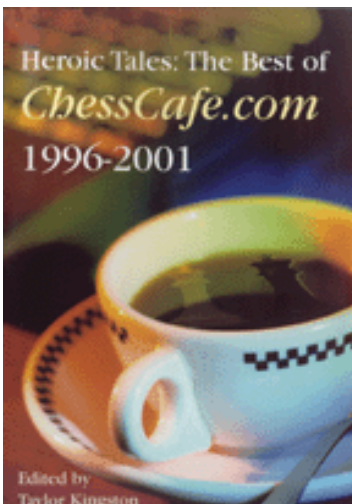




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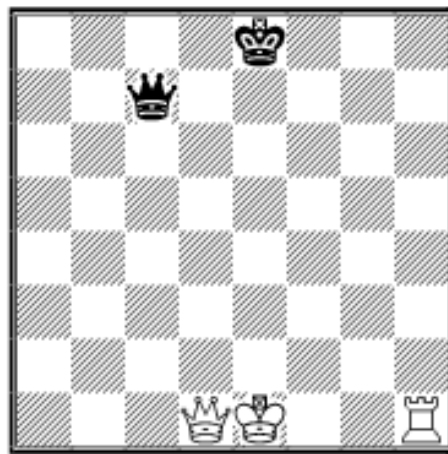
An Arbiter's Notebook

Geurt Gijssen



Dresden 2005

We have [previously](#) discussed castling in connection with the triple repetition rule. This is illustrated in the diagrammed position below. Black is on move and White hasn't moved his king or h1-rook:



Play continues 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. Is this claim correct?

The Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee discussed this matter very extensively during the meeting of the Executive Board in Dresden and made a proposal to the Executive Board, which

was accepted.

The answer is: the claim is incorrect. 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. The general rule is:

A player loses his right to castle with his own move and not by an opponent's move.

In other news from Dresden: The Association of Chess Professionals (ACP) agreed with the new article that players may not record the moves in advance and grandmasters Macieja, Short, and Tregubov were nominated to the Rules and Tournament Regulations Committee.

Question Dear Sir, I was the Chief Arbiter of a tournament played in São Paulo, Brazil and an important question arose regarding the use of tiebreaks. Can it be announced that the order of the tiebreak criteria will only be decided at the end of the event?

This was a Swiss Tournament with 165 players of various ratings including some that were unrated, so the ratings were inconsistent. All the players were informed before the tournament began that the order of the tiebreak criteria would be decided at the end of the tournament, but the criterions themselves were announced.

In the Regulations for Swiss System Tournaments (04.2 of FIDE Handbook), it is clear that in FIDE competitions that are declared to be conducted by “FIDE Swiss Rules,” only minor departures from these regulations are permitted, and such departures must be declared before the competition begins and the attention of participants specially drawn to the departures. Therefore, it is possible to change the usual order of tiebreak criteria.

This is confirmed by the rule of item 06 - FIDE Tournament Rules, which says “it is recommended they also be applied to all FIDE rated tournaments, if applicable,” not that they are obligatory.

In the same Regulations for Swiss System Tournaments (04.2 of FIDE Handbook), on item 3 (Application of Tiebreak System to different Tournament systems), it is clear that the choice of the Tiebreak System to be used in a tournament will be decided in advance, taking into account the type of the tournament (Swiss, Round Robin, Teams, etc.), and the special structure of players to be expected in the tournament.

The Chief Arbiter is also authorized (C06, item VI, 1) to make additional regulations in consultation with the Administrator before the start of the competition and instructed, in 13.2, to “act in the best interest of the competition.” Moreover, the Laws of Chess, in its Preface, recognizes “The Laws of Chess cannot (...) regulate all administrative questions.”

So it should be possible to determinate the order of tiebreak criteria at the end of the tournament. However, I would like your opinion about this. Thank you very much. Best regards, **Joara Chaves (Brazil)**

Answer I am very impressed by your letter because you have researched the available FIDE Laws and Regulations almost perfectly. I understand that the FIDE Laws of Chess had been applied and I assume that the pairings and time limit fulfils the requirement of the Rating Regulations.

Therefore, I do not see any problem with deciding which tiebreak system will be used at the end of the tournament. I would also like to add that, because it was an open tournament, each player knew the conditions in advance and can make their own choice to participate or not.

Question Dear Geurt, in [July 2005](#) you wrote: “The previous organizer of the Linares tournament had a blacklist of players that did not display fighting

chess, and anyone who agreed to a short draw would not be invited back. In my opinion this is the best remedy to avoid short draws.” Do you see potential value for reducing premature draws in the following idea: when player “A” offers a draw to player “B,” “B” retains his right to accept that draw offer until he loses (on time or is checkmated, etc) or until he completes *two* (2) subsequent moves of his own. Of course, the long standing rule has been one (1) subsequent move. Thank you, **Gene Milener (USA)**

Answer To be honest, I do not see the merit of your proposal. There have been many attempts to avoid short draws. At one point it was forbidden to offer a draw before move thirty. However, this posed no problems to the players because they just repeated moves, or played nonsensically, etc. As I mentioned, the best remedy to avoid short draws is not to invite the players who make them.

Question Dear IA Gijssen, During the recent M-Tel Masters tournament in Bulgaria an attempt was made to restrict the number of short draws. My suggestion for the Laws of Chess is to forbid premature resignations and play until checkmate and checkmate only!

Here are the benefits:

- One will never lose a game because of premature resignation.
- The spectators will finally see some checkmating positions in top-level games, not only in their post-game analysis.
- The new rule would lower the increasing percentage of faked games, as one would have to expose oneself to getting checkmated.
- Children and adults will enjoy the game much more.
- Those who get checkmated will do their best not to let it happen again, thus improving their game of chess.
- Everyone will learn better endgame technique, which is relevant because of accelerated time controls.
- Everyone will respect the game of chess even more.
- It will raise the level of the game and bring it a big step closer to other major sports, in which there is no such thing as resignation.

Thanks in advance for your reply! **Jovan Petronic (Serbia)**

Answer In Dresden, I spoke with GM Azmaiparashvili about the tournament in Sofia and I learned something new. When a player offered a draw, he had to consult an expert for permission. If the expert (Azmaiparashvili in this case) did not agree with this offer, the players could still agree to a draw, but had to pay a fine.

As I wrote in a previous [Notebook](#), there was one game in which the arbiter refused the acceptance of a draw. Yet after a few moves, a position was reached in which the arbiter had to accept it. It is very simple for top players

to create a drawn position and the same would happen if your suggestion were accepted. A lot of games would finish with a kind of helpmate. The best answer is to not invite players who do not play fighting chess.

Question Hello, if my opponent releases a piece as completion of a legal move, but has not yet stopped his clock, can I make my move before he punches the clock? Or should I always refrain from touching any piece until he punches the clock? Thanks, **Alexander Stefan Icaza Deckelmann (Germany)**

Answer I refer to Article 6.8a:

During the game each player, having made his move on the chessboard, shall stop his own clock and start his opponent's clock. A player must always be allowed to stop his clock. His move is not considered to have been completed until he has done so, unless the move that was made ends the game (by mate, stalemate or a dead position).

The accepted practice is that after the first player has made his move and the opponent replies before he has stopped his clock, the first player may still press his clock. Although, I can understand that this isn't exactly what Article 6.8 states.

Question Mr. Gijssen, At the American Continental Championship, held in Argentina, 15-year-old Gastón Needleman tied with seven other players for second place, causing a playoff to decide which six players would receive tickets to the FIDE World Cup. It was reported that the six GMs drew quickly with each other, but ganged up against the young fellow. So, here are my questions:

- Do you think the chief arbiter of the tie-break should ask the GMs to play fair and not just make short draws?
- Do you think the GMs involved in the scandal should be punished by FIDE? Ethically they know their behavior was incorrect, but do you think they deserve some sort of punishment?
- In the specific circumstances of this scandal, how should the arbiter have reacted to this incorrect behavior? In the USA, if an arbiter sees that somebody is pre-arranging results to win a prize, they don't allow the offenders to win that prize.

I am very interested in your answer. Thank you very much, **Manuel López Michelone (México)**

Answer Several weeks have passed since this incident took place and many articles have been published about it. I have read all these articles and I am of

the opinion that nothing improper happened.

Seven players have to play for six places. So it is easy to understand that 3 points is sufficient for qualification, i.e. 6 draws is OK. And if one player loses a game, it is even clearer that 3 points qualifies for the World Cup. I repeat: nothing was wrong. Furthermore, it should be taken into account that the tiebreak occurred after the finish of the last round, so the players had to play this 7-round tiebreak until the wee hours of the morning.

Incidentally, the President of FIDE decided to give a wild card to the young star Needleman, who did not qualify during the tiebreak.

Question Respected sir, I was the Chief Arbiter in a recently held FIDE rated tournament. There were 180 players including 7 IMs. One of the lower rated players claimed a draw under Article 10.2, against his higher rated opponent (2385), in a position that offered no winning chances for either side. I gave 2 extra minutes to the lower rated player, then the game continued until one of the flags fell, and I declared the game drawn. The higher rated player continued to sit at the board thinking, and I assumed that he did not know about Article 10.2 (unfortunately most of the senior players in that tourney did not know the rule, even the tournament winner!). I tried to explain the rule to him but he responded angrily and loudly. My question is, was my decision correct? And what can be done about someone who quarrels with the arbiter? Thank you. **Pranesh Yadav (India)**

Answer As far as I can see, your actions in applying Article 10.2 were correct. However, I assume you awarded the two minutes to the higher rated player and not to the player who claimed a draw. As to what happened afterwards, I am not so sure. It is often very difficult for a strong player to accept a draw against a lower rated player and I recognize the situation you described. The player is still thinking about the game, replaying it and trying to discover what went wrong. In such a situation, I leave the player alone as long as he does not disturb anybody else, because after a few minutes he will leave the playing area. If he starts to complain about your decision, tell him that you are willing to explain it outside the playing hall.

Question "A" and "B" are playing and "B" claims a draw according to Article 10.2. He has only 1 minute left on his clock and player "A" has 10 minutes. The arbiter decides that the game should be continued and surprisingly player "B" wins. Is it correct that player "B" wins or should it be a draw? Or what if the arbiter has awarded two extra minutes on the clock to player "A"? If it is a win, then it seems that the arbiter has helped "B" to win. Thank you. Yours faithfully, **M. Manjunath (India)**

Answer According to Article 9.1c:

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

offer of a draw.

If a player refuses a draw offer, he risks losing, and this is what happened in the situation you describe. Therefore, the arbiter does not help player “B” to win. It is irrelevant if a player is awarded two extra minutes. Finally, the arbiter can declare the game drawn or won for either player if he, for instance, oversteps the time limit. As you know, appeals are not allowed.

Question Hi Geurt, My question is about playing chess in Fischer mode. Our club has started playing with a time control of 1 hour and 35 minutes with an increment of 15 seconds per move from move 1. What are the rules when a player has less than 5 minutes? For instance, is one obliged to record the moves? Sincerely, **Martien Smit Bennekom (The Netherlands)**

Answer I refer to Article 8.4:

If a player has less than five minutes left on his clock at some stage in a period and does not have additional time of 30 seconds or more added with each move, then he is not obliged to meet the requirements of Article 8.1. Immediately after one flag has fallen the player must update his scoresheet completely before moving a piece on the chessboard.

Since the time increment is less than 30 seconds per move, then the player with less than 5 minutes doesn't have to write the moves. The essential words are: “at some stage,” which means that a player doesn't have to record the moves whenever he has less than 5 minutes thinking time, even if at a later stage of the same time-control he will have more than that.

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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