



COLUMNISTS

*An Arbiter's
Notebook*

Geurt Gijssen

Capturing the King

Letter 1 I agree with your suggestion to ban king-captures in blitz games. It could be difficult for an arbiter if a player captured the king and then there was a dispute about whether the move to capture the king had been a possible move for that piece. Sometimes players will make a long-diagonal move with their queen and accidentally slip it to the next diagonal over in so doing. If a player captures a king and there is then a dispute about whether the king was actually in check, the evidence of the check has been removed from the board, and unless there is a witness watching closely, it may not be possible to settle the argument. However if a player simply claims a win without moving anything, a witness even at a distance can see that no moves have been made on the board since the win was claimed, and there is more chance that the claim can be verified. **Kevin Bonham (Australia)**

Letter 2 Dear Geurt, you asked for opinions about a player who captures his opponent's king, presumably in a blitz game. I assume you refer to the situation where the opponent moved, leaving his king in check. Then the player indicates this by capturing the king, thus effectively claiming a win. You have offered the opinion that the player then should lose the game because he has made an illegal move and caused a situation to arise on the board where an independent arbiter arriving only then at the board would not be able to determine totally objectively the actual sequence of events. The player should have stopped the clocks and pointed out the illegality without disturbing the position on the board, whereupon he would have been awarded the win.

Most such games are played in the total absence of an arbiter. The players should be left to get on with their own games. In many places it has been common practice to claim a win by capturing the king. In my opinion it would be absurd to award a player a loss because he was attempting to claim a win in a less than perfect manner. If I were the arbiter in such an encounter and called in at the last moment, I would expect the players to come to an agreement. If they were unable to do so and unwilling or unable to replay the game, they might have to suffer the consequences of scoring less than one point between them. My gut feeling over more than 40 years is that, in every case I have ever come across, the opponent whose king has vanished from the board did indeed leave his king in check and should lose the game. **Stewart Reuben (England)**

Letter 3 Dear Mr. Gijssen, you wrote: "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."

OK then, here goes: No, this rule is totally unreasonable. First, there is no logical basis for declaring this a losing offence. Is it an illegal move? How so, when the position itself is illegal. Second and more important, it's very harsh to penalise an action with a loss, when for many years the SAME action was legally permissible and even encouraged as a demonstration of an illegal move, and was awarded with a WIN. I fail to see why this rule had to be changed anyway -- in Australia we say "If it ain't broken, don't fix it." It makes it harder for club captains like me to keep up if the rules chop and change all the time. The old king-takes-king trick, which we both agreed is highly improper, seems to be covered by the first point. Best regards **Jonathan Sarfati (Australia)**

Letter 4 Dear Geurt, I would like to react to your article about taking the King in Blitz games. It is forbidden to take the King, except where it is allowed according to the rules. In my opinion it is an illegal move. Therefore the player who takes his opponent's king should lose the game. The decision of the Dutch chess federation is correct.

Koen van Venetië, The Netherlands

Letter 5 Hello Mr. Gijssen, I should like to comment on the capturing of kings. I learned the game of chess at the age of six and I have always been very fascinated by chess. But it wasn't until I met a much stronger player and played a lot of blitz chess with him at the age of 28 that I finally joined a chess club. And the element of blitz that fascinated me the most was that it was a legal way of winning to capture the opponent's king! This element gives blitz chess a very becoming, rough sort of charm, and it gave me a good chance of sometimes beating my much stronger opponent, and to me it will always remain a very important feature! But for this rule, I might never have joined a chess club!

And now I am an experienced arbiter, and even though I'm not an IA (I've never needed the title) I have worked as a chief arbiter in the Danish National Championships. I've been a good (pardon my immodesty!) chairman of a chess club, and I am a directory member of the Danish arbiters' association, and I've carried out a lot of the work in translating the rules of chess to Danish. I am the editor of the Danish Chess Handbook, and I am also a reasonably active (though not extremely strong) player.

And quite frankly: I think that a lot of clubs and players - including me - might very well continue to play by the rule that it is okay to capture the opponent's king, no matter what FIDE decides in the matter! I can understand the advantages of a certain uniformity of rules in the different forms of chess, but I think it would be both unnecessary and a great pity to remove this wonderful rule. I think it should be very easy to keep it legal to capture the opponent's king - just by considering it a way to demonstrate the opponent's illegal move.

Making it illegal to capture a king also gives one big problem: What happens if a player does it anyway? Should he loose the game then? This might very well be the only effective way to enforce the rule, but it doesn't seem fair to me! In fact it seems very much an overreaction - and thus also somewhat ridiculous! So no, everybody certainly does not agree with you!! **Lau Bjerno (Denmark)**

Letter 6 Dear Geurt, I follow very carefully your information and questions at ChessCafe.com. In nearly all cases I fully agree with your interpretations of the chess rules. Now I am not very happy with the decision of the Dutch Federation concerning the capture of an opponent's king in blitz games. As long as it is only an internal decision for blitz games in the Netherlands it is acceptable for me, but not included it in the Laws of Chess. Please consider that according to C.3 an illegal move is completed once the opponent's clock has been started. I am not sure, that a player will start the opponent's clock after he has captured the opponent's king. I think we have to explain to the players that after capturing a king, every evidence for the opponent's illegal move is destroyed. A big problem for this player and for an arbiter will arise if the opponent declares that the king was on another square and therefore not in check. Finally I want to thank you for all the trouble you take explaining the Laws of Chess to everyone. **Werner Stubenvoll (Austria)**

Comment During the FIDE Congress in Elista 1998, we discussed this matter. And I remember very well, that it was decided to forbid capturing the opponent's King if it were left in check or if it moved into check. We made in Elista the "mistake" of not sanctioning a player if he took the opponent's King. And I remember also quite well that there was no time for discussions during the Congresses in Doha and Istanbul to settle this problem. But still there were questions about this subject, especially in the Netherlands. I know that one arbiter announced before a tournament that in cases where a King was taken, the game would be declared drawn. Other arbiters accepted that the King had been taken and declared the game simply won for the player who took the King. I think that Mr. Bonham in his letter gives a very clear and exact explanation why it is reasonable to accept the decision of the Dutch Chess Federation.

Some arbiters have told me during tournaments, that there is in their opinion no difference between a "normal" illegal move, as, for instance, Nb1-d3 or Rc1xd8 and taking an opponent's King when it was left in check. In my opinion, there is a huge difference. If a player plays a "normal" illegal move the game can be continued, but taking the opponent's king is irrevocable.

Mr. Stubenvoll is not happy with the decision of the board of the Dutch Chess Federation, but he explains in his letter very clearly the problem an arbiter faces in situations in which a King was taken. To avoid exactly this kind of problem the board of the Dutch Chess Federation decided so after a recommendation of the Arbiters' Committee of the Dutch Chess Federation. By the way I am a member of this Committee, but I did not propose this, but I supported the idea very strongly. . I am 100% sure that accepting of this proposal in the next Congress of FIDE taking of the King will be banned By the way, the decision of the Dutch

Chess federation will be applied only in events organised by the federation itself, but we hope sincerely that other organisers of blitz events shall apply this rule also.

Finally I hope that everybody will understand that I would like to make a proposal in the next FIDE Congress or in 2004 and that I will try to find out what experts think about such a proposal.

Question Dear Geurt, In Belgium we played a match with electronic Phileon clocks. I noticed that the remaining time on the clock switched from 0:15.00 to 1:15.00 as soon as move 40 was completed. It means you can easily see if you've made the necessary 40 moves when you're in time trouble. Is it allowed to show this on the clock? If the clock is allowed to show this, can I also ask the arbiter if I've already made 40 moves? **Ruud Lemmers, Netherlands**

Answer I know that the Phileon clock adds the time for the next period at the moment the moves of the current control are completed. The same happens also with the DGT clock when the Fischer mode is used.

It is always a question at which moment the time for the next period must be added. There are two possibilities: 1. When the prescribed number of moves of the current period has been completed; 2. When the time of the current period has been expired.

The Laws of Chess are not very clear on that point. I would like to quote the relevant Article 6.2(b) of the Laws of Chess:

“The time saved by a player during one period is added to his time available for the next period except in the ‘time delay’ mode.”

The time delay mode is the Bronstein mode, but I do not want to discuss this system here.

Curiously both possibilities, which I mentioned before, are in use in chess tournaments.

When we played the “old” Fischer mode, 40 moves in 100 minutes, then 20 moves in 50 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for the remaining moves, the 50 minutes for the second period and the 10 minutes for the third period were added immediately after a player had completed his 40th or 60th move.

When we played 40 moves in 2 hours, then 20 moves in 1 hour and 30 minutes for the remaining moves, in fact the time for the next period was added at the moment the flag fell at the end of the previous period.

There was even one very remarkable time limit, 40 moves in 2 hours, then 20 moves in 1 hour, and 30 seconds per move from move 61. But these 30 seconds

were added after the flag fall at the end of the second period. It was possible that players had already played 68 moves before these 30 seconds per move were added. As far as I know there was only one tournament with this time limit: the European Team Championship, Pula 1997. The problem with this time limit was, that the players did not know whether they were in the second or in the third period.

In February there will be a match between GM Loek van Wely and a computer. I was a little bit surprised when the organiser told me that they would play in this match with the same time limit as in Pula. I agreed, but I claimed, that I have the right to inform the players when they go from the second to the third period.

I understand that I did not directly answer your question whether the arbiter should inform the players about the completed moves. First of all, the Laws of Chess say clearly that the arbiter should not do this. And I think, that we should not change this, because a game of chess is first of all something between two players and the arbiter should not intervene too much. In the second place, it is very dangerous. An arbiter cannot always control the whole game. Players can make mistakes when they write the moves, it is possible that the players did not press the clock properly, as a result of which the move counter does not have the correct number of moves, and there are more possibilities that something may have gone wrong during the game. It is my opinion that the role of the arbiter is only to check whether the players completed the prescribed number of moves or not.

After reading this answer, somebody shall probably say that I am not significant in the match between Van Wely and the computer. Let me therefore explain something for this special case.

First of all, I do not like this time limit. I have seen how things can go wrong with this time limit, and I am not looking forward to more problems with it. Secondly, I have really full control over this game. I will sit next to the board and I will write also all the moves from move 1.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, Article 6.10 of the Laws of Chess says that, when a player spends all his/her time, he/she loses the game, except if his/her opponent can't win. This is obvious with bare king, but I like to know if the following cases are also draws? Suppose White flag is down.

1. White: K + Q, Black: K + B. 2. White: K + Q, Black: K + N. 3. White: K + R, Black: K + B.

Laura Nogueira (Belgium)

Answer The solution for this problem is very simple. Is it possible to create a position where the white King is mated? Well, for all cases you mentioned in your question it is impossible, therefore the arbiter has to decide that the result of the game is a draw.

Is it possible to make a list in which cases it is a draw and in which cases not, provided each player has one piece? I think, that it is possible. In all cases White runs out of time. ('+' means Black wins, '=' means draw.

- 1. K+Q vs. K+Q +
- 2. K+Q vs. K+R +
- 3. K+Q vs. K+B =
- 4. K+Q vs. K+N =
- 5. K+R vs. K+R +
- 6. K+R vs. K+B =
- 7. K+R vs. K+N +
- 8. K+B vs. K+B + or = (+ if the Bishops are moving on the different coloured squares; = if the Bishops are moving on the same coloured squares)
- 9. K+N v. K+N +

I think that this list is correct, but as I mentioned already in my previous column, the whole matter is quite artificial. If a player has less time than his opponent and there is a threat that he shall overstep the time, he shall claim a draw pursuant Article 10.2 in normal and rapid games. Normally the arbiter will agree, provided there is no forced mate and the arbiter understands what the players should not do to be mated (e.g., to move the king in the corner).

Question Dear Geurt, I have a problem with interpreting the pairing rules of the Dutch System for doing Swiss draws as approved by FIDE. Sections B and C appear to be in conflict with each other. I was playing in an event recently where there were four players in the bottom score group. It was not possible to form two legal pairs out of these four players because too many of them had played each other, but there were two players within that group who could have played each other. The arbiters applied section C13 which states that where no pairings can be found to allow a correct pairing entirely within the lowest score bracket, then the two lowest score brackets are joined. This meant that the bottom score group was joined with the next score group up (also containing four players), and that every player in the next score group up therefore played a player on a lower score.

However, section B3 says that the difference of scores of two players paired against each other shall be as small as possible and ideally zero. Section B also says that this criterion "should be fulfilled as much as possible" and that transpositions and exchanges can be applied to achieve this. The pairing obtained using section C13 was not the best possible in this way. It would have been possible (without changing the colours of any player) for two players in the lowest score group to play each other, two players in the second-lowest score group to play each other, and two players from the second-lowest score group to each play a player from the lowest score group. This would have meant that the difference in scores between opponents existed on two boards rather than on four.

How should an arbiter make sense of this apparent conflict when there is nothing in the rules to say which of sections B and C should take priority in this case?

Kevin Bonham (Australia)

Answer Dear Kevin, congratulations, you scored a full point. For people who do not know too much about the Swiss system and its regulations, I will give a very brief explanation.

In Chapter B of the Swiss Pairing regulations the Pairing Criteria are described. Here are some of these criteria: two players shall play only once against each other; no player shall play three times with the same colors in a row; the difference of the scores of two players paired against each other should be as small as possible and ideally zero.

In Chapter C there is a description of the Pairing Procedures. In this chapter you can find what to do if the number of players with the same score is odd; what to do if there are 10 players in a group and it is not possible to make 5 pairings, but only 4 pairings; what to do after the arbiter has finished the pairings for all players and then he discovers that the players in the last group (this is the group of players with the lowest score) cannot be paired. Let me explain.

We have 4 players with 2 point and 4 players with 1½ point. The players with 2 points are A, B, C and D. The players with 1½ point are E, F, G and H.

It is possible to make the pairings A-C and B-D. Going to the next group the arbiter discovers that E played already against F, G and H and the pairing F-G is possible.

Well, what to do? Point C13 of the Pairing Procedure says that the 8 players should form one group and the most likely pairings will be in that case:

A – E, B – F, C – G and D – H. But these pairings violate one of the Criteria of Chapter B, which says that if possible players with the same score should play against each other and good pairings could be: A – C, B – E, D – F and G – H. Without any doubt, this is the best pairing. But there is a conflict in the regulations. The criteria of Chapter B are correct, but, and this is the point, the pairing procedures of Chapter C say something else. The problem is that the pairing procedures cannot cover all situations, and I was also told that it is very difficult to program for the computer. I am afraid that we have to accept a situation that the computer produces pairings we shall simply accept. One thing is sure: the computer is objective. There is no discussion that we have to change the pairings only in cases in which the computer violates the criteria of Chapter B. An example: Two players are leading, they did not play in any previous round, the colours fit and the computer does not pair them against each other. And there are of course more cases like this.

And you probably will not like this: the most important thing is that the pairings at the top are completely correct. The pairings in the bottom (groups), especially at the end of a tournament, are not of the highest priority.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, in your last column you answered questions from Mr. Thiede and Mr. Tavakolian concerning spectators who indicate that a player has overstepped the time limit. This made me remember what a team captain of a Dutch 'major league' team once told me a few years ago: "When the opponent of one of my players oversteps the time limit, I take no risks and tell my player. The only thing an arbiter can do is to throw me out of the playing room. So be it." Considering this ethically ambiguous, but rather logical attitude, don't you agree that the present ruling is rather hollow? I personally would have no objections to granting team members the right to interfere, it being a team event. If not, there should be clear sanctions, like the loss of a point, or the excluding of the offender from coming team matches. What is your opinion? **Frits Fritschy, The Netherlands**

Answer Your proposal seems quite reasonable, but I disagree with you. If we allow all team members to act as a kind of (deputy) arbiter, I am afraid that team matches will end in chaos. I have previously stated that the designated arbiter of a team match should nominate for instance the team captains as deputies, especially for time trouble, and he should give them (limited) tasks: in time trouble, to watch the clocks, to write moves in the event players cannot write the moves. But these deputy arbiters may never decide to declare a game lost or to agree to a draw according to Article 10.2.

Question Dear Sir, the following incident happened recently in a team match, played with 2h/40+ 1h/20 + ½h/rest. After 6 hours and 50 minutes of play White has a king and a queen and 30 seconds left on the clock, Black has a king and a rook and approximately 10 minutes left on the clock. The arbiter (member of White's club) is observing the game.

Black doesn't write down his moves, but moves instantly several times. White's team captain protests to the arbiter, pointing out that Black also has to write down past moves, before he may continue the game. The arbiter doesn't intervene because Black starts writing down moves again (though not the previous ones). After several moves Black stops writing down again. White's team captain protests again, but the arbiter remains passive. The team captain tells the arbiter, that it is his duty to force Black to write down the moves. The arbiter answers, "I know," but he doesn't do anything further, even though Black still does not write his moves down. With 10 seconds left, White has the chance to capture the rook, but he continues to give checks. With only one second left and no opportunity to take the rook, White moves and presses the clock. (He doesn't stop both clocks, just his own.) Then he asks the arbiter: "Can I demand a draw?" The arbiter replies: "Well, you can ask your opponent." Black immediately rejects the offer and makes a move, whereupon White's flag falls. White's team captain demands a draw, arguing a) that Black doesn't try to win and b) that the position probably has been repeated more than three times. (Unfortunately, the arbiter did not ask the players to reconstruct the game.)

Questions: 1) What should the result be? Apart from the team captain, virtually everybody thinks that it should be a win for Black because of the fallen flag. But

then again, he is a lawyer. Maybe he knows better

2) The player obviously didn't know, that he has to stop both clocks in order to make a valid claim according to 10.2 (quickplay finish), but his intentions of demanding a draw were clear. The team captain argues along the lines of your example of the "touch-move" rule: if you brush against a piece, but have no intention of moving it, the "touch-move" rule doesn't apply, even though the wording of the rule fits. So, is the claim valid?

3) I think that White should have gotten some extra time, because Black didn't write the moves down several times. But what can the team captain or the player do, if the arbiter neglects his duties? **Robert Vollertsen (Denmark)**

Answer I agree with you that the player who has more than 5 minutes left on his clock has to write the moves. And the team captain was completely right when he protested. The normal penalty is that the opponent will get some extra time and, of course, the player has to write all moves he did not write before. It was an obvious mistake of the arbiter that he did not act accordingly.

You wrote that the arbiter did not check if there was a repetition of position and that he should do this after the flag fall. This is not correct. Only during the game at the moment the same position has appeared or is about to appear on the chessboard and after a claim of a player the arbiter shall check whether the claim is correct or not.

About the second point I like to say the following: In my opinion the arbiter was right that he did not react when White claimed a draw in an incorrect way. The arbiter may assume that a player knows the Laws of Chess.

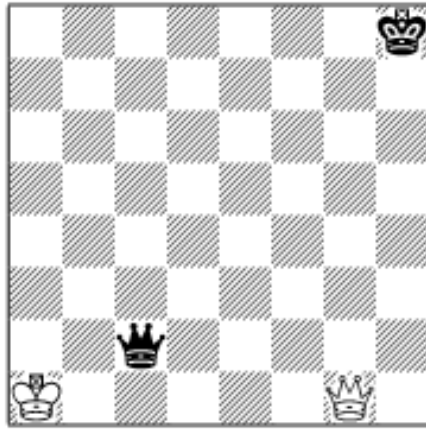
But there is another interesting point. You know that in team matches a captain has the right to inform the player that he may offer a draw, that he may accept a draw or that he may resign. But what if the captain says to his player that he may claim a draw. This point was never discussed in the Rules Committee of FIDE.

Based on Article 9.1(c), that a claim of a draw under 10.2 will be considered as an offer of a draw, I am inclined to say that the captain may do so. In the next meeting of the Rules Committee I would like to discuss it.

Your last question is what to do if the arbiter does not do his job properly. In my country there is an Appeals Committee for the national league and the same is also the case in all regional team competitions. How is the situation in your country? I guess this will be also the case.

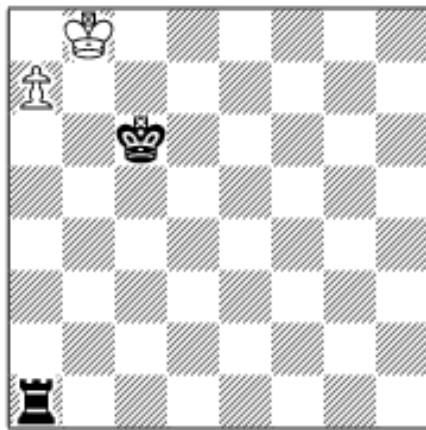
Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, I have a question about the following paragraph from the Laws of Chess:

"1.3 If the position is such that neither player can possibly checkmate, the game is drawn."



White plays Qg7+. Before black manages to complete his move, his flag drops. Does this position qualify for a draw according to 1.3, or did Black lose on time? After all, although White formally has "mating material", a checkmate by legal moves is impossible in this position - Black has only one legal move, after which it's stalemate.

Or this position:



White plays a8=Q+ and Black responds with Rxa8+. Again, white's flag drops before he completes his move - and again, checkmate by legal moves is impossible, as White has only one legal move, after which the position is reduced to bare kings.

What would you rule in such situations?

Alex Shternshain (Israel)

Answer There is a difference between "normal" games on one side and rapid and

blitz games on the other side.

In normal games I accept your opinion that the game is a draw, because neither player is able to win the game. Instead of Article 1.3 I like to refer to Article 9.6:

"The game is drawn when a position is reached from which a checkmate cannot occur by any possible series of legal moves, even with the most unskilled play. This immediately ends the game."

I think the case is different in rapid and in blitz games. As a matter of fact and a little bit strange, illegal moves are "legalised".

Question 1 Many players, especially at the lower levels, write down their moves before they play them. Then make a final check of the position before actually playing the written move. Is their opponent entitled to see what they have written before they actually make the move? Can they legally cover up what they are writing on their game record? As an opponent of one of these players, I kept trying to see what he was writing, (so that I could start thinking of my response) & h e kept trying to conceal it.

Question 2 I am sometimes thinking of a strong response to a move my opponent

might make. This may happen when it is my turn and I am pondering what follows if I make a certain move or during his turn when I am thinking about my responses to moves he might logically make. When this happens, I am tempted to write down this move as a reminder to myself that to make it if the sequence I've anticipated occurs. Doing so would save me the effort of rethinking the position and avoid the danger of forgetting the variation I have already worked out. I am a beginning player from the USA. Thanks for your help. **Steve Zee (USA)**

Answer Sorry, but your opponent may cover his scoresheet in such a way that you are not able to see what he wrote on his scoresheet. You mentioned that especially players of a low level do this, but I can assure you that also many top grandmasters have this habit. But there is something else I have to mention in this context and for this I refer to Article 8.2 of the Laws of Chess:

“The scoresheet shall be visible to the arbiter throughout the game.”

How the scoresheet can be visible to the arbiter and not to the opponent is a problem the player has to solve.

I already mentioned in the first part of my answer that many players write their move before making their move. And just like you described, they again check the position before making the move. It happens that they change the move and in this case they have to correct what they wrote before.

Until now I always accepted this kind of correction, but if I should notice that a player had made a lot of “corrections” on his scoresheet, I interfere and I should use Article 12.2 of the Laws of Chess:

“During play the players are forbidden to make use of any notes, sources of information, advice, or to analyse on another chessboard.”

The scoresheet shall be used only for recording the moves, the times of the clocks, the offer of a draw, and matters related to a claim.”

In my opinion the player is making notes on his scoresheet and as you can see in Article 12.2, to make use of notes is forbidden.

Question In a computer chess forum, an interesting discussion on endgame table bases came up and I wondered about a certain FIDE law. Just as a reminder table bases are computer databases where every possible result is known for every possible position where only 3, 4, or 5 pieces (and a few 6 piece combinations today) are left on the board, including Kings. What is interesting is that with each such position a definite result is known with best play, such as the exact number of moves to a mate. One programmer complained that some of these mate scores were impractical because although they were absolutely correct, the number of moves to a mate might be unplayable due to the 50-move rule. I know he is correct, but the question is this: in normal play AFAIK, if I announce a definite mate shortly before losing on time and am unable to deliver the mate before my

flag falls, the mate is what stands, provided it is confirmed. If this is true then how about the 50-move rule? The purpose of the rule is to prevent eternal games with no definite result, and spare one of the players. However, what if the player were to announce an unmistakable definite mate that could not be played out due to the 50-move rule? Granted that here we automatically think of computers, but it is still theoretically possible that a human could do this, however unlikely. What then? **Albert Silver (Brazil)**

Answer About ten years ago FIDE decided that the 50-move rule is valid for all positions. When FIDE decided so, it was well known that some positions needed more than 50 moves to effectuate a checkmate. And this was known when FIDE decided to enlarge the 50-move rule. Before 1992 there were some exceptions in the Laws of Chess. Each tournament committee had the right to enlarge the number of moves to mate for specific positions, provided it was announced before. I still think that the decision was correct.

To announce mate during the game in a certain number of moves is impossible. In some cases it is of course possible to claim a draw pursuant Article 10.2, but to claim a win is in these situations not possible.

By the way, all I wrote before applies to over-the-board play. If for instance study composers would like to increase the number of moves to create a mate they have full right to do so.

Question Dear Geurt, I have a question concerning rapid chess. Appendix B4 of the FIDE Rules says:

"Once each player has completed three moves, no claim can be made regarding incorrect piece placement, orientation of the chessboard or clock setting. In case of reverse king and queen placement castling with this king is not allowed."

Does this only apply for situations at the beginning of the game (for example: incorrect position of the pieces), or also for situations during the game (for example: positions after illegal moves)? **Klaus Schumacher (Germany)**

Answer Article B4, being a part of the Rules for Rapid games, applies only in situations from the initial position of the game. Illegal moves are covered in Article B5. I have to admit that the text must be corrected. In 2004, when we again have the possibility to make corrections, the words *"from the initial position"* should be included after "Once each player has completed three moves". Thank you for your question.

Question Dear Sir, I have read your answer to Mr. Sharata. I want to learn how there is a way to get the IA title with the help of another federation? I have been an arbiter for 4 years, but I couldn't take duty in official tournaments because of the behaviour of our federation. **Ozan Çakir, Chess lecturer of Marmara University in Istanbul, Turkey**

Answer Dear Mister Çakir, to be honest, I am a little bit surprised by your question. In 2000 I was the chief arbiter of the Olympiad in Istanbul. I know that your federation made a lot of effort to have Turkish arbiters in the Olympiad and about 50 arbiters were from Turkey. I gave a seminar in Ankara for about 60 Turkish arbiters, there was an examination and during the Olympiad two experienced Turkish arbiters supervised the others.

Immediately after the Olympiad there were elections for the Presidential Board of the Turkish Chess Federation. And I remember very well that both candidates had a point in their program to educate the Turkish arbiters in the whole country. I do not know if this really happens, but it was an item mentioned by both candidates.

Finally I have to inform you that only the own federation may apply for any FIDE title I know at least two cases that a federation applied for an IA title for an arbiter who did not belong to this federation. In both cases the title was not awarded.

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.

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