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## Introduction from FIDE Arbiters' Commission Chairman



Dear friends,

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

We continue our effort to provide Arbiters all over the world with necessary knowledge and information coming from real incidents that happened during recent tournaments, and thus making Arbiters better in exercising their duties.

Additionally we start to cooperate with other FIDE Commissions, giving them the opportunity to present subjects that are under their responsibility but they are very important for the Arbiters.

Starting with this issue, we are pleased to begin cooperation with the FIDE Systems of Pairings and Programs Commission and we would like to thank very much for their contributions IA Roberto Ricca and FA Mario Held, Secretary and Member respectively of the FIDE Systems of Pairings and Programs Commission.

We would like again to invite the Arbiters, the players, the Officials, and all chess people to send us their comments, opinions, ideas, and cases that have come to their knowledge and are worth publishing in the Arbiters. Magazine.

Athens, 21st February 2017  
Takis Nikolopoulos  
Chairman  
FIDE Arbiters' Commission

# New FIDE Swiss Rules, in effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017

**Contributed by: IA Roberto Ricca**, Secretary of the FIDE Systems of Pairings and Programs Commission and **FA Mario Held**, Member of the FIDE Systems of Pairings and Programs Commission

*The current Swiss Rules include the Basic Rules (section C.04.1 of the FIDE Handbook), the General Handling Rules (section C.04.2) and the four pairing systems defined by FIDE (section C.04.3).*

*When talking about the Swiss Rules we usually refer, even if that is not completely correct, only to the Dutch pairing system. However, starting from July 1st 2017, this system will be alone in section C.04.3 (the other three systems being moved to section C.04.4) and will contain in its title the word “FIDE” - so that it would not be anymore inappropriate to use “FIDE Swiss Rules” and “Dutch System” as synonymous.*

*Note: Waiting for the FIDE handbook to be updated, the new rules draft can be found at <http://pairings.fide.com/images/stories/downloads/newsectionc04web.pdf>*

The rules coming into force on July 1st, 2017 look **very** different from the ones we were used to - but, from a practical standpoint, there are just minor differences. For instance, the Gibraltar 2017 tournament - mentioned in another article, and paired accordingly to the 2013 rules - with the 2017 rules would yield exactly the same pairings.

## Swiss rules

Swiss Rules include the Basic Rules, the General Handling Rules, and the Dutch System Rules; plus, as a new entry in the pairing realm, the Accelerated System Rules.

### **Basic rules (or Swiss General Principles)**

Apart from a few wording clarifications, the major change here is that whoever receives any points without being paired (typical example: the half-point-bye) will no more be protected from receiving the pairing-allocated bye (or PAB, the new terminology for the ‘classical’ bye). In other words, only a player who has already received a PAB, or has scored a forfeit-win, will be prevented from receiving the PAB.

### **General Handling Rules (or Swiss Tournament Rules)**

Also in this section, most differences are due to wording improvements. One change, though, is worth mentioning. Most software programs used to manage tournaments allow the user to modify, or regenerate, pairing numbers when adjustments to the initial list of players are required. In a nearing future, the FIDE Rating Server will automatically check the pairings. Such checks are strictly dependent on pairing numbers - so that changing the latter will cause an excess of anomalies to be reported.

In order to avoid such problems, a rule is introduced, stating that **modification of the pairing numbers is allowed only for the first three rounds**. After the fourth round has been paired, rating adjustments will still be legal, but **no pairing number may be changed**.

### **Dutch System Rules (or FIDE Swiss Rules)**

The Dutch Rules were modified at the 2015 Congress in order to introduce some explanations, correct some secondary defects, simplify the Rules and make them better. Then a massive rewording took place at the 2016 Congress in Baku.

The main differences from the current (2013) rules are the following:

the choice of floaters is now modified in order to maximise the number of pairs produced in the next bracket (this may change the pairings in some situations and, when re-pairing the penultimate bracket, may cause a floater to downfloat again)

the scoring differences in the pairing of a bracket (particularly the last one) are computed in a new and improved way (*see article C.04.3.A.8*)

it is clarified that floaters' protection applies also to double floaters

the asymmetry in treating odd and even rounds is abolished

the order of importance of the pairing criteria is now clearly defined (there is no more need to infer it from the algorithm)

any player who skips a game, even because of a forfeit or announced leave, gets a downfloat

the protection of upfloaters of the last round has priority over that of downfloaters of two rounds ago.

Further details about those modifications can be found in the 2015 Congress papers.

### **Accelerated System Rules**

A new section is being introduced in the handbook, to deal with methods of accelerated pairings. This section also offers a brief explanation of the reasons behind those methods.

For the time being, all such methods are still widely allowed (*see section C.04.2.A.3*); however, in a near future, the rules will very likely define which acceleration systems are authorized.

As for now, the handbook contains only one method (the 'Baku Acceleration Method', or BAM), which was the first that proved through statistical analysis to be fair and stable (and is also easy to explain); and the promise to add other methods, as long as they can be proven, through statistical analysis, to get better results than BAM - or, if their effectiveness is comparable, to be simpler.

The BAM is analysed and certified for tournaments that last nine rounds or more, and, as mentioned, it is fairly easy to explain: divide the fields in two main groups, then give the players of the top group one virtual point for the first three rounds and half virtual point in the next two rounds.

## **The new wording of the Dutch system rules**

The new structure of the Dutch Rules is divided in five sections:

Section A contains the preliminary definitions and a panoramic vision of the pairing process (*see below*).

Section B contains the rules to build a candidate pairing and evaluate its quality, and rules on how to proceed when the achieved quality is not satisfactory.

From the Rules standpoint, the aim of this section is only to univocally define the sequence of generation for the pairings. However, from the Arbiter's point of view, this section can also be used as an effective roadmap to actually build - or, far more often, prove - a pairing.

Section C contains the rationalized pairing criteria, nineteen of them, from C.1 to C.19.

Section D gives the rules to put transpositions and exchanges in the right order; thus allowing us to determine which candidate is the next one - the examples which were previously here have been moved away (they will be put in an appendix by themselves) to separate rules from operating instructions. Section E contains rules to allocate colours (no changes here).

Additional explanatory appendices may be prepared during this year, to clarify some more aspects of the newly reworded 2017-rules.

### **Pairing process outlines**

Article A.9 of the FIDE (Dutch) Rules gives an outlook of the pairing process for a round. This is a very important thing to do, as there is no more an algorithm to dictate step-by-step operations.

First of all, we need to define a basic concept: a pairing is complete when all players (except one, when their number is odd), have been paired in compliance with the absolute criteria (C.1 to C.3).

For the very first time, the Rules give an explicit indication about what to do when a pairing cannot be generated. As for now, it is a very general indication (the arbiter is required to make a decision), but this leaves a place for possible future rules.

The pairing process, as usual, starts with the topmost scoregroup, proceeding bracket by bracket until all the scoregroups have been used up and the pairing for the round is complete.

Before proceeding from the pairing of a bracket to that of the next one, we verify that at least a legal pairing (i.e. a pairing that complies with the absolute criteria) exists for all the players as yet unpaired, together with the downfloaters (if any) left from the bracket just paired.

Of course, this check is far easier than the actual complete pairing, since for the moment we are not interested in finding the best (correct) pairing, but only in showing that a legal one exists. Hence, we are now sure that the pairing can be completed - and thus we shall never need to modify the pairings already made. The old backtracking rule (*if the pairing of a bracket was not satisfactory, go back to the previous bracket and pair it again to get better downfloaters*) has been practically swallowed by the new criterion C.7, which forces to verify at once whether the produced floaters pair satisfactorily the next bracket.

When it happens that the set formed by the downfloaters together with all of the remaining players (rest) cannot be paired, it means that, given those downfloaters, we cannot complete the pairing without infringing the absolute criteria. In this situation, the pairing produced by the last (current) paired bracket is not adequate, and we need to modify it before proceeding.

Hence we must restart with this same bracket, while changing the pairing conditions. This bracket, to keep the same name as in the old rules, is now called the Penultimate Pairing Bracket (PPB), and the score of its resident players is called the "collapsing score".

All the players having scored less than the collapsing score - who are of course as yet unpaired - become the "special collapsed scoregroup" (SCS for short) mentioned in article A.3. The primary goal is now to have the PPB produce a set of floaters that allows a (complete) pairing of the SCS (this is the new C.4 criterion) - while the downfloaters are not required anymore to produce the best pairing in the next bracket (as it was in the previous attempt).

With the downfloaters produced by re-pairing the PPB, together with the SCS, we build the Collapsed Last Bracket, which is the last bracket to be paired.

Although presented in a far different way, this is exactly what was done with the previous rules, through the old algorithm. We were going down to the last bracket and, when failing to pair it, we started to go back, possibly repeatedly collapsing two brackets in one, until we got to a point where it would be possible to find for a bracket a set of floaters who paired the possibly enlarged last bracket - the entity that now is simply called "rest".

Anyway, the new wording of the Rules does not specify any particular method to enforce compliance with the pairing criteria: both the arbiter and the programmer enjoy complete freedom in choosing their preferred method to implement the system (look-ahead, backtracking, weighted matching or other), as long as the rules are fully complied with.

## Validity dates

The new rules will enter into force on July 1st. However, in order to allow a smoother realignment, a transition period (TP) is defined, lasting from January 1st until the 2017 Congress. Any program that, during the TP, passes the endorsement tests can be used with the new rules, even before July 1st. Conversely, any endorsed program that has not passed the 2017 tests, can be used with the old rules until it is officially deleted from the list of the endorsed programs.

The decision of which version of the program to use (and hence which set of rules to use) is left to the arbiter. If there is a theoretical possibility for a conflict, the tournament directors shall communicate to the players which version of the rules they are going to use in the tournament.

## Case A – Hou Yifan's Pairings at Tradewise Gibraltar Masters Open Tournament

Contributed by: IA Roberto Ricca, Secretary of the  
FIDE Systems of Pairings and Programs Commission

The reigning Women World Champion Hou Yifan caused major stir, when she deliberately lost her last game in the Gibraltar 2017 tournament, in protest against the tournament pairings. In her opinion (as she herself later stated in an interview) the pairings were doctored to make her meet an unreasonable number of women (seven in nine rounds).

This paper will show that, apart from the first round (when, as often happens, for the reasons we all know, the pairings did not strictly follow the rules), all of Hou Yifan pairings were strictly compliant with the rules of the FIDE Dutch system (the one adopted in Gibraltar as well as in the majority of the tournaments valid for FIDE ratings), fully described in the FIDE handbook currently available at

<https://www.fide.com/fide/handbook.html?id=167&view=article>

### 2<sup>nd</sup> round

After winning her first game, Hou Yifan (pairing number #22) has 1 point, like 113 other players. 57 of them are White-Seekers (WS), the other 57 are Black-Seekers (BS).

The first 57 players are put in S1 (the players from #1 to #67, except #10, #16, #19, #25, #29, #30, #43, #51, #52 and #60), all the others are in S2. Hou Yifan is the 19<sup>th</sup> player in S1. So let's limit the following table to the first 21 players of S1 and the first 21 players of S2.

In the second round, in the 1-point score group, the only thing to look at is color matching. Since there are 57 WS and 57 BS, each WS will be paired to a BS.

S1:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	12	13	14	15	17	18	20	21	22	23	24
	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	w	b	w	b	w
S2:	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	87	88	90
	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	w

The first nine pairings are obvious. Then #77 and #78 are switched<sup>1</sup> to make two further pairings, and the same happens to #80 and #79. Then, to create four further pairings, #82 and #84 should precede #81 and #83, while #88 should precede #85, and #90 #87.

After these switches, the table looks like this:

S1:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	12	13	14	15	17	18	20	21	<b>22</b>	23	24
	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	w	b	<b>w</b>	b	w
S2:	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	78	77	80	79	82	84	81	83	88	<b>85</b>	90	87
	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	w	w	b	w	b	w	w	b	b	w	<b>b</b>	w	b

Of course, the pairing continues, but the part of our interest ends here: as we can see, the opponent of Hou Yifan (#22) is #85, i.e. **Natalia Zhukova**.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> round

Hou Yifan has now 2.0 points, like 36 other players. 18 are WS, 19 BS. Here it is the full table:

S1:	3	5	8	9	11	13	15	17	20	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	34	38	
	w	w	b	w	w	w	w	w	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	b	b	b	
S2:	39	40	42	45	46	47	48	49	50	54	58	62	63	64	65	66	67	71	100
	w	b	b	w	b	w	b	w	b	b	b	b	w	b	w	b	w	w	b

Once again, we only need to check colours. The bracket will produce a floater and, as there is nearly parity between WS and BS, we can easily predict that the floater will be a BS (the last one, i.e. #100).

When there is parity, a good trick is to separate WS/BS from S1/S2, and let the WS from S1 play the BS from S2 and, obviously, the BS from S1 play the WS from S2.

Hou Yifan is a BS, so let's reduce the above table to the one that includes only BS from S1 and WS from S2:

S1:			8						20		<b>22</b>		24	26		28	34	38
			b						b		<b>b</b>		b	b		b	b	b
S2:	39			45		<b>47</b>		49					63		65		67	71
	w			w		<b>w</b>		w					w		w		w	w

This way, pairings are pretty easy: 39-8, 45-20, 47-22, 49-24, 63-26 and so on.

The opponent of Hou Yifan (#22) is #47, i.e. **Anna Muzychuk**.

### 4<sup>th</sup> round

Hou Yifan drew her third game. Thus, now she has 2.5 points, like 28 other players. However, we should add a player moved down (MDP) from the group at 3 points (#23).

Thus, the bracket with 2.5 points has 30 players, 17 WS and 13 BS. This means that we will have four WS paired among themselves, i.e. two WS-WS pairs. On the other hand, any BS should meet a WS.

Note that, from now on, besides colors, we should always take into account that two players may have already met. Here is the table:

<b>23</b>	S1:	1	2	3	8	10	12	13	16	18	19	20	22	24	26	27
<b>b</b>		b	w	b	w	w	w	b	w	w	b	w	w	w	w	b
	S2:	31	32	36	40	41	45	47	48	49	50	51	63	66	104	
		b	w	w	w	b	b	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	w	

<sup>1</sup> We are talking of switches and not of transpositions (as the rules say) because transpositions are made from the bottom (first the last two elements, then the third-to-last and the second-to-last ones, and so on), but until we fix the 10th pair, we will never find a good pairing. A switch between the 10th and the 11th player of S2 (a subgroup with 57 elements) means that we have actually made a number of transpositions equal to 47! (factorial of 47), which is a huge number with 60 figures.

The MDP (#23) is a BS. According to the situation, he should play with the first available player who is a WS. So #1 is discarded (he is a BS), and the choice is for #2.

The rest is paired as a normal bracket. #1, the first to pair, is a BS, and he has to meet a BS. So #32 is moved ahead of #31. #36 (in order to meet #3) is also moved ahead of #31, who becomes the opponent of #8. The fourth pair (10-40) is ok, because we know that there must be two games between WS, and the FIDE Dutch rules try to create this kind of pairs as soon as possible.

Fifth pair is also ok (12-41), then, to find an opponent for #13 (BS), we have to look for the first WS after #41. This is #48, who will precede #45 and #47. The seventh (16-45) and the eighth (18-47) pairs are ok. The ninth is not – but, after switching #49 and #50, everything falls in the right place, with the second WS-WS game being 26-66.

23		1	3	8	10	12	13	16	18	19	20	<b>22</b>	24	26	27
b	S1:	b	b	w	w	w	b	w	w	b	w	<b>w</b>	w	w	b
2		32	36	31	40	41	48	45	47	50	49	<b>51</b>	63	66	104
w	S2:	w	w	b	w	b	w	b	b	w	b	<b>b</b>	b	w	w

As we can see, the opponent of Hou Yifan (#22) is #51, i.e. **Mariya Muzychuk**.

### 5<sup>th</sup> round

After winning her fourth game, Hou Yifan has now 3.5 points, like 13 other players. There are no MDP here, so we have 14 players, 4 WS and 10 BS.

S1:	2	3	<b>5</b>	10	15	16	18
	b	w	<b>w</b>	b	w	b	b
S2:	20	21	<b>22</b>	24	26	27	34
	b	B	<b>b</b>	b	b	w	b

This is a quite easy pairing, because everything falls immediately in place without any transposition in S2. There will be three games between BS, and they are immediately identified. The opponent of Hou Yifan (#22) is #5, i.e. Michael Adams (male).

### 6<sup>th</sup> round

After losing her fifth game, Hou Yifan has still 3.5 points, like 34 other players. There is one MDP (#67) from the group with 4 points. Thus, the players in the bracket at 3.5 are 36, 17 WS and 19 BS. However, be aware that, while 17 BS have a strong preference for Black, two of them (#54 and #80, who, for whatever reason, missed a game before) have a mild preference for Black. According to the FIDE Dutch rules, this means that in the inevitable game between two BS, at least one of them must have a weak preference for Black. Here is the full table:

6	S1 :	4	6	9	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	45	46	47	48	50
7		w	w	b	w	w	b	w	b	w	w	w	b	b	b	w	b	w	B
	S2 :	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	8	8	8	9	10	10	11	11	12	
		3	4	2	6	8	9	2	3	0	1	7	4	0	9	6	7	6	
		b	b	w	w	w	b	w	b	b	b	w	w	b	w	b	b		

The MDP (#67) is a BS. Hence, he will meet either the first WS or the first weak-BS of the group with 3.5 points – in this case, the former (#4).

With the third pair (9-54), we immediately identify the game between two BS (as there is one weak BS in it). That means that for the remaining 30 players, 15 WS and 15 BS, we can apply the same trick seen in Round-3, i.e. just consider the WS from S1 (Hou Yifan, #22, is a WS) and the BS from S2.

S1:	10	11		18		<b>22</b>	32	33					46	48	
	w	w		w		<b>w</b>	w	w					w	w	
S2:				69		73	80	<b>81</b>	87				109	117	126
				b		b	b	<b>b</b>	b				b	b	b

The intuitive pairing (10-69, 11-73, 18-80, 22-81 and so on) yields no problems. The opponent of Hou Yifan (#22) is #81, i.e. **Pia Cramling**.

### 7<sup>th</sup> round

After drawing her game in the sixth round, Hou Yifan has now 4 points, like 27 other people (no MDP). We have 10 WS, 18 BS (i.e. four BS-BS games). The full table is:

S1:	1	9	14	17	20	<b>22</b>	23	25	26	40	42	45	46	48
	w	w	b	w	w	<b>b</b>	w	w	b	b	b	w	b	b
S2:	54	56	60	62	76	<b>78</b>	82	94	98	104	117	124	126	134
	b	b	b	b	b	<b>b</b>	b	b	b	b	w	b	w	w

This is not a perfect pairing because #17 and #62 have already played. However, once we switch #62 and #76, all other parts are in the right place, including the pairing of Hou Yifan (#22). Her opponent is #78, i.e. **Borya Ider** (male).

### 8<sup>th</sup> round

After winning her seventh game, Hou Yifan has now 5 points, like other 19 players. There is a MDP (#27). All in all, in the bracket with 5 points, there are 21 players - 10 WS and 11 BS. Let's look at the full table:

27		11	1	6	9	17	18	20	22	23	26	
	S1:											
b		w	b	b	b	b	w	b	w	b	w	
			32	38	40	42	45	46	47	48	67	94
	S2:		b	b	w	w	b	w	w	w	b	w
											↓	

There is a new row in S2, signaling that #67 has already floated down in any of the last two rounds. Thus, accordingly to the FIDE Dutch rules, it means that he is protected from floating down again. The floater will come from the BS – but, as #67 is protected, the obvious candidate to float down is #45.

The MDP (#27) is a BS who, since in the bracket there is parity, should meet the first WS (i.e. #11). If we then exclude the candidate to float down (#45), we remain with 16 players, 8 WS and 8BS. Hence, we can use the usual trick (#22 is WS, so we are interested only in pairs S1-WS vs. S2-BS).

	S1:					18		<b>22</b>		26
						w		<b>w</b>		w
	S2:	32	<b>38</b>							67
		b	<b>b</b>							b

These pairings yield no problems. The opponent of Hou Yifan (#22) is #38, i.e. **Ju Wenjun**.

## 9<sup>th</sup> round

After losing her eighth game, Hou Yifan remains with 5 points, a score shared with 29 other players. There is a MDP from the bracket at 5.5 (#94, BS), so there are 31 players to pair, 13 WS and 18 BS. This means that there will be two games between BS, and one BS is going to float down.

Regarding the two BS-BS games, in the bracket there are five players (#39, #51, #54, #81, #91), who have a strong preference for black (they missed, for whatever reason, a game in the tournament) and who shouldn't be paired among themselves.

Here is the full table:

94		4	19	21	22	29	32	35	39	40	45	48	50	51	54	56	
	S1:																
b		b	b	w	b	b	w	w	<b>b</b>	b	w	b	w	<b>b</b>	<b>b</b>	b	
			57	66	67	70	75	81	82	86	88	91	96	104	110	116	117
	S2:		w	w	w	b	w	<b>b</b>	b	w	w	<b>b</b>	b	w	b	b	w

s the MDP is a weak BS, he will meet the first player of the group with 5 points, i.e. #4, independent of the color expected by the latter.

Since any WS should meet a BS, 21-66 cannot work (besides the fact that they have already played). #21 looks for a BS after #66: #70 doesn't do, because 21-70 have already played, so he picks #81. Hence, for #22, the candidate opponent is now #66. This pair is fine, and, since we are only interested in Hou Yifan opponents, we can stop here. #66 is **Nino Batsiashvili**, the seventh woman met by Hou Yifan.

## 10<sup>th</sup> round

With a victory in the ninth round, Hou Yifan has now 6 points, like 22 other players. There is one MDP (#3). Thus, the total number of players is 24, 13 WS and 11 BS. Note that there are five players (#11, #33, #51, #52, #54) who have a weak preference for White. This means that the inevitable WS-WS game should have one of them in it.

The MDP is a WS, so he can meet the first player at 6 points (who is #1), regardless of the color expected by the latter (provided that they have not met yet, of course).

Here is the full table, with an extra row to mark the players who “upfloated” (i.e. played with a MDP) in the last two rounds, and thus are protected from “upfloating” again:

69		4	6	9	11	16	17	21	22	23	26	33	35
b	S1:	b	b	b	w	w	b	b	w	b	w	w	b
		↑			↑								
	S2:		37	42	46	48	50	51	52	54	58	68	86
			b	w	w	w	b	w	w	w	w	w	b

The MDP (#69) is a BS, so he should play against the first WS available – #11 is not (he is protected from upfloating), so the MDP picks #16.

In the remainder, 4-37 is not ok (they have already played, besides being both WS), so #37 and #42 are switched. 4-42 is ok, but 6-37 is not (both are BS), nor is 6-46 (they have already met), o the proper opponent for #6 is #48.

The next player to pair is #9: 9-37 are both BS, 9-46 have already played, 9-50 are both BS, so the right pair is 9-51.

Finally, we get to #11, who is a weak WS. He has already played with #37. #46 is next, and 11-46 is the WS-WS game we were looking for (one of them is a weak WS).

Now the rest has 7 WS and 7 BS, so the usual trick is applied (limited to S1/WS against S2/BS, as #22 is a WS).

			<b>22</b>		26	33	
S1:			<b>w</b>		w	w	
S2:	<b>37</b>	50					86
	<b>b</b>	b					b

22-37 is a fine pair, and that’s why Hou Yifan’s opponent in the last round was Babu Lalith (male).

By the way, the above table shows also that 33-86 (Fridman - Zatonskih, who are married) was a correct pair (provided that 26-50 was a possible pair, and it was).

## Conclusion

Actually we can say that the pairings of the tournament were correct and Hou Yifan had no reason to be upset.

## Case B – Captain Touching Player

### This case from a team competition in late 2016 highlights multiple points:

It was White's 40<sup>th</sup> move, with only 40 seconds remaining in the primary time control period. White played his move on the board, and then offered a draw to Black. However, White had forgotten to press his clock. The White Captain was standing behind the White player. Noticing his player had not pressed his clock, the White Captain touched the White player, probably trying to indicate that he should press his clock.

The Black player then stopped the clock, protested to the Arbiter that this was a kind of cheating, and so requested that Black should be declared the winner by forfeit.

- 1) The White Captain should be disciplined, as his behaviour is completely unfair and unacceptable. He should be banned from the playing venue for at least the rest of the round, and reported appropriately.
- 2) Per Article 11.5 (distraction), the Black player shall be awarded 2 extra minutes.
- 3) However, the White player cannot be punished for the actions of the White Captain. This is similar to situations where a spectator interferes. The spectator would be disciplined (for example, being banned from the playing venue), but the player cannot be blamed for the actions of someone else.
- 4) Note that situations may arise where the Arbiter should exercise patience before interfering. For example, with this current case, what if the White player does not realize what the White Captain is trying to do, and lets his clock keep running down? Now, if the Arbiter immediately steps in to discipline the White Captain, then the White player will have his clock stopped, which was the intent of the original interference by the White Captain! By exercising timely patience, the Arbiter could decide to temporarily defer disciplining the White Captain.
- 5) Ultimately, the Arbiter should have controlled the playing area, thus not allowing the White Captain to interfere. This is especially critical in time trouble.
- 6) After the game was resumed, the White player draw offer is still in effect.



## Case C – Displaced Captured Piece

This case occurred during an Armageddon tiebreak game in a tournament in Spain in late 2016.

This game is being played at a blitz time control. An arbiter is present for this game, but the moves are not being recorded, nor being electronically broadcast.

The White player captures a Black piece, by using a White piece to push aside the Black piece that is being captured. However, the White player performs the capture by just slightly pushing the captured Black piece aside, but does not actually remove the captured Black piece from the chessboard. The White player then presses his clock. The Arbiter does not intervene, and the Black player does not react. A few seconds later, the Black player's flag fails. Now the Black player claims a win because the White player "made an illegal move". The Arbiter declines the Black player's claim, declaring a win for the White player.

This is a very instructive case, in that it highlights multiple points for Arbiters:

- 1) Even though an arbiter is present (B.3.a), the moves are not also being recorded (B.3.b). So (per B.4) this game is governed by Rapidplay Laws (A.4)
- 2) Once the White player pressed his clock, the Arbiter, who was present and following this critical game, should of course have intervened immediately!
- 3) The specific article that should have been invoked is 7.4 (displaced piece rule). In addition, per the last part of this rule, the Arbiter should have penalized the White player by adding 1 minute (Article B.2 for blitz) for the Black player.
- 4) This situation is NOT an "illegal move"! This is a DISPLACED PIECE!
- 5) Once the Black player's flag fell, the game was over (which should have been claimed by the White player or the Arbiter). Once the game was over, the Black player could not make any prior claims. This arbiter decision was correct.





**World Chess Federation  
FIDE Arbiters' Commission**



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