



FIDE

**World Chess Federation
FIDE Arbiters' Commission**

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FIDE Arbiters'
Magazine



CONTENTS

FIDE President's welcome letter	1
Introduction by the FIDE Arbiters, Commission Chairman	2
Time Controls in FIDE World Events.....	3
Anti cheating guidelines for Arbiters.....	5
Incidents that happened during Tournaments:	
a. Case from a National Youth Championship	8
b. Case from an International Open Tournament	9
c. Case from the 2015 World Women's Team Chess Championship	9
d. Case from the 2015 World Amateur Chess Championship.....	10
e. Case from the 2015 Dubai Open Tournament	10
f. Case from the 2015 USA Chess Championship	11

FIDE President's welcome



Dear chess friends,

Every professional community has to have an open platform to discuss their work-related issues and to share operational experience. Ever-growing and dynamic chess arbiters' society is no exception.

FIDE Arbiters' Commission has undertaken the task of publishing an online magazine for chess arbiters where the most actual problems of chess arbiters, day-to-day professional life will be analyzed and the most perplexing cases will be scrutinized.

The online format allows immediate response of the audience and favors vivid discussions. I am convinced that this new magazine will be of great help for chess arbiters around the world and wish it big success and active and competent readers.

Gens Una Sumus!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'K. Ilyumzhinov'.

Kirsan Ilyumzhinov
FIDE President

Introduction



Dear friends,

The FIDE Arbiters. Commission has the pleasure to publish the first issue of the Arbiters. Magazine.

This publication is our attempt to offer to all the Arbiters around the world the necessary knowledge and information, to enable them to exercise their duties in the best way.

The Magazine will include real incidents from the tournaments and respective actions of the Arbiters, as well as decisions taken by the FIDE Congresses and Presidential Boards in connection to the Arbiters. It will also contain any other information that can be useful to the Arbiters.

Many thanks to the Arbiters. Commission Editorial Subcommittee of IA Aris Marghetis (CAN), Secretary of the FIDE Arbiters. Commission, and IA Carlos Dias (POR), Member of the FIDE Arbiters. Commission, who collect the material for publication in every issue of the Magazine and prepare it for publication.

The Arbiters. Magazine will be published twice a year on the FIDE Arbiters. Commission website and will be available for printing to everybody.

You are welcome to send your comments, opinions and ideas, as well as any incidents that have come to your knowledge and you believe are worth publishing.

Your assistance to our effort will be highly appreciated.

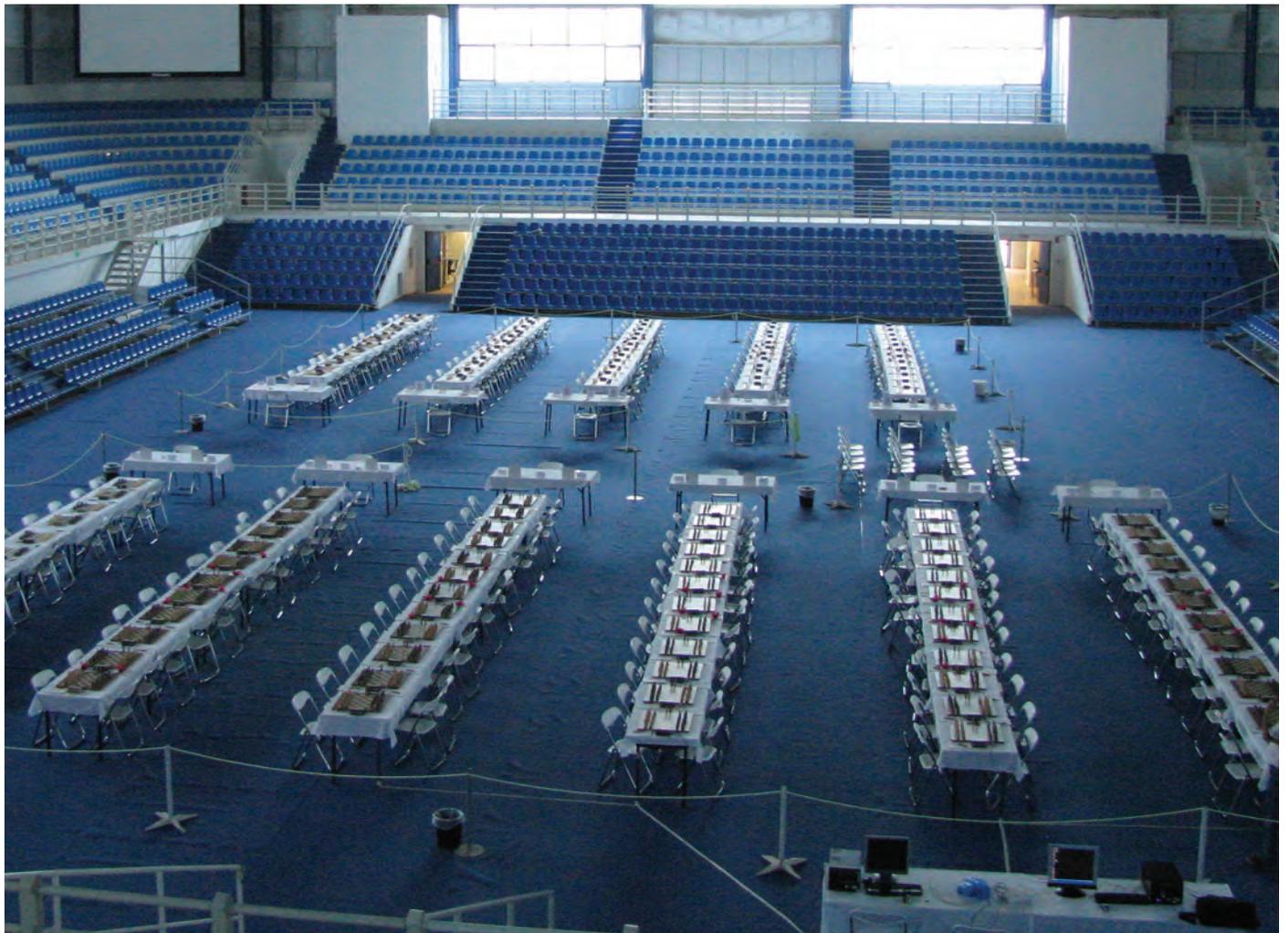
Athens, 30 June 2015
Takis Nikolopoulos
Chairman
FIDE Arbiters' Commission

TIME CONTROLS IN FIDE WORLD EVENTS

The following time controls have been approved by the 2015 Chengdu FIDE Presidential Board for the following FIDE Events:

No	EVENT	TIME CONTROL
1.	World Championship Match	100'/40+50'/20+15'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
2.	Candidates Tournament	100'/40+50'/20+15'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
3.	World Cup	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
4.	Grand Prix Tournaments	100'/40+50'/20+15'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
5.	Women's World Championship Match	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
6.	Chess Olympiad	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
7.	World Team Championship	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
8.	Women's World Team Championship	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
9.	Women's Grand Prix Tournaments	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
10.	World Senior Championship	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
11.	World Senior Team Championship	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
12.	World Juniors and Girls U-20 Championship	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
13.	Continental Individual Championships	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
14.	Continental Team Championships	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
15.	World Youth 14-16-18 Championships	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
16.	World Cadets 08-10-12 Championships	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1

No	EVENT	TIME CONTROL
17.	World Schools Individual Championships	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
18.	World Schools Team Championships	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
19.	World Amateur Championship	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
20.	World Chess Olympiad U-16	90'/40+30'/end with incr. 30"/move, starting from move 1
21.	World Rapid Championships	15' /end with incr. 10" per move, starting from move 1
22.	World Blitz Championships	3' /end with incr. 2" per move, starting from move 1



ANTI CHEATING GUIDELINES FOR ARBITERS

The following Anti cheating guidelines for the Arbiters have been approved by the 2014 Sochi FIDE Presidential Board and are in effect from 1 January 2015:

(These guidelines shall be included in the subjects and will be taught in all Workshops, FIDE Arbiters' Seminars and Courses for International and FIDE Arbiters).

The FIDE Laws of Chess that have been in effect from 1 July 2014 introduced new provisions against cheating. Specifically:

12.2 The arbiter shall: (a) ensure fair play.

It means that it is the Arbiter's duty to avoid the cheating by the players.

The Laws also explicitly forbid electronic devices:

11.3.a During play players are forbidden to use any notes, sources of information or advice, or analyze any game on another chessboard

11.3.b During a game, a player is forbidden to have a mobile phone, electronic means of communication or any device capable of suggesting chess moves on their person in the playing venue. However, the rules of the competition may allow such devices to be stored in a player's bag, as long as the device is completely switched off. A player is forbidden to carry a bag holding such a device, without permission of the arbiter. If it is evident that a player has such a device on their person in the playing venue, the player shall lose the game. The opponent shall win. The rules of a competition may specify a different, less severe, penalty. The arbiter may require the player to allow his/her clothes, bags or other items to be inspected, in private. The arbiter or a person authorized by the arbiter shall inspect the player and shall be of the same gender as the player. If a player refuses to cooperate with these obligations, the arbiter shall take measures in accordance with Article 12.9.

Tournament organizers are also free to introduce their own regulations and conditions for events, provided they are in accord with the Laws of Chess. Such regulations may include that:

- Arbiters should remind players of the existence of the new AC regulations.
- Organizers and arbiters are encouraged to carry out regular screening tests via the FIDE Internet-based Game Screening Tool
- Integral application of Law 11.3.b. In case of breach, the arbiter shall take measure in accordance with article 12.9.f and forfeit the player.
- Additional security in the form of ACC-certified metal detectors/x-ray machines, scanners, electronic jamming devices, manned by qualified secu-

riety staff, subject to applicable restrictions in each individual jurisdiction. Each tournament should adopt at least one measures from the ones listed in Annex D. The list is to be adjourned on a time-to-time basis by the ACC.

- Obligation to present the AC Form at least 4 weeks before the start of the tournament (or as otherwise specified in Paragraph 02 of the current FIDE Rating regulations).

Complaints

For these reasons during a tournament the arbiter shall have a duty to record each and every allegation of cheating by a FIDE-rated player meaning that players cannot "informally" tell an arbiter that they suspect that another player is cheating. This also applies to any other person having a FIDE Identity Number. All cheating-related communications shall be duly recorded by the arbiter and subsequently filed to the ACC.

Part A: In-Tournament Complaints

Potential cheating incidents may be observed during play directly by a tournament arbiter. They can also be reported to the arbiter by a player, a spectator or, indeed, the ACC (e.g., based on statistical analysis or on-site inspection).

If the report is based on possible breaches of Article 11.2 or 11.3a, then the arbiter shall investigate the breach in the usual manner, with reference to Article 12.9 for possible penalties.

If the complaint is specifically about possible cheating, then the Chief Arbiter shall, in the first place, identify the complainant and invite him to fill out a Complaint Form (Appendix A). The complainant shall provide to the arbiter the reasons why the complaint is being made, and shall sign the form on completion. However, if the complainant is tense, the arbiter shall record the name of the complainant and ask for his signature, and only at a later time ask him to fill in the form, but no later than the end of the round.

Upon receiving a complaint, the arbiter shall take steps to investigate it, whenever possible in coordination with the ACC, using his/her judgment in how this investigation is to be carried out. Any additional information that the arbiter gathers shall be added to the report.

The report shall be forwarded to the FIDE Office at the completion of the tournament, who shall pass it on to the ACC. All information in the report shall remain confidential until an investigation is completed by the ACC. In case of breach of privacy requirements before the investigation is completed, the ACC re-

serves the right to publicize the details of the investigation and shall refer all offenders to the Ethics Committee.

On completion of the investigation the ACC shall issue an official report, explaining its process and decisions.

If the complaint is manifestly unfounded, the complainant can receive a warning by the ACC, whereupon his name will be added to a special "Warning data base" maintained by the ACC. Upon receiving a second warning within a period of six months, the complainant shall be sanctioned (three months suspension for first violation, six months suspension for second violation).

Part B: Post Tournament Complaint

Potential cheating may also be reported after a tournament has been completed, based, for example, on new findings (e.g. confessions, statistical evidence). In general, a Post Tournament Report should be based on very substantial evidence, and complainants are required to illustrate their case in great detail for the ACC to actually consider it. PTRs can be filed only by interested parties such as players, Federations and chess officials. The ACC may also open a case based on its own post-tournament findings.

Investigation of alleged cheating incidents shall be started:

- (i). By an in-tournament report from the Chief Arbiter/ Organizer of a tournament,
- (ii). By a post-tournament report, or
- (iii). As a result of self-originated investigation by the ACC.

Each investigation will be carried out by an investigating Committee appointed by the ACC, known as the Investigating Committee (IC). The IC shall be formed on a case-to-case basis.

1. How players can cheat during the game

- An arbiter should know how a cheater typically acts and which devices are used for cheating. Typically, a player can cheat by: i) accepting information by another person (spectator, captain, co-player, etc.); or ii) getting information from any source of information or communication (such as books, notes, etc., or any electronic device). It is the arbiter's duty to take care of situations that may yield suspicions of cheating during the entire duration of the round.

Often a cheater is using a mobile phone hidden in a pocket. This is forbidden according to Art. 11.3.b of the laws of chess. To find hidden mobile phones and other electronic devices, the use of hand-held metal detectors and other equipment (such as mobile phone jammers, hand-held security metal detectors, walk-through metal detectors, automatic electro-magnetic

screening devices for metallic/non-metallic items, closed circuit cameras) is highly recommended in all tournaments. Arbiters should exercise caution and delicateness in asking for and carrying out a check with hand-held metal detectors. If a metal detector gives a signal it is important to clarify the reason, if necessary by an inspection of the player and his belongings as described in Art. 11.3.b of the Laws of Chess.

2. Which precautions can be taken to prevent cheating

- The Arbiter must have a discreet control of the players that are leaving the playing area very often, for their contact with other players, spectators and other persons, according to Article 12 of the Laws of Chess.

- The arbiter should be aware that in some cases a cheater gets information by a third party. The arbiter should prevent any contact between players and spectators such as talking and/or giving/receiving signals.

- The arbiter should never tolerate the use of chess programs in the playing venue. In case he should detect a player or a spectator using a chess program in the playing venue, he should immediately inform the Chief Arbiter.

- Organizers are free to assign extra arbiters to the specific task of preventing cheating.

- During a tournament, the arbiter is encouraged to use the FIDE screening tool with games in pgn format, since that tool can identify cases needing further attention, or more likely, show that a player is not to be considered suspicious based on his or her games.

3. Screening games for precaution and information

- During a tournament, the arbiter is encouraged to compile games in PGN format and submit them to the FIDE screening tool. This is not a cheating test and gives no statistical judgment, but its information is useful to have beforehand in case any suspicions are voiced or situations may be developing.

- In early rounds (such as 1-3 of a 9-game event) there will always be outliers because the total number of relevant moves is small, but any cheating player will likely be among them.

- In middle rounds, honest outliers will tend to "regress to the mean", while records of some past cases show no-sanctioned players having become more obvious. Trials have shown it possible by this time to be confident in the absence of statistical ground for suspicion against any player.

- On the other hand, a persistent outlier may be ground for contacting ACC, calling for a full statistical

test, and for “unobtrusive” actions such as increased watchfulness of a player.

- The screening tool will provide tables with guidelines based on players' ratings for gauging the magnitude of outliers. For instance, 67% matching is more “normal” for 2700- players than for 2300. Again only the full test can give any kind of judgment.

4. How to deal with suspicious behavior

- In case of a suspicious player's behavior the Arbiter must always follow the player on his way out of the playing venue (to the bar, toilets, smoking area etc.), in order to avoid any contact of the player with other persons and any use of sources of information or communication.

- In multiple cases, there has been use of mobile phones in the toilet. Therefore the arbiter should note how often a player leaves the playing area and if this is significant take appropriate measures trying to find out the reason.

5. How to deal with the new Article 11.3 of the Laws of Chess

- The arbiter may require the player to allow his clothes, bags or other items to be inspected, in private. The arbiter, or a person authorized by the arbiter, shall inspect the player and shall be of the same gender as the player.

- Usually the arbiter will inspect a player as described in Art. 11.3.b of the Laws of Chess only in case of suspicion of cheating or after receiving an official In-Tournament complaint, but only if he comes to the conclusion that the complaint is not evidently unfounded. If he decides to make an inspection on whatever grounds, he is not obliged to give the player a special reason; however he should be calm, polite and discreet. The inspection of a player should be carried out in a separate room by a person of the same gender. Only this person, the player and one witness (also of the same gender) may have access to this room during the inspection. The player is entitled to select a second witness of his own choice.

- If there is no matter of urgency, the inspection of a player and his belongings should generally be carried out before or immediately after the end of the game. Still, the arbiter should be aware that it is possible to hide the electronic devices somewhere in or near to the playing venue as also to give them to a third party shortly before the end of the game. The arbiter has also the right to check the player, who decided to leave the playing venue or upon request of a player who filed an In-Tournament complaint, but only once during the round.

- If a player refuses to be inspected it is advised that the arbiter explains the rules to him. If the player

still refuses he shall get a warning. If he still refuses to submit to an inspection he shall lose his game.

- If random inspections are considered, they must be announced in the rules of the competition in advance.

6. How to deal with accusations

- The procedure how to deal with accusations is described in the part of Complaints. If any FIDE-Identified person presents an accusation of cheating, the arbiter should ask him/her to make an official In-Tournament complaint. In case of refusal, the arbiter shall make a remark in the tournament report and annotate the person's name as having presented a cheating accusation. In this case the accused player shall not be informed by the arbiter. If the arbiter receives an In-Tournament complaint he can inform the accused player after the end of his game and ask him for comment. - The arbiter should mention in his tournament report any In-Tournament complaints and inspections, if any, specifying the result of each action.

7. How to deal with false accusations.

- In case of a false accusation by a player the Arbiter shall penalize him according to the Article 12.2 of the laws of Chess.

The following technical equipment shall be adopted by the Tournament Direction to contrast potential cheaters in Top level tournaments. The actual equipment to be adopted shall be agreed between the ACC and the Tournament Direction on a case-to-case basis.

- Mobile phone jammers;
- Hand-held security metal detectors
- Walk-through metal detectors
- Automatic electro-magnetic screening devices for metallic/non-metallic items
- Closed circuit cameras.

In most cases, a hand-held metal detector will prove enough to secure that electronic devices are not being carried into the playing venue, and should thus always be considered as the first-choice device. The actual equipment to be adopted shall be agreed between the ACC and the Tournament Direction on a case-to-case basis.

FIDE Internet-based Game Screening Tool

The Commission recommends the implementation of a FIDE Internet-based Game Screening Tool for pre-scanning games and identifying potential instances of cheating, together with the adoption of a full-testing procedure in cases of complaints. Together they shall meet the highest academic and judicial standards, in that they have been subject to publica-

tion and peer review, have a limited and documented error rate, have undergone vast empirical testing, are continuously maintained, and are generally accepted by the scientific community. Once in place, the Internet-based Game Screening Tool will be accessible to arbiters and chess officials and will be a useful instrument to prevent fraud, while the full test procedure will adhere to greater privacy as managed by FIDE and ACC.

The FIDE Internet-Based Game Screening Tool

FIDE will supply organizers and arbiters with an Internet-based Game Screening Tool that will be accessible to all authorized FIDE officials (IO, IA, ACC members) and National Federations. The Internet-based Game Screening Tool shall be hosted on a

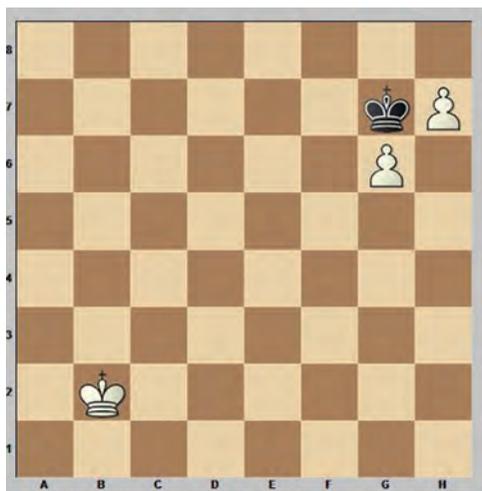
FIDE-dedicated webpage and will enable authorized parties to upload games in pgn format for a "fast test" that will identify potential outliers in the tournament – i.e. players whose performance is far above their expected level and potentially compatible with computer-assisted play.

The results of the "fast test" are to be kept confidential and are only meant to assist the Chief Arbiter in identifying cases that may call for further measures to assure that players are adhering to the rules. If requested, the ACC shall provide assistance to the Chief Arbiter in determining such measures. It should be reminded that only a "full test" can confer reliable statistical evidence on whether the outlier is receiving external help, so that the results of the "fast test" are not applicable for judgments of complaints.

INCIDENTS THAT HAPPENED DURING TOURNAMENTS.

A. The following case has happened during a Youth Chess Championship:

The game was played according to G5 (see Laws of Chess, Appendix G) of the "quickplay finish". The player with the black pieces, having the move, has less than two minutes left on his clock. He claimed a draw before his flag falls. He called the arbiter and stopped the chess clock. He claimed on the basis that his opponent cannot win by normal means once he will play Kg7, ... Kh8, etc.



What should the arbiter decide?

The relevant Article of the laws of Chess says:

G.5 If Article G.4 does not apply and the player having the move has less than two minutes left on his clock, he may claim a draw before his flag falls. He shall summon the arbiter and may stop the chess clock (see Article 6.12 b). He may claim on the basis that his opponent cannot win by normal means, and/or that his opponent has been making no effort to win by normal means

- If the arbiter agrees that the opponent cannot win by normal means, or that the opponent has been making no effort to win the game by normal means, he shall declare the game drawn. Otherwise he shall postpone his decision or reject the claim.
- 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 the flag of either player has fallen. He shall declare the game

- drawn if he agrees that the opponent of the player whose flag has fallen cannot win by normal means, or that he was not making sufficient attempts to win by normal means.
- c. If the arbiter has rejected the claim, the opponent shall be awarded two extra minutes.

a. Wrong decision

Declare that is a draw it's a wrong decision because white may wins.

c. Wrong decision

Reject the claim it's a wrong decision because it's the same as to tell to the player with white pieces that he can win that game

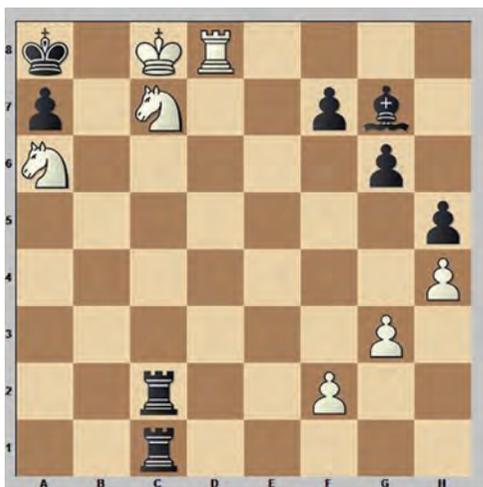
b. Correct decision

The arbiter must postpone his decision and let the game continue under his (or one of his Assistants) presence.

B. The following case has happened during an International Open Chess Tournament:

The position below appeared after the player with white pieces made the move Nxc7. Immediately after he made that move his flag fell. The player with the black pieces claimed the win.

What should be the Arbiters' decision regarding the result?



It is a case of a draw, since the opponent of the player whose flag fell (white) cannot give a checkmate by any series of legal moves, as there is a forced continuation where white makes a checkmate!

1. Nc7+, Rxc7+, 2. Nxc7+, Rxc7+, 3. Kxc7+, checkmate!

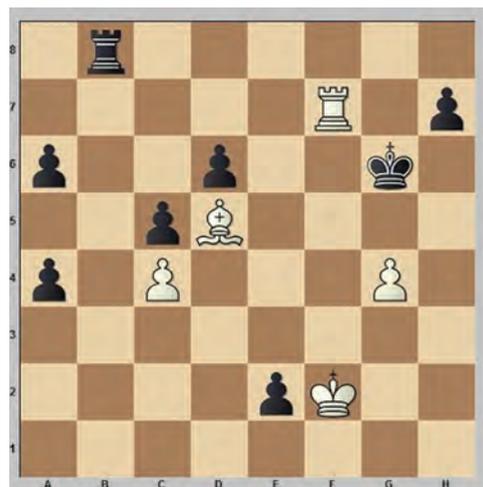
The relevant Article of the laws of Chess says:

6.9 Except where one of Articles 5.1.a, 5.1.b, 5.2.a, 5.2.b, 5.2.c applies, if a player does not complete the prescribed number of moves in the allotted time, the game is lost by that player. However, the game is drawn if the position is such that the opponent cannot checkmate the player's king by any possible series of legal moves.

The Arbiter had to declare the game as a draw

C. The following case has happened during the 2015 World Women's Team Chess Championship, where the time control is 90 min/40 moves + 30 min/end, with 30 sec increment starting from move one.

In a game of the first round both players are in time trouble in the first period. The arbiter is watching the game in the next board, where there is also a time trouble. Black's flag fell after the player made her 32nd move. The position was the following:



The player called the Arbiter and insisted that she had made her 32nd move and had pressed her clock but the flag fell and insisted that the clock was defected. The Arbiter immediately checked the clock and found that it was working properly (the move counter was recording the number of the moves correctly).

The black player was insisting that she had pressed the clock properly and that the clock had the problem. The Captain of the player's team arrived and the arbiter demonstrated once more in

front of him and both players that the clock was working properly and was not defected.

Then the Arbiter based on the Article 6.10.a of the Laws of Chess which says:

6.10.a

Every indication given by the chess clock is considered to be conclusive in the absence of any evident defect.

The arbiter's decision was correct.

The arbiter did well showing and demonstrating to the players and the captain that the clock was working properly.

D. The following case has happened during the 2015 World Amateur Chess Championship, where the time control is 90 min/40 moves + 30 min/end, with 30 sec increment starting from move one.

The Arbiter is passing by the tables in the playing hall and sees that in one game the black player's flag has fallen. She stops the game immediately and checks the score sheets. Both players have recorded 42 moves. She checks the move counter of the clock and finds that it shows 39 moves. The player with the white pieces says that the flag really fell on move 39 and claims a win. The player with the black pieces disagrees. The Arbiter explains to the player with the white pieces that she cannot base any decision on his witness and applies article 6.8 of the Laws of Chess, setting the clocks on move 42 and adding 30 minutes to both players, asking them to continue the game. The white player calls the Chief Arbiter who agrees with the decision of the Arbiter and the game continues. The white player lost the game and made an appeal against the decision of the Arbiters. The Appeals Committee after a short discussion unanimous rejected the appeal and didn't change the result of the game, accepting the decision of the Arbiters as correct.

The decision of the Arbiter and the Appeals Committee afterwards were correct.

Article 6.8 of the Laws of Chess says:

6.8 A flag is considered to have fallen when the Arbiter observes the fact or when either player has made a valid claim to that effect

The Arbiter observed the fact on move 42, so correctly decided the game to be continued. None of the players made any relative claim for the flag fall.

The player should have made a claim for flag fall on move 39. Then he should win the game. When he claimed it on move 42 it was not possible the claim to be accepted.

However in any case the Arbiter (or his Assistant) should have been close to the board and control the game, since the players were in time trouble (even if the time control was with increment and both players were obliged to record their moves). In this way he would have avoided the incident, because he had to call the flag fall immediately.

E. The following case has happened during the 2015 Dubai Open Chess Championship.

According to the Chief Arbiter's IA Mahdi Abdulrahim report:

The tournament was a 9-round Swiss System, with 150 participants from 39 federations.

During the 6th round of the tournament the Chief Arbiter got a question and claim from GM Tigran Petrosian (ARM) that his opponent GM Gaioz Nigalidze (GEO) was leaving the tournament hall several times during their game.

So there was aroused a suspicion that the Georgian player was getting help from somewhere, as GM Petrosian noticed that the Georgian was going very frequent to the toilet after each move during a crucial part of the game.

The Chief Arbiter considered the claim and followed the player to the Toilet. He went into the same toilet and he was waiting more than six minutes. Nigalidze came out and he closed the bathroom door after leaving it, and then when the Chief Arbiter asked for inspection of his clothes, he agreed, but he embarrassed at the same time. The Chief Arbiter checked him but he did not find any device with him.

After a while the Arbiter was suspected that the player was always using the same cubicle no (2). Then he returned to the toilet and when he checked the cubicle, he found an IPOD and a headset hidden behind the pan and covered with toilet paper.

When confronted, Nigalidze denied he owned the device, but the Chief Arbiter and the Tournament director Mr. Yahya Saleh opened the electronic device (IPOD) and found that it was logged into a social networking site and he was using stock fish engine with

some analyze of his game until move 23. Cheating was obvious.

The Chief Arbiter in consultation with the Organizer of the Tournament gave GM Petrosian the win and removed GM Nigalidze from the tournament.

The decision taken was:

GM Gaioz Nigalidze (GEO) was banned from 17th Dubai Open 2015 because of cheating. He was caught by consulting a device hidden in one of the toilet cubicles of the Dubai Chess and Culture Club during his sixth-round encounter with GM Tigran Petrosian (ARM).



Article 11.3.b says:

b. During play, a player is forbidden to have a mobile phone and/or other electronic means of communication in the playing venue. If it is evident that a player brought such a device into the playing venue, he shall lose the game. The opponent shall win.

The rules of a competition may specify a different, less severe, penalty.

The arbiter may require the player to allow his clothes, bags or other items to be inspected, in private. The arbiter or a person authorized by the arbiter shall inspect the player and shall be of the same gender as the player. If a player refuses to cooperate with these obligations, the arbiter shall take measures in accordance with Article 12.9.

The Chief Arbiter correctly considered the player's claim and checked the player who was going very often to the toilet. He was clever enough to check the toilet as well, as soon as he found nothing after searching the player. The penalty he applied was according to the Article 12.9 of the Laws of Chess.

F. The following case has happened during the 2015 USA Chess Championship.

In the 9th round of the event GM Wesley So (PHI) was forfeited in his game against GM Varuzhan Akobian (USA) by the Chief Arbiter, because he was using notes.

Actually he had written on a paper that he had put under his score sheet the phrases "Double check and triple check" and "Use your time". GM Akobian complained to the Chief Arbiter that this was distracting for him.

The same had happened in the 1st round, when So had written on his score sheet the phrase: "Use your time, you have a lot of it" and in 2nd round: "Sit down for the entire game, never get up".

The Chief Arbiter had warned GM So after the 1st round and he gave him a second warning in 3rd round, informing him that if he will do it for a third time, he would forfeit him. Therefore he forfeited him in the 9th round and gave the win to GM Akobian.

Wesley So declared that he had concentrating troubles and by writing such advices to himself he was trying to solve his problem.

According to the Laws of Chess:

8.1.b. The score sheet shall be used only for recording the moves, the times of the clocks, offer of a draw, matters relating to a claim and other relevant data.

11.3.a. During play the players are forbidden to use any notes, sources of information or advice, or analyze any game on another chessboard.

11.5. It is forbidden to distract or annoy the opponent in any matter whatsoever.

11.7. Persistent refusal by a player to comply with the Laws of Chess shall be penalized by loss of the game. The Arbiter shall decide the score of the opponent.

The Chief Arbiter had the right to take such a decision to forfeit GM Wesley So in his game against GM Varuzhan Akobian as: (a) he had warned him twice and he had informed him that he would forfeit him in case he would repeated it for a third time and (b) his opponent complained that he was distracted by So's action.

In general the Chief Arbiter of an event has to be very careful when applying the penalty of the forfeiture for a player. He has to do it if it is the only solution to the problem that was raised and only if it is according to the Laws of Chess.





The cover page photos are courtesy of IA E. Saltamara (GRE),
who also compiled the edition.



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