



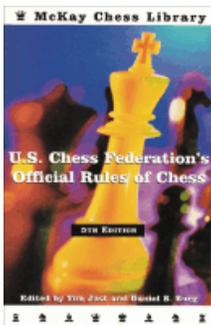
COLUMNISTS

An Arbiter's Notebook

Geurt Gijssen

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CHESSTHEATRE

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Does a draw claim stand for the entire game?

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. The DGT clocks (approved by FIDE) do not apply the regulations of rapid games (Article A4.d.3) when using functions with the increment. When one player has run out of time, the clock stops working and neither side runs (it only reports the fall of the flag with a "-"). Because the opponent's time doesn't go down to zero, the player who overstepped the time control cannot continue and thus has no possibility to claim a draw. I want to organize a blitz tournament with an increment (5m + 3s). How can I fix this problem? Thanks, **Christian De Vivo (Italy)**

Answer I spoke with the producer of the clock and he told me that you are right. Furthermore, he informed me that this was always the case and that no one has made any objection. The only solution I see is that you mention in the regulations that the arbiter may call a flag fall. In my opinion it is possible to introduce this rule. As you know, if there is adequate supervision, the normal rules apply, but for each game an arbiter is required. In the period of falling flags, many games are already finished by resignation or draw agreements. Therefore, the arbiters have to supervise fewer games. This is the only possibility I envision.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. I would like to ask your opinion on a somewhat bizarre matter that caused some commotion in our club league last year.

The host club used digital clocks with double displays, one large display with clock hands and a round clock face with flag, plus one very small display with digital numbers arranged on each clock face between seven and five o'clock. During the match in question there were no arbiters present, which meant the playing team captains had to assume the role of arbiters. After the games had started, the team captain of the host team mentioned to the team captain of the guest team that the small displays were valid. This remark was not communicated to all players, nor were its consequences explained.

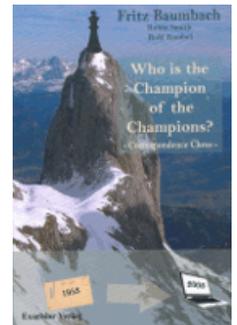
During a time scramble at one of the boards the player of the host team claimed ETL on move thirty-eight (time control was at move forty) even though the clock hands showed that his opponent had two or three more minutes available to him. However, the small digital numbers showed ETL indeed. The player of the guest team had noticed only on move thirty-seven that his time on the small display was running short, but was unable to make the missing moves in time. Moreover, with his last move he ruined his position.

After the claim the guest player stopped the clocks and extended his hand, obviously devastated by his last move. Only then the team captains took notice of the events. The host team insisted that the game was lost to the guest team. The guest team captain did not sign the score card.

Afterwards the guest club protested against the game being counted as lost, asking that the game should be replayed. They argued that the host club did not comply with the rule that requires them to provide properly functioning clocks. As a consequence the guest player was irritated by two different times being displayed on his clock one of which showed he had enough time to play on, whereas the other one – ignored by him so far – signalled that loss on time was imminent.

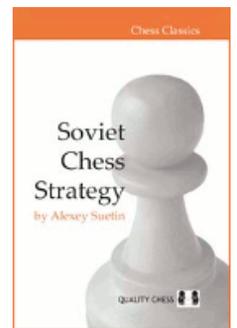
The decision was to grant the protest and to have the game replayed, as suggested by the guest club in their protest letter. The case was discussed in the league at length since it heavily influenced relegation. There had been considerable disagreement on whether the obvious sign of resignation – stopping the clock, extending the hand – would not have to prevail over

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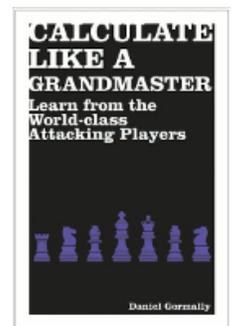


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anything else. How should this protest be decided in your view? Thank you for your consideration. Kind regards, **Stephan Busemann (Germany)**

Answer In fact each game was played with two clocks, which showed different times. I wonder whether this chess clock was approved by FIDE. In my opinion it is absolutely necessary to announce in advance which clock, digital or analogue, will be used. The fact that this did not happen is a perfect reason to replay the game. Furthermore, if the two clocks for each player show different times, at least one clock is incorrect. In my opinion, this clock should not be used in an official competition.

Question Dear, Geurt. Suppose that the lights in the playing hall go out during a game and the T.D. asks that the clocks be paused. I was wondering if this is covered under FIDE rules. Is it possible to analyze with others during this period? This would seem to be a type of adjournment. Thank you, **Lee Hendon (Canada)**

Answer There is one big difference between the situation you describe and an adjourned game: nobody has sealed a move. Therefore, the games are considered to be in progress and analyzing is forbidden.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. The annex to the FIDE Tournament Regulations regarding tie breaks states

Only one type of the five categories described above should be used for a given event.

For example: using Sum of Progressive Score + Buchholz would be incorrect.

In practice, I see this recommendation widely violated. For instance, look at the Regulations of Minsk Open 2010 posted on FIDE homepage:

The winner shall be determined by a) Buchholz; b) slender Buchholz; c) Progressive Score.

Would you comment on it? Sincerely yours, **National Arbiter Yurie Gnyp (Ukraine)**

Answer As you wrote, the FIDE Handbook refers to "recommendations." Therefore, there can be no violation. As a matter of fact, during the next FIDE Congress (September 24 to October 3) the tie break rules will be discussed.

Question Dear, IA Gijssen. I have a couple of questions for you:

Question One An interesting situation arose at our club a few years ago. In my opinion, the arbiter acted correctly, but I would like your opinion.

The clock was not set correctly before the game and it was adding more than thirty seconds of increment per move (as per tournament regulations). One of the players noticed it, but didn't say anything, instead he calculated how much the clock should have really added and when his opponent's time went below that he claimed a win on time based on Article 6.10.b of the Laws of Chess:

If during a game it is found that the setting of either or both clocks was incorrect, either player or the arbiter shall stop the clocks immediately. The arbiter shall install the correct setting and adjust the times and move counter. He shall use his best judgement when determining the correct settings.

The argument of the complaining player was that the correct setting was very obvious because the clock wasn't malfunctioning and was always adding the same increment (I can't remember what it was now, but probably forty seconds per move). The arbiter argued that it was impossible to forfeit a player when his flag hasn't actually fallen, because that would negate Article 13.2:

The arbiter shall act in the best interest of the competition. He should ensure that a good playing environment is maintained and that the players are not

disturbed. He shall supervise the progress of the competition.

As a result he continued the game from the time settings at the time of the claim, while reinstating the correct increment. I believe that he also added a couple of additional minutes for the complainer. This situation is not explicitly covered in the rules of chess; thus, I would like to see what you think about it.

Question Two This has never happened to me in a tournament that I ran, but I am not sure what I would do if it did. If a player's cell phone sounded in a position where he can't lose, the rules specify that he should be awarded a zero, while his opponent should be awarded half a point. The thing is that I don't even know how to mark a score like that? In the Swiss pairings program that we use, such a result is impossible, and as far as I know FIDE can't receive a result like this for rating purposes. The only way that I see to make this work would be to annul the game and give one of the players a half point bye and the other a zero point bye. The problem is that this can lead to cheating. Suppose a higher rated player would be in a dead drawn position (like king and rook pawn vs. king), he could then let his phone ring, be awarded with zero points (it may not matter for prizes, etc.) and not lose any rating points.

I would like to hear what would you do in such a situation and also whether it might be possible to revise the rule to equate a ringing cell phone to a fallen flag? That way in such an incident a simple draw would be awarded.
Sincerely, **FA Vlad Rekhson (Canada)**

Answer One I am not sure that your reference to Article 13.2 is correct. But you referred correctly to Article 6.10.b. In my opinion, essential in this case is the following sentence:

He (the arbiter) shall use his best judgement when determining the correct settings.

I believe that the arbiter acted correctly by rejecting the claim to declare the game lost. But I don't understand why he awarded some extra time to the claimant.

Answer Two It is incorrect, as you mentioned, to change the result into two byes, because FIDE will consider this game as unplayed. In Swissmaster the results $\frac{1}{2}$ -0 and 0- $\frac{1}{2}$ are possible.

If the program that you use cannot produce this result, you can solve this problem by awarding the byes to both players, export the FIDE report, and make a text file of this report. In this text file you only have to add the colors, the correct result, and the pairing numbers of the players.

Question Mr. Geurt Gijssen. I have two questions:

Question One A player promoting the pawn, puts the rook upside down and calls it a queen. Can this be considered an illegal move, or just an inverted piece (rook), which then must be placed correctly on the board?

Question Two Player A (White) has rook, queen, king and a6-pawn. Player B has only king and a7-pawn. Seeing that he will not be able to win the game in time, Player A asks for a draw based on Article 10.2. The referee orders the game to continue and White's flag falls. Does Player A lose or is it a draw?
Carlos Alberto (Brazil)

Answer One I have discussed this situation several times. I refer to Articles 4.4.d and 6.12.b of the Laws of Chess:

If a player having the move, promotes a pawn, the choice of the piece is finalised, when the piece has touched the square of promotion.

A player may stop the clocks only in order to seek the arbiter's assistance, for example when promotion has taken place and the piece required is not available.

The first Article is very clear. The choice is finalized the moment the chosen piece has touched the square of promotion. This also applies to an inverted rook. It occurs mostly in time trouble that a player will attempt to use an inverted rook as a queen, and it is understandable in a situation when a queen is not available. However, now a player may always stop the clocks to summon the arbiter and ask for the piece he needs if it is not available. Nevertheless, I can understand that some amateurs do not know this rule. Therefore, a little flexibility is required.

Answer Two I refer to Article 10.2.b:

If the arbiter postpones his decision, the opponent may be awarded two extra minutes and the game shall continue, if possible in the presence of an arbiter. The arbiter shall declare the final result later in the game or as soon as possible 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.

I think you will agree, considering the material on the board, that it is impossible for the player of the black pieces to win the game by normal means, even if he wanted to try to do so. The simplest way to ensure that the player of the white pieces cannot lose the game is to capture the pawn on a7.

Unfortunately, in the given position, the arbiter can decide whatever he likes, because by applying Article 10.2 he is always right.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. In responding to GM Oleg Korneev's question about Buchholz tie break computation ("Something's Wrong with Buchholz"), you wrote that Mr. Cruz would receive $4\frac{1}{2}$ Buchholz tie break points for his forfeit win against his opponent in the first round of the eight round tournament.

I'm not sure I understand why Mr. Cruz would receive $4\frac{1}{2}$ Buchholz points. I thought that Mr. Cruz would receive $3\frac{1}{2}$ points. Here is my reasoning: The "virtual opponent" used in the calculation would start with the same score as Mr. Cruz had before round one (which, of course, is zero). Then, since Mr. Cruz had a forfeit win ("+-"), the virtual opponent would be treated as losing the first round. Then, for each of the remaining seven rounds, the virtual opponent would receive one half point.

I am certain I must have misunderstood the "virtual opponent" computation! Thank you. **Kenneth Ballou (USA)**

Answer You are correct that the Buchholz score of Mr. Cruz is $3\frac{1}{2}$ and your reasoning is flawless. Thank you very much for your rectification.

Question One Dear, Mr. Gijssen. Suppose that an international arbiter has sent a FIDE Tournament report to the federation. But later it is discovered that the name of the deputy arbiter was wrong. Is it possible to send a new report with the correct name of the deputy arbiter?

Question Two Is it possible to have two chief arbiters in a tournament?
Wilfredo Paulino, (Dominican Republic)

Answer One The normal procedure is that the chief arbiter of a tournament sends the report to the national federation. The rating officer sends this report to FIDE. If it is obvious that there was a mistake in the report, a correction is always possible.

Answer Two It is unusual, but it is not forbidden. But the two bosses need to clarify some situations in advance. The most important decision is that they agree to respect the decision made by their colleague, and if they disagree, they should not discuss it publicly.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. Does a player forfeit his right to a win if he claims a draw? Apparently it is so if I were to believe many of the regional and national arbiters of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines who

have been imposing the rule.

It seems that Article 9.5 is the basis of their decision; i.e., "If a player claims a draw as in Article 9.2 or 9.3 he may stop both clocks. He is not allowed to withdraw his claim." Since the claim cannot be withdrawn, they say the claim stands for the rest of the game.

I do not believe Article 9.5 should be interpreted this way. If a draw claim was made, it is because the player believes the position at the time of the claim was drawn. I truly appreciate your response on this. I've heard from players who do not believe that FIDE intended the article to be one-sided. Thank you and best regards! **Amante E. Espejo Jr. (The Philippines)**

Answer I understand that the sentence in Article 9.5 (He is not allowed to withdraw his claim) could be misinterpreted. The meaning of this Article is as you explained: the claim is only valid in the actual position in which the claim was made and not for the whole game.

Question Dear, Geurt. Perhaps this has been mentioned before, but surely video monitoring should be a standard in all large tournaments where money is relevant. Vidcams are relatively inexpensive these days. Many of the questions you are asked to adjudicate depend on the arbiter being unable to be present at a given board. Bring on the replay and most problems are solved, such as whose flag fell first or was there really a touch-move claim. Kindest regards, **Nick Barnett (South Africa)**

Answer In the rapid competition of the Amber tournaments, there is a camcorder stationed above each of the three tables. It is very useful in connection to certain claims: touched piece, playing with two hands, etc. However, flag fall is problematic. For this a second camcorder is required. If an organizer is ready to accept your proposal, at least two camcorders per game are required. This may be acceptable in high ranked events; for instance, the final or semi-final of the world championship. But for a tournament with as few as twelve players (six games), it is likely too expensive.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. I recently played a game against Zhou Yang Fan of England with black. The position was close to drawn, but I was playing for the smallest inaccuracies:



[FEN "1k5r/1pr2p2/pb2p1p1/3pP2p/P2N1P2/1PPR1RPP/1K6/8 b - - 0 30"]

Black to play

In this position, I played **30...Rhc8** threatening ...Rxc3. White responded with **31.Rd1**. I then repeated the position once with **31...Ba5 32.Rdd3 Bb6 33.Rd1** before playing something else. Then after some moves the following position was reached:



[FEN "1k5r/1pr2p2/pb2p1p1/3pP2p/P2N1P2/1PPR2PP/1K6/5R2 b - - 0 40"]

Black to play

Here I played **40...Rhc8** again threatening ...Rxc3. This time White wrote 41. Rff3 on his scoresheet and claimed threefold repetition. I was aware that this wasn't a threefold as the first two positions were White to play and the third was Black to play, but I let him call the arbiter. The arbiter agreed that it wasn't a threefold repetition and the arbiter played Rf3 on the board. Needless to say I took on c3 and won in a few moves.

My question is whether my opponent was forced to play 41.Rff3, as he did not touch the piece but had only written it on his scoresheet to try and claim a draw. Thank you for your excellent column. **IM Ashwin Jayaram (India)**

Answer I refer to Article 9.2.a of the Laws of Chess:

The game is drawn upon a correct claim by the player having the move, when the same position, for at least the third time (not necessarily by a repetition of moves) is about to appear, if he first writes his move on his scoresheet and declares to the arbiter his intention to make this move.

This article describes the correct way to claim a draw by a player having the move and producing with the next move the triple repetition. Also essential is Article 9.5.b:

If the claim is found to be incorrect, the arbiter shall add three minutes to the opponent's remaining thinking time. Then the game shall continue. If the claim was based on an intended move, this move must be made as according to Article 4.

Although the player did not touch the piece, he is according to this article forced to play the intended move. The situation can be compared with adjourned games. When adjourning a game, the player didn't touch the piece he intended to play. We have here more or less the same situation. The player "adjourns" the game and writes his move.

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