



## COLUMNISTS

*An Arbiter's  
Notebook*  
Geurt Gijsen

## Playing with the Ratings

At this moment 144 men's teams and 100 women's team are registered for the Olympiad in Bled. An outsider would never understand how much work must be done before an Olympiad. Let me give you some figures: In each round we have 438 games on electronic boards. For 10 boards we need a computer, so we need 44 computers and monitors in the playing hall. After the Olympiad I will let you know how many kilometres of cables we needed for the computers.

Each team in the men's competition has 7 members: 4 players, 2 reserve players and a captain; a women's team has 3 players, 1 reserve and a captain. It is very rare that a team has a playing captain or no reserves. This means that we have about 1500 players, reserves and captains. In the playing area we shall certainly have 720 players and captains in the men's section and 400 players and captains in the women's section. Then we add about 95 arbiters and assistants who do their job in the playing area. This means about 1200 persons in this area. At the start of each round I also expect a lot of photographers. I hope everybody understands that we have to apply very strict rules. One of them is that reserve players are not allowed to enter the playing area when they are not playing. Another rule that has to be strictly applied: players who have finished their game must leave the playing area.

There is one very good thing: the Slovenians have a very rich chess history and tradition and they know how to organise a chess event. And in Slovenia, Bled is a famous chess city. By the way, when I tell a non-chessplayer that I am going to Bled, I have to explain where the city is situated. But when I meet a chessplayer, there is nothing to explain. Some of them even mention immediately the German name for this city: Veldes. You may expect a lot of stories in my next column about the Olympiad.

There will be live covering of all games. All rounds start at 14.00 (western European time), except the last round, which will start at 10.00.

Something else is quite interesting: the new FIDE rating list was published on October 1. First of all, it is very important that it was published on time. Therefore we have time to check all the ratings for the Olympiad. But what is most interesting is that in the new list, the ratings are published starting from

1800, and not from 2000. (I hope that everybody understands that I do not mean the years 1800 and 2000.) In the new rating list the ratings of 42,619 players appear. 393 have a rating lower than 2000. I am sure that in the next list there will be more listed players and more with ratings lower than 2000.

Finally I have begun to understand a little bit about Excel spreadsheets. Playing a little with the list, I was interested in how many players on the list had not played any games in the period July – September. The result: 30,865 did not play at all. Among them are Kasparov and Kramnik. And if I remember correctly, Kramnik has not played a rated game in a year. Also, as you may know, FIDE intends to lower the rating platform to 1000. It is quite likely in that event that about 500,000 ratings would be published. Everybody can download the rating list from the FIDE Internet site: [www.fideonline.com](http://www.fideonline.com). If you prefer Excel, (and personally I like this format very much) the following procedure is advisable: extract the zip file and open it in Word pad. Delete the header: id#, name, title etc and then open it in Excel. Then you put your own header above the list.

**Question** Please give me your opinion on the planned testing of chess players for “banned substances”. **Steven Opio (Uganda)**

**Answer** Here is my own opinion. I do not see any need to test chessplayers for doping. You know, I have worked for more than 20 years in professional chess and I have never met or seen any use of drugs to achieve a better result in a tournament.

To be recognized as a sport, we have to fulfill some requirements. And unfortunately, one of these requirements is doping controls. During the Dutch national championships, for the first time in Holland, chessplayers were tested. All participants agreed in advance to be tested. I have to admit that the officials who were in charge of the controls were very correct, helpful and discrete. No complaints about them. Again I have to use the word “unfortunately”. To be recognized as a sport, with the result that the government shall provide financial support, apparently doping controls are required.

**Question** Dear Mr. Gijssen, I would like to ask for your help. I would like to turn to a FIDE committee connected with a protest against the decision of the Hungarian Chess Federation. They had pursued an investigation against GM Emil Anka, the final result of which was absolutely not acceptable to me. This one was a reprimand hearing and after trying for months I cannot hope for any legal redress from the HCF, so finally I decided to turn to FIDE. Unfortunately I don't know which committee of FIDE deals with such cases. Is it the Ethics Commission, the Rules and Tournaments Regulations committee or another committee? **Istvan Almasi (Hungary)**

**Answer** Dear Mr. Almasi, It is impossible for me to answer to your question, because the case is not clear. Has it something to do with the Laws of Chess? Is it related to an ethical question? There are several committees that deal with these cases.

If it has to do with the Laws of Chess, a federation may ask FIDE to give an official decision about problems relating to the Laws of Chess (Article 14 of the Laws of Chess).

Furthermore, I would like point out Chapter 15 of the FIDE Statutes. This chapter is called "Ethics". In this chapter the Code of Ethics is described.

In Article 15.4 of this Chapter we find that the Code of Ethics is applicable to:

*FIDE office bearers, member federations, delegates and counselors, affiliated organizations, organisers, sponsors, all competitors in FIDE registered tournaments. This Code of Ethics shall govern what action may be taken against any person (meaning either an individual or organization) who deliberately or through gross negligence violates the rules and regulations of the game or neglects to observe the precepts of fair play.*

I shall not quote the entire Article 15; suffice it to mention:

*Breach of the regulations of this code by any Federation or FIDE official shall be reported to the FIDE Secretariat.*

*Breach of the regulations of this code by any person shall be reported to and decided by the FIDE Ethics Committee.*

*The proceedings shall be recorded in writing. Grounds must be given for any decisions taken and these must also be in writing after the defendant must have been given sufficient grounds to defend himself in writing and orally if necessary*

*Appeals against a decision taken by any FIDE official can be submitted to the FIDE Ethics Commission. The appeal must be sent by registered mail together with a deposit of Two Hundred Fifty U.S. Dollars (US\$250). The deposit will be returned should the appeal to all intents and purposes prove to be justified*

*Any decisions made by the Ethics Commission may be the object of appeal arbitration proceedings in accordance with the*

*Code of sports-related arbitration of the Court of Arbitration  
for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland*

*The time limit for appeal is twenty-one days following the  
communication of the decision concerning appeal. All recourse  
to ordinary courts is excluded.*

**Question** Dear Mr. Gijssen, I have been following your extraordinary columns for a very long time. They are most useful and interesting and I enjoy reading them. Unfortunately, not many chess players (even top GMs, or some FIDE arbiters, for that matter) are well acquainted with the Rules of Chess, resulting in hundreds of disputes due to not knowing the basics. I am aware that the Rules are still not "perfect"; neither are the players themselves, but your columns are a gigantic step towards an overall improvement of the game of chess. My father (Milos Petronic) was a FIDE Arbiter and I continue to follow all articles related to the FIDE Chess Rules. I have two questions:

**Question 1** There are many programs being used for FIDE rating calculation and submission purposes. Some of them can be found as freeware on the Internet (Swiss Master versions, for example) as well. Can you comment on which ones are "approved" by FIDE and give your list (if you have one) of the top Chess Tournament Program Managers?

**Question 2** We can often see charts and reviews of top chess players (men and women) around the globe. We never, however, see a similar list of the top world class arbiters! Could you make a list of your top 10 world chess arbiters of all time? I believe you are more than qualified to do this. **Jovan Petronic (Yugoslavia)**

**Answer 1** In the FIDE Handbook you can find the systems and the programs, which are approved by FIDE:

There are four systems approved by FIDE:

1. Lim System: this is a Swiss system based on ratings. There is a computer program developed by GMB.
2. Dutch System: this system is also based on ratings. There are several computer programs to make pairings with this system: Petunia, Swiss Chess, SVBOSS
3. Dubov system: this system is also based on ratings, but uses the TPR's achieved after each round. As far as I know there is no computer program for the Dubov system.
4. Burstein system: this system is based on the Buchholz scores of the players after each round. I do not know a computer program that is able to make pairings according to this system.

The systems are described in Chapter C of the FIDE Handbook, except the Burstein system. An explanation of the Burstein system is given in Chapter D (see Olympiad Pairings Rules).

I myself work always with Petunia. At the present time I use Swissmaster 4.8 (An MS DOS program). I hope to present on Internet very soon a Windows version for downloading. I keep all readers informed.

**Answer 2** It is possible to make a ranking list of all chessplayers who are currently active. For this we can use the rating lists. But there are a lot of problems making such lists of all players starting, for instance, from 1850. Some people have tried to make such lists, but others always criticized them. These lists were generated based on results of games. I do not see any reason to make such a list for arbiters. The other problem is: On what should this list be based? Really, I have no idea.

**Question 1** I have a question about something I think could be a problem. If you are playing with Article 10: Quickplay Finish I would like to hear your opinion about which rule has priority over the other. We played in the "Hallsta Open" which starts with 3 rounds of 30-minute games and in the first round we had a game finishing with both players making their last moves at a furious pace. Suddenly black claimed illegal move, because white's king was in check and then white claimed draw because both flags have fallen. What was the correct decision? In the regulations for quickplay finish there are certain conditions:

*10.3 If both flags have fallen and it is impossible to establish which flag fell first the game is drawn.*

But: The arbiter must not intervene in a game and acted upon black's claim first because the game was still "alive" and he must deal with this:

*7.4 If during a game it is found that an illegal move has been made, the position immediately before the irregularity shall be reinstated. If the position immediately before the irregularity cannot be determined the game shall continue from the last identifiable position prior to the irregularity. The clocks shall be adjusted according to Article 6.14.*

*Article 4.3 applies to the move replacing the illegal move. The game shall then continue from this reinstated position.*

It would be interesting to hear your thoughts and the reasons. (The game was declared won by black)

**Question 2** Then I have a more personal problem, you see I am the accounting manager for our local coffee brewery and with FIDE's rather new thoughts about drug policy I have grown concerned and worried that I may not be able to continue as team captain, tournament director and arbiter for our chess club as they consider me a "dealer". Have you any idea what punishment is in store for a person like me, if I not quit my job or stop my chess-activities? **Thomas Franzén, (Sweden)**

**Answer 1** One remark in advance: the game you described was a Rapid game, because all moves must be made within 30 minutes. This means three things:

The arbiter may take a decision regarding illegal moves only after a claim of a player.

And probably more important is: the game is not lost, even after such a claim. Only in Blitz games would the completing of an illegal move have this consequence.

We have to apply Article B6 of the Rapidplay Rules:

*If both flags have fallen, the game is drawn.*

Taking into consideration the points mentioned before I do not see any reason why the game should be lost for white. In my opinion it is a draw.

I am afraid that the arbiter confused a lot of articles:

Article 10.3:

*If both flags have fallen and it is impossible to establish which flag fell first the game is drawn.*

This Article applies only in "normal" games, not in Rapid and Blitz games.

Article C3:

*An illegal move is completed once the opponent's clock has been started. However, the opponent is entitled to claim a win before making his own move. If the opponent cannot checkmate the player's King by any possible series of legal moves with the most unskilled counterplay, then he is entitled to claim a draw before making his own move. Once the opponent has made his own move, an illegal move cannot be corrected.*

This Article applies only for Blitz games.

**Answer 2** Mr. Franzen! I have only one piece of advice: please continue all your activities. The chess world needs people like you. The chess world would be in chaos without people like you.

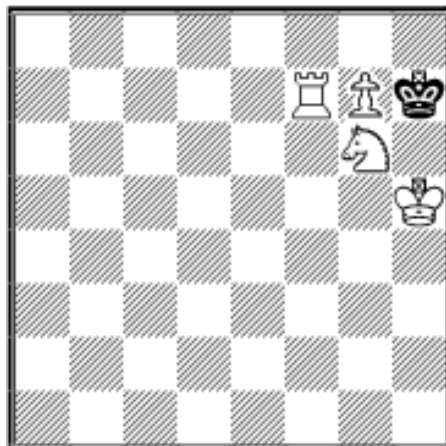
**Question** Dear Mr. Gijssen, In a Swiss tournament, after the 7th round of 9, the person maintaining the cross table wrote on the pairings sheet a win for player A. But, incredibly, he added 1½ point for the win. So, player A reached the first board against the leader and lost in round 8. Nobody was aware of the error, but certainly player A knew that he should not have been awarded 1½ points for the win. Only a few days later was the error discovered. If we had discovered it just at the end of the tournament, what should the arbiter have done? **Jorge Laplaza (Argentina)**

**Answer** If I shall ever publish a book about incredible stories, I shall include this one. Well, what to do if the mistake was discovered during the tournament? Very simple. It should be corrected immediately and the pairings of the subsequent rounds should be made with the correct standings. In the report to the federation and FIDE the correct result must be transmitted, in case the tournament is rated.

**Question** As an aside to the issue raised by Mr. Theo Heukels regarding the White player with rook, knight and pawn versus Black with a bare king in which White promoted his pawn to a *black* queen: If instead of protesting the illegal move and gaining a draw, might Black not have continued playing with winning chances now that he has a new queen so "thoughtfully" provided by his opponent? **Wayne L. Rohricht (USA)**

**Answer** I am quite sure that this question is submitted as a joke. Let me give you a nice example what can happen if your view is right.

Consider the following position and try to find mate in 1. It is white's move:



Mate in 1 is achieved by 1. g7-g8 and White replaces the white pawn by a black knight. I found this example in an excellent book about the Laws of Chess published by the Swiss Chess Federation. Unfortunately the text is only in German, but I would like to recommend this book to all arbiters who can read German.

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

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