



## The 75th FIDE Congress

I am afraid that in a few years chessplayers will remember the 2004 Calvià Olympiad only because of the tumultuous closing ceremony. But the splendid result of the young Ukrainian team, which very convincingly won the Olympiad, and the fantastic result of Susan Polgar, who made the best performance in the Women's Olympiad, are both well worth remembering.

### COLUMNISTS

The 75<sup>th</sup> FIDE Congress was held during the Olympiad and, as usual, it began with the meetings of the Commissions and Committees. I attended several of these conferences and would like to report on them.

## An Arbiter's Notebook Geurt Gijssen

### Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee

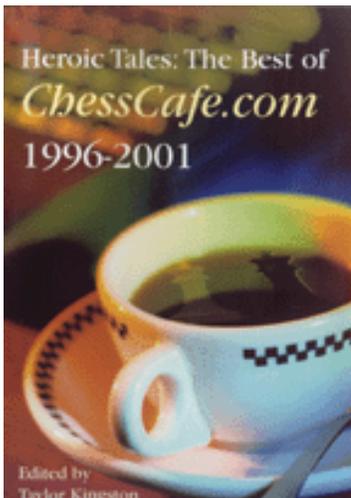
I'll begin with the Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee. As the reader may know, the Laws of Chess can be reviewed once every four years and I would like to mention the most important changes that occurred in 2004.

**Article 1.2:** *The objective of each player is to place the opponent's king 'under attack' in such a way that the opponent has no legal move. The player who achieves this goal is said to have 'checkmated' the opponent's king and to have won the game. Leaving one's own king under attack, exposing one's own king to attack and also 'capturing' the opponent's king are not allowed. The opponent whose king has been checkmated has lost the game.*

New to this Article is the sentence: "Leaving one's own king under attack, exposing one's own king to attack and also 'capturing' the opponent's king are not allowed." This change means that capturing the king is considered an illegal move and there are no exceptions in the Rapid and Blitz regulations.

The Rules Committee readily accepted this change, but there was strong opposition in the Executive Board. A majority accepted the proposal and, in private discussions after this meeting, I tried to convince those opposed to it that the proposal had merit.

Afterwards, I had a discussion with a colleague about a situation in which a player leaves his king in check during a Blitz game. We thought it strange that a player could lose a game when he captures the opponent's king. So we



agreed to the following: if a player leaves his king in check, he makes an illegal move. If the opponent does not claim the illegal move, he then sanctions it and considers the move legal. But this does not mean that the opponent is allowed to make an illegal move by capturing the king. Therefore, two consecutive illegal moves cannot exist.

**Article 4.4d:** *If a player promotes a pawn, the choice of the piece is finalized, when the piece has touched the square of promotion.*

There were many discussions about when the choice of a newly promoted piece is finalized and this Article now makes it clear. Even if a player announces “queen,” it does not mean he has to choose a queen. Nevertheless, the arbiter may penalize the player if he considers this as a disturbing act.

**Article 4.7:** *When, as a legal move or part of a legal move, a piece has been released on a square, it cannot then be moved to another square. The move is considered to have been made when all the relevant requirements of Article 3 have been fulfilled*

*a. in the case of a capture, when the captured piece has been removed from the chessboard and the player, having placed his own piece on its new square, has released this capturing piece from his hand;*

*b. in the case of castling, when the player's hand has released the rook on the square previously crossed by the king. When the player has released the king from his hand, the move is not yet made, but the player no longer has the right to make any move other than castling on that side, if this is legal;*

*c. in the case of the promotion of a pawn, when the pawn has been removed from the chessboard and the player's hand has released the new piece after placing it on the promotion square. If the player has released from his hand the pawn that has reached the promotion square, the move is not yet made, but the player no longer has the right to play the pawn to another square.*

Until 1996 the points mentioned above were written in the Laws of Chess, but have since disappeared. It was the opinion of the Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee that they should return because they well clarify the situation in such cases where a move consists of two parts. For instance, if the white player releases his king, coming from e1, on the square g1, he has to castle to that side, if this is possible. Or if the white player releases a pawn on e8, he has to promote this pawn.

**Article 6.7:** *Any player who arrives at the chessboard more than one hour after the scheduled start of the session shall lose the game unless*

*the rules of the competition specify or the arbiter decides otherwise.*

There were many proposals to change this Article. One was that a player, who is not present at the start of session, will lose the game; another proposal was to forfeit the game if a player is not present half an hour after the start of the session. After a long discussion it was decided to make no changes, because each organizer or arbiter can decide this matter, with the stipulation that it is announced before the start of the event.

**Article 8.1:** *In the course of play each player is required to record his own moves and those of his opponent in the correct manner, move after move, as clearly and legibly as possible, in the algebraic notation (Appendix E), on the 'scoresheet' prescribed for the competition. It is forbidden to write the moves in advance.*

Strangely enough, there was not a long discussion about introducing the last sentence of this Article: "It is forbidden to write the moves in advance." There was a proposal that a player may change the intended move on the scoresheet once or twice, but there was no support for it. Readers of previous columns know my stance on this issue.

**Article 8.4b:** *If a player has less than five minutes left on his clock and has additional time of 30 seconds or more added with each move, both players have to write the opponent's move before completing their own move.*

This Article has a story behind it. It was not in the original draft sent to the federations and members of the Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee. However, during the Olympiad the games were played with a time control of 90 minutes for the whole game with an increment of 30 seconds from the first move. Several players approached me and told me that this was very inconvenient, especially in time trouble, as the opponent had the possibility of replying immediately without recording the moves and they proposed something like Article 8.4b. In the meantime the meetings of the Rules Committee and the Executive Board of the FIDE had already taken place.

I then consulted the members of the Committee individually and found that a huge majority was in favor of this new Article. I asked permission to include it in the final draft and it will be approved by the next Presidential Board of FIDE. We still have to make some "cosmetic" changes in the final version, but at the end of February the final version of the Laws of Chess will be published and they will take effect on July 1, 2005.

**Article 10.2b:** *If the arbiter postpones his decision, the opponent may be awarded two extra minutes and the game shall continue in the*

*presence of an arbiter, if possible. The arbiter shall declare the final result later in the game or after a flag has fallen. He shall declare the game drawn if he agrees that the final position cannot be won by normal means, or that the opponent was not making sufficient attempts to win by normal means.*

There are two changes in this Article. Previously it was stated that the arbiter had to declare the final result after a flag fall. As of July 1, 2005, he has the possibility to do so even before the flag falls. The advantage is that the arbiter can observe other games and does not have to wait for a flag fall. The second change was to add the words “not making sufficient attempts” to the last sentence.

**Article 12.2b:** *It is strictly forbidden to bring mobile phones or other electronic means of communication, not authorized by the arbiter, into the playing venue. If a player's mobile phone rings in the playing venue during play, that player shall lose the game. The score of the opponent shall be determined by the arbiter.*

Mobile phones and other electronic means of communications were debated extensively over the last year. Note that pocket computers are not mentioned in this Article, because they are considered to be sources of information and hence covered under Article 12.2a: “During play the players are forbidden to make use of any notes, sources of information, advice, or analyze on another chessboard.”

**Article 13.6:** *The arbiter must not intervene in a game except in cases described by the Laws of Chess. He shall not indicate the number of moves made, except in applying Article 8.5 when at least one flag has fallen. The arbiter shall refrain from informing a player that his opponent has completed a move or that the player has not pressed his clock.*

That the arbiter will refrain from informing a player that he has not pressed his clock is re-introduced into the Laws of Chess.

**Article 13.7b:** *It is forbidden for anybody to use a mobile phone in the playing venue and any area designated by the arbiter*

This Article is written “for anybody.” It applies to arbiters, sponsors, spectators, organizers, et cetera. It is also important that the arbiter has the possibility of forbidding mobile phones in the spectators' area.

**Article B1:** *A ‘Rapidplay’ game is one where either all the moves must be made in a fixed time from 15 to 60 minutes; or the time allotted + 60 times any increment is from 15 to 60 minutes.*

The definition of a Rapid game has been expanded. The majority of games with an increment are now considered Rapid games.

**Article B6:** *An illegal move is completed once the opponent's clock has been started. The opponent is then entitled to claim that the player completed an illegal move before the claimant has made his move. Only after such a claim, shall the arbiter make a ruling. However, if both kings are in check or the promotion of a pawn is not completed, the arbiter shall intervene, if possible.*

Matters regarding illegal moves in the previous Laws of Chess were quite unclear. This Article introduces several new elements:

- It is now clear at which moment a player may claim an illegal move made by the opponent.
- It was previously written that the opponent may claim an illegal move before he had touched a piece. This has been changed to “before he has made a move.”
- There are two cases in which the arbiter will intervene in a Rapid game, but not in a Blitz game. These are the typical cases of an illegal position, i.e. a position that cannot be reached by any possible series of legal moves. The first case being one where both kings are in check, including attacking each other; as well as the situation where the promoted pawn has not been replaced by a new piece.

**Article C1:** *A ‘blitz’ game’ is one where all the moves must be made in a fixed time of less than 15 minutes for each player; or the allotted time + 60 times any increment is less than 15 minutes.*

Some games with an increment are now also considered to be Blitz games.

### **Swiss Pairings Committee**

Three programs were submitted for endorsement by the Swiss Pairings Committee: SWISS Master 5.0 from The Netherlands (an updated Windows version of SWISS Master 4.8); SWISS Manager from Austria; and PROTOS from Germany.

Furthermore, the following decisions regarding Swiss Pairing Systems were accepted:

- The pairing system used for a FIDE rated tournament will be one of the published FIDE systems, or if another system is in use a detailed written description of the rules will be distributed to the participants.
- Accelerated pairings are acceptable if they are announced in advance.
- It is forbidden to vary the correct pairings to maximize a player's chances of fulfilling a title norm.

- Any participant who has not arrived at the venue of a FIDE rated tournament before the scheduled time for the pairings of the first round will be excluded from the tournament as long he does not arrive at the venue in time for the pairings of another round.
- The pairings, once published, will not be changed unless two players, who were previously paired against each other, are paired against each other again.
- A player, who is absent without notifying the arbiter will be considered as withdrawn unless the absence is acceptably explained before the next pairing.

### Technical Commission

Three electronic clocks were presented for approval. The Silver version 1.3 and Lisa clocks were conditionally approved, but the Phileon clock was not approved because of some errors.

Furthermore, standards for chess equipment and tournament venues for FIDE tournaments were approved, while Tie-break calculation in cases of default in Round Robin tournaments will be discussed and proposed at the next congress. I will inform you of the details in a future column.

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*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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