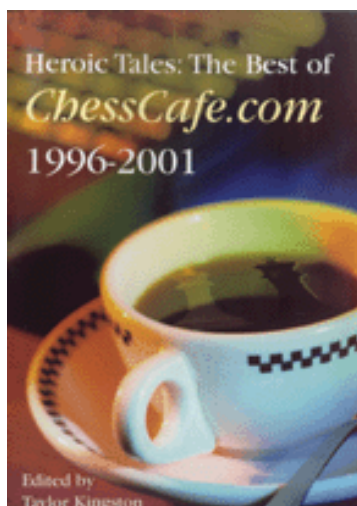




C O L U M N I S T S

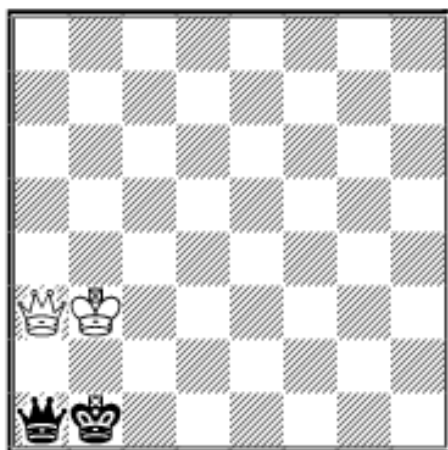
## An Arbiter's Notebook

Geurt Gijsen



## Castling

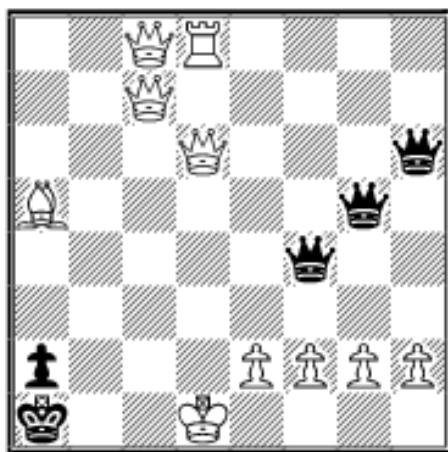
I recently had a discussion with Stewart Reuben about various positions:



### Position 1

In this simple position White plays 1.Qxa1+, presses his clock, and Black's flag falls. The question is: Did White win the game or is it a draw? The answer is simple: it is a draw, because the only move Black can play is 1...Kxa1. The decision to declare the game drawn is based on Article 6.10:

*Except where Articles 5.1 or one of the Articles 5.2 (a), (b) and (c) apply, if a player does not complete the prescribed number of moves 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 by any possible series of legal moves, even with the most unskilled counterplay.*



### Position 2: Black to move

It is unlikely that this position will occur in a game; nevertheless, let us see what could happen. Black plays 1...Qc1+ and his flag falls before the following sequence of forced moves are played. 2.Qxc1+ Qxc1+ 3.Qxc1+ Qxc1 4.Kxc1 and stalemate. Based on Article 6.10 (see above) the arbiter should declare the game drawn.

We discussed these positions as an

introduction for Article 9.2:

*The game is drawn, upon a correct claim by the player having the sequential move, when the same position, for at least the third time*

*(not necessarily by sequential repetition of moves)*

*a. is about to appear, if he first writes his move on his scoresheet and declares to the arbiter his intention to make this move, or*

*b. has just appeared, and add the player claiming the draw has the move.*

*Positions as in (a) and (b) are considered the same, if the same player has the move, pieces of the same kind and color occupy the same squares, and the possible moves of all the pieces of both players are the same.*

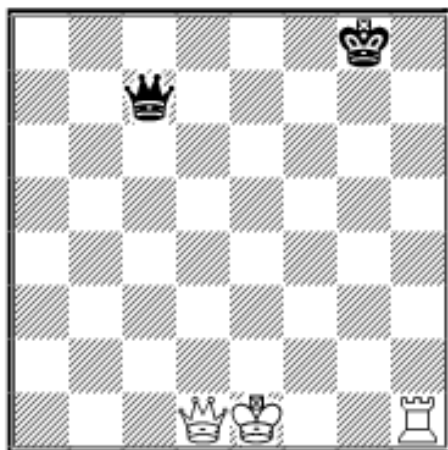
***Positions are not the same if a pawn that could have been captured en passant can no longer be captured or if the right to castle has been changed temporarily or permanently.***

We agreed that there is no need to mention “taking en passant” in this Article, because if a player can take en passant in the first position then it is impossible in the second and third position.

The problem is the addition of the words *temporarily or permanently*. I supported the proposal to delete these words, but the majority of the Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee decided to retain them. After the FIDE Congress I discussed this matter with Stewart Reuben because I still don't understand why the word “temporarily” is included. The sentence should read:

***Positions are not the same if the right to castle has been changed permanently.***

In this context we discussed the following position:



### Position 3: Black to move

White has not moved his king or rook; therefore he still has the possibility of castling. Let us consider two continuations:

A. 1...Qe5+ 2.Kf1 Qf4+ 3.Ke1 Qe5+ 4.Kf1 Qf4+ 5.Ke1 and, at this moment, the black player claims a draw because after 5...Qe5+ we have a third repetition of position, with the same player on move.

The arbiter must reject the claim because when the position was first on the board White had not lost the right to castle. He lost this right not by 1...Qe5+, but by 2 Kf1, when he moved his king.

B. 1...Qg3+ 2.Kf1 Qf4+ 3.Ke1 Qg3+ 4.Kf1 Qf4+ 5.Ke1 and at this moment

Black claims a draw because after 5...Qg3+ we have a third repetition of position, with the same player on move. The arbiter must reject the claim, because when the position was first on the board, White had not lost the right to castle. He lost this right not by 1...Qg3+, but by 2 Kf1, when he moved his king.

Stewart has a different opinion. He considers that situations A and B are different. In case A White had the possibility of retaining the right to castle by playing 2.Qe2. In case B he lost this right immediately, because he was forced to move his king and lose his right to castle. The consequence being that in A the claim must be rejected and in B the arbiter should agree.

This is quite interesting and the situation needs to be clarified. I will seek the opinions of the members of the Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee pursuant to Article 14 of the Laws of Chess:

*Member federations may ask FIDE to give an official decision about problems relating to the Laws of Chess.*

**Question** Dear Geurt, Several Australian arbiters have been discussing the meaning of “the right to castle” in a position where a player has not yet moved his king or rook, yet will still never be able to castle with any sequence of legal moves.

Such a case would be rare, but I would be surprised if it had never happened. Suppose that in a given position White has not moved his king and at least one rook. However, White’s king is in check from a black queen that has just moved to e6. Then after 1.Kf2 Qf6+ 2.Ke1 Qe6+ we have the starting position again, at least in terms of what is on the board. Play continues 3.Kf2 Qf6+ 4.Ke1. Can Black now write ...Qe6+ on his scoresheet and claim a draw by triple repetition? Or is the starting position “different” from the two “repetitions?”

The reason for my question is that in the starting position it could be argued that White has not yet lost “the right to castle” and only does so when he moves his king. However, this seems absurd, since White must move his king immediately. He will never be able to castle with any series of legal moves, so in what sense does White have “the right to castle?” You suggest:

*Article 3.8a.ii.(1) has to be changed as follows:*

*(1) The right for castling has been lost:*

*a. if the king has already moved, or*

*b. with a rook that has already moved.*

I agree that this is an improvement, but to deal with the situation I have mentioned perhaps we should also add: “c. on a given side, once it is no

longer possible to castle on that side after any series of legal moves.” **Kevin Bonham, (Australia)**

**Answer** Dear Kevin, Most of the answers can be found in the introduction to this column. As for your proposal to add “c” to Article 3.8, it is unnecessary because your suggestion is already covered in the article as it is.

**Question** Please explain the rules in the following situation. In a CFC tournament game, a junior player attempted to castle long. Her opponent indicated the move was illegal as she had previously played Rb8-Ra8. The black player acknowledged that castling long was illegal and then castled short. Was playing 0-0 legal? Or did she have to move her king because she had touched both the king and her a8-rook when attempting to castle long? I asked a number of people after the tournament and some felt that she could castle and others felt she had to move her king because of the touch move rule. Please, clarify this point as I am involved with scholastic chess and many players could make this mistake. Thank you very much. **Don MacKinnon (Canada)**

**Answer** I refer to Article 4.4c:

*If a player, intending to castle, touches the king or king and rook at the same time, but castling on that side is illegal, the player must make another legal move with his king which may include castling on the other side. If the king has no legal move, the player is free to make any legal move.*

This Article very clearly states that castling on the other side is possible if legal. Another misunderstanding is that the player has to move the rook. But because a king move was intended, a king move must be played. Even if moving the king is impossible, a player is not forced to play the rook that was touched.

**Question** Mr. Gijssen, I am the arbiter at my local chess club and the following problem arose during a 30 minute tournament game. Somewhere around move 35 Player A attempted to castle and was told that he could not by player B. It seems that Player A had reversed the black king and queen. He wanted to castle, but since the king was misplaced he could not correctly do so. His queen had already moved from e8 and since 35 moves had been played I ruled that Player A could not castle and had to continue the game with the king on d8. Was this the correct ruling or should I have let him castle? **Thomas Rehmeier (USA)**

**Answer** Let us see what the Laws of Chess say about it. I refer to Article B4 of the Rapid Game Rules:

*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.*

Therefore, your ruling was correct.

**Question** Dear Geurt, Could you give your opinion concerning an incident that occurred during a time scramble in a recent club match. The players had about eight moves each to reach the first time control and were both down to less than a minute. They exchanged major pieces and as Black executed a move, White stopped him indicating that it was not yet Black's turn. White then made a move, play continued, and Black's flag fell. I was taking score and I could see that the time control had not been reached. However, I couldn't see what intervening move had been played by White when he prevented Black from making a move. In fact, when we reconstructed the game, it became clear that White had been in error, that it *had* been Black's turn to move and that White had therefore made two consecutive moves!

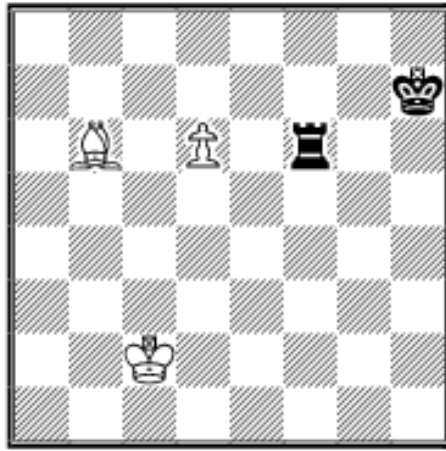
This was quite clearly an honest error on White's part and the players amicably agreed to a draw. Nevertheless, if it *had* been necessary to obtain a ruling, what ruling should have been made? Yours, **Justin Horton (UK)**

**Answer** First, it is very important to mention that the game was not yet over. Even after a flag fall some aspects of the game have to be investigated. And the most important element is, of course, whether the players completed the required number of moves. The players and the arbiter agreed that there was an irregularity and it was found during the game. I refer for this case to Article 7.4a:

*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*

I consider the second move to be an illegal move. The position will continue from the position after White's "first" move and Black is not forced to play the same piece as he did after White's "second" move.

**Question** Respected Sir, I was the arbiter at a recent scholastic event where the following position was reached:

**Black to play**

Black moved his rook to 'f2' and announced "check" but realized that his rook would be captured by White's bishop on 'b6,' so Black captured the white pawn on d6 instead.

The black player never released the piece and only released the rook after capturing the d6-pawn. The white player appealed that the move was completed when Black

announced "check." I rejected White's appeal. Was I correct? Thank you,  
**Pranesh Yadav, National Arbiter (India)**

**Answer** As long as the player did not release the piece, he can make any legal move with this piece. Therefore ...Rxd6 stands. But, even though he did not mean to disturb his opponent by saying "check," it is not unreasonable to give the opponent some compensation of time because of the disruption.

**Question** Dear Mr. Gijssen, I recently witnessed an incident in a low league team competition in Germany. Our rules state that the home team's captain will act as an arbiter or, if he cannot do so because he's still playing his own game, select another person to act as an arbiter.

The incident happened in a game where both players had only a few seconds left before move 40 (2h/40+1h/finish). The home team player wasn't recording his moves, while the guest team player was at least marking the number of moves made on his scoresheet. Another home team player was recording the moves – as an arbiter should do. The home team player was in desperate time trouble, so when they reached move 40 the "arbiter" announced: "40 moves completed!" The home player then instantly stopped blitzing.

There was no discussion about the incident and the guest team player won the game after all. I think the "arbiter" simply didn't know the rule not to interfere until flag fall. How should such an incident be penalized? Should the game be declared lost for the home player? That may be too harsh as he did nothing wrong. Should the "arbiter" receive a warning or be thrown out? That wouldn't change the fact that the home player gained an advantage. Sincerely,  
**Christian Kinkelin (Germany)**

**Answer** The "arbiter" made a mistake, but to punish a player for an arbiter's mistake is not correct. The arbiter thought that he acted correctly. And, I must add, it is more and more difficult to find people who are willing to volunteer their services to their club. Therefore, do not punish the arbiter, but make it

very clear to him what kind of mistake he made. These kinds of incidents happen frequently. That's why it is very important to organize courses for arbiters and ensure that each club has at least one experienced arbiter. Care must also be taken when a substitute is appointed.

**Question** Geurt, Many thanks for your enlightening column. Imagine the following scenario, which I am sure has arisen in practice. A player has a winning position and yet decides to accept a draw or offer a draw based on the perceived tournament situation. The player believes that a draw would lead to a position of sole first. However, it later transpires that this belief was based on a mistake by a tournament official who made incorrect entries on the wall chart. When this official's mistake is corrected, after a draw has been agreed, it transpires that the player will not take sole first and should have gone for the win. Does the player have any recourse? The situation seems unfair because the predicament was the result of a tournament official's error. However, it's unclear what remedy there could be; any comments? Thank you, **Paul Epstein (UK)**

**Answer** I understand that a player feels very unpleasant in such a situation, as does the arbiter. However, the Laws of Chess don't deal with these kinds of situations. It is simply bad luck for the player involved. Another problem is that it is very difficult to prove that he would have won the game if it had continued.

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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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