



COLUMNISTS

An Arbiter's Notebook Geurt Gijssen



Long Moves

The Women's World Chess Championship in Elista has just finished. Stefanova, who had to play several tie-breaks, won this championship convincingly. The time limit in this event was 90 minutes for 40 moves and then 15 minutes for the whole game with an increment of 30 seconds from the first move. The move counter was also used. After a player had completed the 40th move, 15 minutes were added automatically. I was afraid of problems with the move counter, because in previous tournaments the moves would sometimes be added on move 39 or 41; 127 games were played and time was never added at the wrong moment. In the past I had been in favour of a time limit with the Fischer mode, but with only one control. Frankly, I somewhat changed my mind in this tournament, and I have to admit, that two periods have an advantage. When a player had completed the 40th move, she had a short period to relax. There was one case where a player claimed, that these 15 minutes were not added. But calculations showed that her claim was wrong. The match arbiters had noted the times shown on the clocks every 30 minutes and this was one of the indicators that she had not been correct. Furthermore, the senior arbiter had noticed that the 15 minutes were added.

Nevertheless, it is my opinion that it is necessary to clarify something about the time limit. I have been the arbiter in several tournaments this year. These were the time limits:

- Semi-finals, Dutch Championships: 40 moves in 2 hours + 1 hour for the remaining moves.
- Aeroflot Group A: 40 moves in 2 hours, then 20 moves in 1 hour, and finally 15 minutes for the remaining moves with an increment of 30 seconds in the third period. No move counter.
- Aeroflot Group B and C: 90 minutes for the whole game with an increment of 30 seconds from move 1.
- Women's World Chess Championship: 40 moves in 90 minutes + 15 minutes for the remaining moves with an increment of 30 seconds from move 1, with a move-counter.
- Petrosian Memorial: 40 moves in 100 minutes, then 20 moves in 50 minutes, finally 10 minutes for the remaining moves with an increment of 30 seconds from move 1.
- Dutch Championships: 40 moves in 2 hours, then 20 moves in 1 hour, finally 30 minutes for the remaining moves.

Six tournaments with six different time limits. This requires concentration at the critical moments. For instance, when a flag falls at the end of the first period, it is important to know whether a move counter has been used. The same occurs in the last period. May a player claim a draw pursuant Article 10.2? I hope that the reader understands the problem for players and for arbiters.

Question Dear Geurt, I would like to know your opinion about an incident that took place during the Armenian Youth Chess Championship. The game was played between the top ranked players. The position was very tense and both players had a chance to win. The black player claimed a draw under the three-repetition rule. The arbiter checked the records on the score sheets, where the last moves (1.Nf7+ Kh7 2.Ng5+ Kh8) were repeated three times, and it seemed that the position had been exactly repeated three times. The arbiter asked the white player if he agreed and he signed the scoresheet trusting the arbiter. After the game, while analysing the position, the black player showed his opponent how he could have won.. Suddenly, it was realized that during the first “repetition” of the position, Black had one pawn more on the f7-square and it was captured the next move. In fact, the position was repeated only twice and the draw claim was incorrect.

The Arbiter's Commission discussed the case and decided to continue the game from the above mentioned position, considering the importance of the game result and the fact that the arbiter had made a mistake. Black refused to continue the game, as a few minutes ago he himself had shown his opponent the winning moves, so he lost the game. Was the decision made by the Arbiter's Commission correct? **Ashot Vardapetian (Armenia)**

Answer From time to time I give lectures about the Laws of Chess. When I discuss Article 9, the drawn game, I advise the audience always, in case the arbiter was not present at the board during the last-played moves, to replay the whole game on a separate board after a player has claimed a draw. This incident is again a clear proof how dangerous it is to rely on the scoresheets only and not to replay the game.

Let us now discuss your case. It is clear that the claiming player and the arbiter made a mistake. Also the other player made a mistake by accepting and not checking the arbiter's decision. All parties involved were wrong. It is also very important that the players signed the scoresheets that confirmed that they agreed to a draw. I realise that the acceptance was based on the wrong reasons, but still they accepted and confirmed it. In my opinion the draw stands. I therefore disagree with the Arbiter's Commissions decision.

In this respect I have a question for this Commission. The mistake was discovered a few minutes after the finish of the game. If it had been discovered after some hours or after some days would you have reached the

same decision? I am almost sure that this would not have been the case.

That Black showed his opponent after the game how White had the possibility to win the game makes the case more complicated, but it is in my opinion not relevant.

Finally I would like to mention another point: During the game players are forbidden to leave the playing area. The reason is clear: conversing or analysing the game must be prevented. It is my opinion that a game cannot be continued when players, as in this instance, have permission to leave the playing area and have the possibility of analysing the game. Continuation of the game is therefore in my opinion impossible.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, In a Wisconsin state championship game a couple of years ago I reached an odd situation that I can't seem to get off my mind. At the time I was a young player rated 1650 and my veteran opponent was 1900, so he was obviously frustrated when I won a clean pawn in the opening stages of the game. When it came time for him to castle he picked up his king and placed it on f8, swung his rook around to e8 and announced check! Then he looked at me as if to say "I know what I am doing, but do you?!" Instead of getting a TD I merely told him that it was an illegal move, at which point he nodded and slid his king to g8 and rook to f8 and we played on. When I asked the TD about it, he said that because of the USCF "intent to castle" rule he would have merely required him to make a castling move. Personally I feel that since he made a legal move, moving his King to f8 that *that* move should stand, applying by analogy the rule which states that if you are moving your rook and accidentally drop it on the wrong square that the move must stand. Which is it? **Josiah Stein (USA)**

Answer In my mind it makes a big difference who is castling incorrectly, a novice or an experienced player. I understand that your opponent was quite experienced and apparently knew exactly what he was doing. You understand that I support your opinion that the move Kf8 stands. I cannot believe that the USCF rules would come to another conclusion.

Question Hi Geurt, Please tell us which were the "forbidden" pairings in the Aeroflot Open Festival. It is my opinion that they must be published. **Willem Broekman, (The Netherlands)**

Answer I am not surprised that somebody has asked this question. As a matter of fact the players of some countries were forbidden to play against Israelis.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, (a) Last month you talked about Buenos Aires 1939:

First, I would like to mention what happened in 1939. The Chess Olympiad was organised in Buenos Aires. During this Olympiad, World War II began, and many countries refused to play against Germany. FIDE decided not to change the pairings but the results of the unplayed matches versus Germany and Böhmen und Mähren were 2-2. The last country was, as a matter of fact, the Czech Republic, which was occupied by the Germans. The following matches were decided in this way: Germany- Poland, Germany-Palestine, Germany-France, Poland-Böhmen und Mähren, Palestine-Böhmen und Mähren, France-Böhmen und Mähren, and Argentina-Böhmen und Mähren." According to the tournament book, *El Torneo de las Naciones en Buenos Aires*, the matches Palestine- Böhmen und Mähren and Argentina- Böhmen und Mähren did take place, with the results 1½-2½ and 3½-½, respectively. On the other hand, the match Argentina-Palestine was not played and the result fixed as 2-2, in order that Argentina would not take advantage of the fact that Germany would not play Palestine in the next round and would only get two points.

I live in a region where the digital clocks are still rare, so all the tournaments are played with fixed time. Article 10.2 is one of the most difficult to apply by the arbiters. I think their work may be made easy by the adding of this item:

10.2.e The arbiter may change the time mode from fixed time to time incremental per move (Bronstein or Fischer mode) [so that the article 10.2 is no longer applicable].

Usually only one digital clock will be needed and the arbiter will not have to decide if "it is not possible to win by normal means". I hope this is not a too radical rule changing. **Christian Sánchez (Argentina)**

Answer You are completely right that problems in the last time control can be avoided by playing this period with an increment of, e.g., 30 seconds. In that case Article 10.2 will not apply. In my opinion it is not necessary a new Article 10.2e as you suggested. What can be done?

1. You mention in the tournament regulations the time limit of the last period.
2. To have the possibility to use this time limit you mention before each round, that at the moment the game will enter the last time control of the game, the clock being used will be replaced by a digital clock and that the arbiter will put on this digital clock the times shown on the mechanical clock used before.

Question You may have seen the rapid game Karpov,A (2735) - Polgar,J (2670) played in Budapest 1998: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.g3 00 5.Bg2 d6 6.00 Nc6 7.d5 Na5 8.Nfd2 c5 9.a3 Nd7 10.Ra2 Ne5 11.Qc2 Bf5 12.e4 Bd7 13.b3 b5 14.Bb2 bxc4 15.bxc4 Rb8 16.Bc3 Qb6 17.a4 e6 18.h3 exd5 19.cxd5

Rfc8 20.Kh2 Nb3 21.a5 Qb7 22.f4 Nd4 23.Qd1 Bb5 24.fxe5 Bxf1 25.Qxf1
 Bxe5 26.Na3 Qe7 27.Nac4 Bg7 28.a6 h5 29.h4 Rf8 30.Qd3 f5 31.Bxd4 Bxd4
 32.exf5 gxf5 33.Nf3 Qf6 34.Nxd4 cxd4 35.Rf2 Rbe8 36.Bh3 Qg7 37.Bxf5
 Kh8 38.Rf4 Rf6 39.Qxd4 Re2+ 40.Kh3 Re1 41.Kg2 Re2+ 42.Kf3 Re1
 43.Ne3 Rg1 44.g4 hxg4+ 45.Bxg4 Rxf4+ 46.Qxf4 Re1 47.h5 Rh1 48.Qf5 Rc1
 49.Qe6 Qf8+ 50.Bf5 Rc7 51.h6 Re7 52.Qg6 Rf7 53.Kf4 Re7 54.Ng4 Rf7
 55.Nf6 Rc7 56.Be6 Rc4+ 57.Kg5 Rc7 58.Kh5 Re7 59.Qg8+ Qxg8 60.Nxg8
 Rc7 61.Nf6 Rc1 62.Ne8 Rh1+ 63.Kg6 Rg1+ 64.Kf7 Rf1+ 65.Ke7 Kh7
 66.Nxd6 Kxh6 67.Nf7+ Kg6 68.d6 Rd1 69.d7 Kh5 70.Nd6 Rxd6 71.Kxd6
 Kg5 72.d8Q+ Kf4 73.Qh4+ Ke3 74.Qg3+ Kd4 75.Qf3

Karpov stalemated Polgar. He may have done this on purpose as he was very short of time. If his flag had fallen he would have lost because Judit had mating material, the pawn on a7, the white queen could have gone to b6 and the pawn could have queened.

However, if Karpov did not had a queen then there is no way the a7-pawn could ever have moved, and nor could a mating position have been constructed with the a-pawn alone. So would the game have been drawn?

Alan O'Brien (UK)

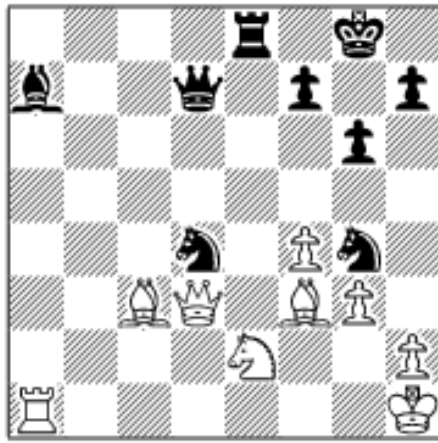
Answer The only person, who is able to answer to some of your questions, is of course Anatoly Karpov himself. I think that Karpov had in mind to play Qb6 and on the next move to take the a6 pawn, to make sure that in case he should overstep the time, he would not lose the game and probably he overlooked the stalemate. Another possibility is that he stalemated Polgar on purpose for the same reason.

I think you are wrong that the game should be a draw in the event Karpov did not have a Queen. It is easy to see that Black may take the white pawn on a6 and then promote the black pawn to a queen. In other words, without the queen Black has, thanks to his pawn on a7, mating material.

Karpov is a very practical player, especially in time trouble. Let me give you an example from my own practice. In 1999 he played a match versus Piket in Monaco, organised by the Association Max Euwe:

Karpov,A (2710) - Piket,J (2619):

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 00 5.Nge2 d5 6.a3 Be7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.g3 c6
 9.Bg2 Na6 10.Bd2 Nc7 11.Qc2 g6 12.f3 Ne6 13.Na4 Re8 14.00 a5 15.Kh1 b5
 16.Nac3 Ba6 17.Rfe1 c5 18.dxc5 Bxc5 19.b4 axb4 20.axb4 Bxb4 21.Reb1
 Bc5 22.Nxb5 Bxb5 23.Rxa8 Qxa8 24.Rxb5 Qa7 25.Qc3 Qa6 26.Qd3 Ba7
 27.Rb3 Qa4 28.Rb1 Rd8 29.Bc3 d4 30.exd4 Nd5 31.Ra1 Qd7 32.Ba5 Re8
 33.f4 Ne3 34.Bf3 Nxd4 35.Bc3 Ng4 36.Kg2 Ne3+ 37.Kh1 Ng4



In this position Karpov was very short of time and the game finished with 38.Kg2 Ne3 and the players agreed to a draw. After the game Karpov was asked why he played 38. Kg2 instead of 38. Rxa7 with probably a winning position. He answered that he was very short of time and very afraid to overstep the time limit if he had played the long move Ra1xa7.

Question Dear Geurt Gijssen, In an eight-player rapid tournament of 30 minutes for

each player two players didn't play the first round, even though opponents were available. These two players got points without playing anybody. During the second round it was decided to have a six-player round robin. Please note that seven rounds had been reduced to five rounds from second round forward. Is this possible? What about the two players who didn't play anyone in the first round and obtained one point each? The results will not be accurate. In addition, to decide second place, the Koya system was followed after 5 rounds since two players had identical scores. Please give your suggestion as to how the chief arbiter should handle this particular situation.

S. K. Talwar, (national arbiter, India)

Answer Let me quote Article 4 of the Tournament Regulations:

When a player withdraws or is expelled from a round-robin tournament the consequence will be as follows:

If a player has completed less than 50% of his games and leaves the tournament, his score remains in the tournament table (for rating and historical purposes), but the points scored by him or against him are not counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player and his opponents are indicated by "-" in the tournament table and those of his opponents by +. If neither player is present, this will be indicated by two -.

If a player has completed at least 50% of his games, his score shall remain in the tournament table and will be counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player are indicated as above.

If you read this Article, it is clear what the arbiter should have done: 1. He should not have given a point to the players whose opponents did not show up; and 2. He should not have changed the pairings he made for the 8-player tournament or he should have changed the pairings in such a way that the colour balance at the end of the tournament for each player would have been

2/3 or 3/2, meaning that each player would have had the same colour two or three times.

But the most important thing is he should not have counted the unplayed games as a win in the final standings.

Question We always use the same thinking time for Black and White. Yet we recognise that White has an advantage. Why not play the game so that Black has a time advantage. For example the FIDE Rate could be all in 80 for White and all in 100 for Black with 30 seconds added from the first. This would be the same total thinking time. Of course, it would be unnecessary in the World Championship as all matches are played with an even number of games. We do recognise this point for the sudden death play-offs. Looking at 6.1 of The Laws, I think this is already permitted. Do you agree? **Stewart Reuben (United Kingdom)**

Answer I agree with you that Article 6.2 does not prohibit giving different thinking times to the White player and the Black player. Let me quote, for the readers, Article 6.2a:

When using a chess clock, each player must make a minimum number of moves or all moves in an allotted period of time and/or may be allocated an additional amount of time with each move. All these must be specified in advance.

You mention that there is no need to apply your proposal in the World Championship, because this event is played as a match with an even number of games. Of course, this is true, but I am afraid that things become too complicated if we accept your proposal. See my introduction to this column. Finally I would like to note that you are right that in the sudden death games we already accepted different time limits, but keep in mind that in case of a draw Black is considered to be the winner of the game, and not only of the game, but the whole match.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, Recently I encountered an example of tricks in a blitz game. Both players were almost out of time, but one also had a lone King, while the other one had a Queen and a pawn on the 7th rank.

However, what happened was that the player with King moved it, intentionally, next to the other king (an illegal move), but being short on time, the other person decided to promote his pawn. And after that the player who had committed the illegal move claimed victory (with a lone king?), because his opponent had made an illegal move.

I decided the game was lost though for him, as he forgot to stop his clock and overstepped the time limit, and I decided that the person who was accused of

the illegal move did not make one. However, after discussing it with another arbiter, he told me that when it came to the FIDE regulations I had only a weak basis for my decision. What I wonder is how to act in such a situation? I liked a solution that the chief arbiter gave me, expelling the player from the tournament for unfair behavior, but isn't there anything else we can do against this? **Victor de Bruin (The Netherlands)**

Answer Let me quote Article C3 of the Laws of Chess:

An illegal move is completed once the opponent's clock has been started. However, the opponent is entitled to claim a win before making his own move. If the opponent cannot checkmate the player by any possible series of legal moves with the most unskilled counterplay, then he is entitled to claim a draw before making his own move. Once the opponent has made his own move, an illegal move cannot be corrected

It is clear that in the case mentioned by you the player with a bare king can never win. The opponent has at least a draw. Probably no more. The problem is that this instance is not specifically covered in the Laws of Chess. There are illegal moves, which lead to a legal position. That is, a position that could be the result of legal moves. There are also positions which are illegal after an illegal move, for instance two Kings attacking each other or two Kings that are both in check. And to be honest, I really don't know how to handle such positions. I thought about it during the Women's World Championship. In tiebreak and sudden death games it was prohibited for the arbiters to interfere if there were illegal moves. But what should be done in cases of illegal positions? Probably the regulations must be changed so that in such cases the arbiter must intervene. I would like to discuss these cases at the next FIDE Congress.

Question Geurt, I enjoy your column a great deal...but I notice that you often field questions from players who reside in the United States. Your column deals with FIDE rules and such, and often you reply to questions from USA-based readers as if only the FIDE rules exist. But, of course, the USCF-style rules dominate in the USA, and FIDE has recognized USCF-style rules as a perfectly acceptable variation of FIDE rules. The differences are subtle but important.

For example, in a recent column, you gave two examples where one side might win a game via opponent's flag fall. Under FIDE rules, your answers are 100 percent correct, of course. Under USCF-style rules, your answers are incorrect.

Example 1: Player A has K+N. Player B has K+R+N. Player B's flag falls. Under FIDE rules, Player A may win the game because he can construct a possible mating position (with very bad play by B, of course). Under USCF-

style rules, the game is a draw because A cannot force a mate with his material alone.

Example 2: Player A has a K. Player B has K+N+N. Player A's flag falls. Under FIDE rules, Player B may win the game because he can construct a possible mating position.

Under USCF-style rules, the game is drawn as soon as we reach K vs. K+N+N, because the 2 Ns cannot force mate on their own. USCF uses the principle that positions are drawn if the side that would make a flag fall claim cannot produce a positive mating action -- help-mates are not recognized.

I call this to your attention only as a service to your readers --clearly, your column deals with FIDE rules. However, inasmuch as USCF-style rules are a recognized FIDE variant, I hope that in the future you will at least occasionally note this in your replies (out of concern for your USA-based readers). **Eric C. Johnson (USA)**

Answer I agree with you that in all my answers I deal with the FIDE rules. And I wonder whether your statement is correct, that the USCF rules are a recognized FIDE variant. Your examples show that the USCF rules clearly differ from the FIDE rules. Therefore I like to quote a part of the preface of the Laws of Chess:

A member federation is free to introduce more detailed rules provided they: a. do not conflict in any way with the official FIDE Laws of Chess and b. are not valid for any FIDE match, championship or qualifying event, or for a FIDE title or rating tournament.

I draw your special attention to point a. Do you agree with me that your examples conflict with the FIDE Laws of Chess? That is why I wonder whether FIDE has recognised the USCF rules.

Question Dear Mr. Gijssen, In your answer to my question last month, you answered based on the sequence of placing the promoting piece on the promotion square, then removing the pawn. In that case, it is clear touch move applies. But in my case, the pawn was never touched. The queen touched (as opposed to being placed on) the promotion square, then was withdrawn without the pawn being touched. Does touch-move still apply? **Michael A. Mulford, (USA)**

Answer This is a very interesting case, in my opinion not covered in the Laws of Chess. This means we have to find a solution based on logic as it is written in the Preface of the Laws of Chess. Let me quote:

Where cases are not precisely regulated by an Article of the Laws, it should be possible to reach a correct decision by studying analogous situations, which are discussed in the Laws.

Is it possible to find analogous cases? I think I have found something in the Laws of Chess:

4c. If a player, intending to castle, touches the king or king and rook at the same time, but castling on that side is illegal, the player must make another legal move with his king which may include castling on the other side. If the king has no legal move, the player is free to make any legal move.

4.7 When, as a legal move or part of a legal move, a piece has been released on a square, it cannot then be moved to another square. The move is considered to have been made when all the relevant requirements of Article 3 have been fulfilled.

In 4.4c the Laws say that, if a player with intention to castle, touches the king and rook, he has to make a king move. Well, I think that placing a queen on a promotion square, and promotion is possible, the player should promote this pawn. Otherwise it can be explained as disturbing the opponent.

Pursuant to 4.7, placing the queen on the promotion square can be considered as a part of a legal move and again, I do not see any reason why the promotion should not be valid.

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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