel the spectator, who indicated the flag fall, was completely right. It means that the arbiter was 100% correct.

Question Dear Mr.Gijssen, Thank you for your answer to my last question about the pairings. I have an additional question about pairings. In open tournaments, with amateurs, it is sometimes necessary to set pairings, for example because players come later, have to leave earlier (especially at weekend tournaments) or cannot play one round and want to play earlier (for example in the morning instead of evening). In such cases it may be helpful to set pairings (not in cases of norm tournaments). Can this be a reason not to calculate such a tournament for ELO rating?

Another case: If in a round robin tournament a player drops out of the tournament for example because of illness, is it possible to let another player play for him? And where exactly is it written that only the Swiss pairings are valid for rated tournaments? I can find not of such a rule and I think it would be necessary to have such rules written and although a comment to them. **Heinz Brunthaler (Germany)**

Answer It happens very often that there are special regulations in a Swiss tournament. You yourself give a lot of valid examples. A necessary condition is that these special regulations are announced in advance. It is also necessary to send these additional regulations to the rating officer of the federation in case the tournament must be rated. When an arbiter fulfills these requirements, there are in my opinion no problems.

Regarding your last question about the validity of the pairings of a Swiss tournament I quote some articles of the FIDE Handbook: C04A Article 20:

Mandatory information to be provided in tournament's reports by arbiters.

20.1 When reporting a tournament to FIDE, the arbiter shall declare which of the official FIDE Swiss Systems was used.

20.2 If another system was used, the Arbiter has to submit the rules of this system for checking by the Swiss Pairings Committee.

20.3 Where it can be shown that modifications of the original pairings were made in favor to achieve a norm, a report may be submitted to the Qualification Commission to initiate disciplinary measures through the Ethics Commission.

I hope you will agree with me, that this information covers what you want in the regulations.

Finally your questions regarding round-robin tournaments. Yes, it is possible to replace a player who leaves the tournament. But the question is, if it is useful and how to calculate the final result. I remember one case that GM Huebner left the tournament after round 1 due to illness. It was in a GMA World Cup Tournament 1989. Ex-World Champion Michael Tal was present in Rotterdam as a journalist. With the permission of all players Tal replaced Huebner and the first round game of Tal was played on a rest day. Generally it is not advisable to replace a player after a round has been played.

Question I have a question concerning the category of a tournament that I organized and for which I was an Assistant Arbiter. The Second SmartChess.com International Tournament was a 9-RR designed to provide GM norm opportunities for young International Masters. The tournament began on Sunday October 7, 2001. At the time, the October FIDE rating list had not been published. Based on the existing ratings when the tournament began (July list), the event was a Category X, but by an extremely small margin. I believe it was

after the 5th or 6th round that the new FIDE ratings appeared on the FIDE web site. Unfortunately, based on the new ratings, the tournament was a Category IX. Therefore, an International Master needed $6\frac{1}{2} / 9$ for a norm and not $6 / 9$.

What is the proper thing to tell the players about this during the event? At what rating category should this tournament is rated? I think the key point is that players devised their strategies about which games they needed to draw and which they needed to win. **Jonathan Hains (USA)**

Answer I understand that nobody was very happy with this situation, but as a matter of fact you have to use the October 2001 rating list for rating calculations. I have no doubts that you should inform the players immediately about the new situation. I hope you did so. But I have a question for you. In your e-mail you mentioned that your tournament was a category IX tournament. Do you know that it is also possible to calculate a GM norm based on the Tournament Performance Rating (TPR)?

For a GM norm with a score of 6 out of 9 the required average rating of the opponents must be between 2476 and 2520. And as you can see in the chart of the tournament categories it must be between 2476 and 2525. And you have even the possibility to include or exclude the rating of the player himself.

Suppose the ratings of the ten players are Player 1: 2450, Player 2: 2500, Player 3: 2440, Player 4: 2400 Player 5:2480, Player 6: 2550, Player 7: 2550, Player 8: 2430 Player 9: 2560 Player 10: 2440.

The average rating of these 10 players is 2475. The category of the tournament is IX; therefore the required score is 6.5 out of 9, as you mentioned in your example.

Let us calculate the TPR of the players with a score of 6 out of 9. First of all we have to calculate the average rating of the opponents:

Average rating of the opponents of player #1: 2478; #2: 2472; #3: 2479; #4: 2483; #5: 2474; #6: 2467; #7: 2467; #8: 2480; #9: 2466; #10: 2479.

According to the previous paragraph, the players #1, #3, #4, #8 and #10 made a GM norm if their score is 6 out of 9.

Question In a recent tournament I saw one player, on the verge of considering two moves - one being a pawn promotion - pick up a Queen and place it on the promotion square, then without releasing it, he put it back on the table, then made another move. Is this "touch- move" even though he never touched the pawn on the 7th rank? **James C. Jackson (USA)**

Answer Article 3.7(e) says: *“When a pawn reaches the rank furthest from its starting position it must be exchanged as part of the same move for a Queen, Rook, Bishop or Knight of the same colour.”*

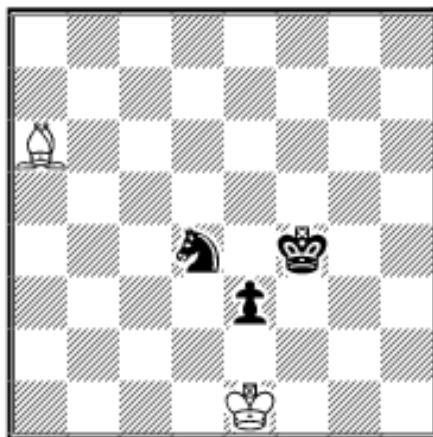
The order is apparently: 1. The pawn moves to the promotion square. 2. The pawn will be exchanged for a piece. This means that, strictly saying, the player cannot be forced to play this pawn. But it is very clear, that he tried to mislead his opponent. Therefore I would give the player an official warning and some time compensation to the opponent. If a player places a piece on the last rank, releases this pieces and removes the pawn on the seventh rank from the board, it is not considered illegal.

Question From a game of mine: Round 4: still undefeated playing a lost position to test my opponent's technique.
Situation: I played a move that checked my opponent's King. He had only 3 legal moves. Instead, he played Rb8 checkmate. I showed that it was an illegal move and given my time, I did not add minutes for the move. After a few minutes of thought, he played b6 blocking the check. I felt that I could have forced him to play Rb6 blocking the check and forcing an immediate loss of his game! However, given the position on the board, I simply did not want to win the game in such a manner. My

friends on the other hand said that I was "wrong" for not enforcing the win using the technicality! Was my assumption correct? Could I have forced him to play the losing Rb6? Have you seen similar circumstances arise in play; if so, what did they do? **Kevin Monte de Ramos (USA)**

Answer When a player touches a piece with the intention to play this piece and it is possible to make a legal move with this piece, the player must play this piece. Very simple! Apparently Rb6 was a legal move, blocked the check, therefore this move had to be played.

Recently the following happened in one of my own games. I had White. My Queen was on b6 and a Bishop on c4. A black pawn was on a6 and a black Bishop on b7. I took Black's pawn on a6 and doing this I touched my Queen on b6. The Queen was inadvertently touched as I made the move and I re-set the Queen again on b6, said "Sorry" and moved my Bishop to a6. My opponent resigned without any comment because his position was lost. But when we analyzed the game, he asked me if he had had the possibility to claim that I took with the Queen. When I explained to him that I touched the Queen without the intention of moving it, he immediately accepted my explanation. He added that he had never intended to claim that the Queen must move.



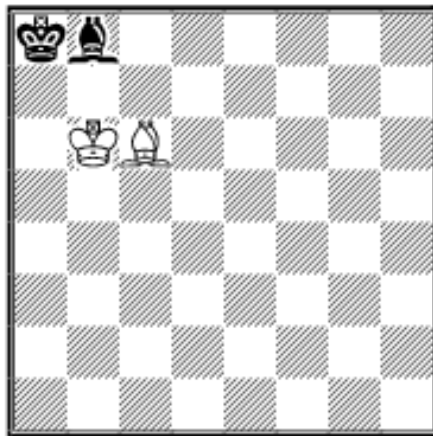
Question 1 With reference to Article 10.2. They are "fighting" players: nobody offers draw, nobody claims draw. Finally Black's flag falls. What is the result? And what is the result if Black had claimed the draw earlier? This case happened twice in the Hungarian team championships, where the time control 40 moves / 2

hrs + 1 hour for the rest with quickplay finish.

Answer 1 Article 6.10:

*“Except where Article 5.1 or one of the Articles 5.1 (a), (b) and (c) apply, if a player does not complete the prescribed number of move in the allotted time, the game is lost by the player. **However**, the game is drawn, if the position is such that the opponent cannot checkmate the player’s King by any possible series of legal moves, even with the most unskilled counterplay.”*

In the given position, is it possible to play a series of (sometimes stupid) moves so that White can win the game? And the answer is "Yes". It is possible. Suppose Black promotes his to a Bishop. The black Bishop moves on the white squares and the white Bishop on the black squares. Suppose that Black sacrifices his Knight, although not necessary, and it is clear that White can checkmate Black’s King. For instance: the final position could be:



Note that if the black pawn is on d3 instead of e3, he promotes on a white square and the situation I described before is not possible. The question is again: Can I create a series of moves so that Black’s King will be checkmated? The answer is again “Yes, it is possible”. The final position I have in mind is the following: White:

Kb6, Bb7, Black: Ka8, Nb8. I must agree that the whole business is quite artificial, but this is what the regulations say.

Question 2 In mutual time pressure, White plays his 40th move but he cannot complete the move because his flag falls. Black observes it and he says, “Flag,” but before he can stop the clocks his flag falls as well. Unfortunately, no arbiter is present

at the board. Black does not continue the game and asks for an arbiter. Black's clock is still running when the arbiter arrives. The arbiter decides to continue the game because it cannot be clearly determined whose flag fell first. The fact that Black's clock is running does not prove that White overstepped the time limit first, because the flag fall could have happened after 39th move or even earlier. However both players did not catch sight of the clock. Really does not it prove anything that White's clock is stopped but Black's is running?

Answer 2 I quote Article 6.12:

"If both flags have fallen and it is impossible to establish which flag fell first, the game shall continue." Well, I think the situation is clear. As you probably know, the DGT clock indicates clearly which flag fell first.

Question 3 Some Hungarian arbiters are of the opinion that a player who has claimed a draw pursuant Article 10.2 (Quickplay Finish) cannot win that game anymore, even when his opponent blunders. This can happen when the arbiter postpones his decision. In the opinion of our arbiters, the arbiter has to stop the clocks and declare the game drawn. I think it is nonsense. I ask you what is the correct opinion? **Janos Tompa, IM and IA, Budapest (Hungary).**

Answer 3 If I understand the opinion of the Hungarian arbiters correctly, it is their opinion that a player who has previously claimed a draw is apparently satisfied with half a point and does not deserve to win. But I agree with you that this opinion is not correct. Let me quote Article 9.1(c)

"A claim of a draw under 9.2, 9.3 or 10.2 shall be considered to be an offer of a draw."

This Article came into force on July 1, 2001. What is the meaning of this new Article? At the moment a player claims a draw, his opponent has the ability to agree to a draw. By not doing so, the opponent indicates that he is playing for a win and therefore may risk even losing the game.

Question Is it possible to add at the FIDE site a downloadable button for the handbook so that we can download it? It would be very helpful. **Krishna Moorth (India)**

Answer Personally I do not see any problem, provided the FIDE handbook is current. And I have to admit that this is not the case at the moment. But I can assure you that several Commissions and Committees of FIDE are working on it. In Bled, the new regulations shall be approved and then they can be made ready for downloading. I promise you that I will do my best so that everybody has this possibility.

Have a question for Geurt Gijssen? Perhaps he will respond to it in a future column. Send it to geurtgijssen@chesscafe.com. Please include your name and country of residence.

Copyright 2002 Geurt Gijssen. All Rights Reserved.



[\[The Chess Cafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Reviews\]](#) [\[Bulletin Board\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)
[\[Endgame Studies\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)
[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About The Chess Cafe\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

Copyright 2002 CyberCafes, LLC. All Rights Reserved.
"The Chess Cafe®" is a registered trademark of Russell Enterprises, Inc.