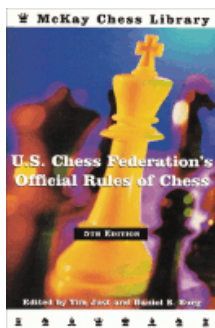COLUMNISTS

An Arbiter's Notebook

Geurt Gijssen

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Formulas and Figures

Question: Dear, Mr. Gijssen. In regards to your reply to Mr. Quickenborne's question in September 2008. I have been thinking about Mr. Model's formula and wondering how he invented it. Let's see the formula:

$$R = (P+7Q)/5$$

When R is the number of rounds, so the maximum R is P-1 or P. When Q is the number of qualified players, so the maximum Q is P. If we replace R, Q with P in Mr. Model's formula then we have

$$P = (P+7P)/5 \quad P = 8P/5 \quad P = 1.6P$$

This is not true. So, I concluded the formula cannot be applied for all conditions, especially when Q is quite significant. In this situation, I like to suggest the following formula instead:

$$R = (P+4Q)/5$$

What is your opinion? Did Mr. Model run any experiment on this? The optimum number of rounds in Swiss systems is always a debatable issue, especially for those who didn't qualify. Best regards, **Teerapong (Thailand)**

Answer Let me point out that P = 1.6P is true in case P = 0. Furthermore, if R = P-1 or R = P, why play such a tournament, because everybody qualifies. Although I was a mathematician, I believe it is wrong to approach the Model formula in a mathematical way. I think it is a **rough-and-ready rule**. In general, the formula works quite well.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. I refer to the FIDE Handbook: 04.1. Swiss System Based on Rating> Exchange Procedures D2.

1. Why are players of number 1 and 8 not seen in matrices? 2. If number of player is odd S1=1, 2, 3, S2=4, 5, 6, 7, please clarify related matrices of Exchange Procedures.

Best regards, **Dr. A. Bahavar (Iran)**

Answer I understand your question very well; however, my answer will be very technical. First, let me try to explain the meaning of this matrix. Suppose we have a score group of eight players. We divide this group into two subgroups S1 and S2.

S1 contains the players 1, 2, 3 and 4; S2 contains the players 5, 6, 7 and 8. We try to make a pairing in such a way that everyone from S1 plays a player of S2. The ideal pairings (disregarding colors of course is 1-4, 2-5, 3-6, and 4-8. If this pairing is impossible, then we try another pairing. But which pairing?

There is a simple solution: Make all combinations of the figures 5, 6, 7 and 8. These are the combinations from low to high: (1) 5678 (2) 5687 (3) 5768 (4) 5786 (5) 5867 (6) 5876 (7) 6578 (8) 6587 (9) 6758 (10) 6785 (11) 6857 (12) 6875 (13) 7568 (14) 7586 (15) 7658 (16) 7685 (17) 7856 (18) 7865 (19) 8567 (20) 8576 (21) 8657 (22) 8675 (23) 8756 (24) 8765

If (1) 1-5, 2-6, 3-7, 4-8 is impossible, then we try (2) 1-4, 2-5, 3-8, 4-7. If this is also impossible, try (3) 1-5, 2-7, 3-6, 4-8, and we continue until we find a possible pairing.
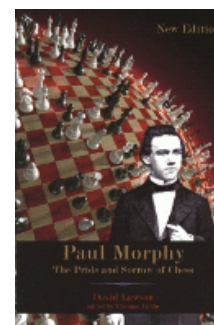
If all twenty-four pairings are impossible, we have to try another way: to exchange one player of S1 with a player of S2. But again how to do it and in which order? For this aim we created a matrix:

Matrix 1

S2\S1	4	3	2	1
5	a	C	F	j
6	b	E	I	m
7	d	H	L	o
8	g	K	N	p

In this matrix it is given the order of exchange between a player of S1 (1, 2, 3, 4) and S2 (5, 6, 7, 8). You begin by exchanging 4 and 5 (a) and follow the same procedure as it is written before, making all the combinations until a pairing is found. This is according to the rules. If it is impossible to find correct pairings, the numbers 4 and 6 (b) will be exchanged.

Instead of the matrix above, the FIDE Handbook publishes the following matrix:

Matrix 2

S2\S1	4	3	2
5	a	c	f
6	b	e	h
7	d	g	i

Apparently, the last one is sufficient to find all combinations in case one player of S1 is exchanged with one player of S2. I shall try to clarify it with an example:

Suppose 1 and 6 will be exchanged, then S1 is (2346) and S2 (1578).

Let us see the possible combinations:

It starts with 2-1, 3-5, 4-7, 6-8. If we exchange 2 and 6, we get the same pairings. It is exchange (h) in the second matrix.

The second combination: 2-1, 3-5, 6-8 again exchange (h) All combinations starting with 1-2 are covered by (h)

Combinations starting with 5: (2346) (5178) 2-5, 3-1, 4-7, 6-8 If we exchange 3 and 6, we get the same pairings. It is exchange (e) in the second matrix.

The combination: 2-5, 3-1, 4-8, 6-7, Again exchange 3 and 6 (e)

Next combinations: (2346) (5718) 2-5, 3-7, 4-1, 6-8 and 2-5,3-7, 4-8, 6-1. If we had exchanged 4 an 6, we get the same pairings. It is exchange (b) in the second matrix.

In the same way you may try all combinations with exchanging #1 with a player of S2. You will see we get always one of the exchanges mentioned in matrix 2.

In case of an odd number of players; for instance, seven players, we can use the second matrix.

Question Hello, I investigated the table more precisely, in fact this table has been copied and pasted from earlier examples when the maximum considered rating difference was 350 (and now is 400).

I found this example in the FIDE Handbook 2000. In that example RcNew for player C had become 2351, so his new rating got 2414, which has been copied incorrectly in this table and now it should be 2411. RcNew for H and I will be 2342 and 2322 respectively as has come correctly at the end of 8.58. So the

new Ru for H and I should be revised and likely: RuNew for H = 2144, RuNew for I = 2006. Thanks again, and hope you notify me if I've been wrong in any stage. **Hadi Bakhshayesh (Iran)**

Answer You are right. I will send your calculations to the responsible person in FIDE. Thank you for your remarks.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. Your answer to GM Mrva's question from October 2010 left me worried.

It has always been common practice to walk around and have an occasional chat during a chess game when you don't have the move. A very small minority of players have always tried to abuse this practice, but as you clearly state yourself, arbiters have enough ways to stop them.

Now, in professional surroundings there may be a need to formalize things. Professionals may be expected to accept stricter rules (if acceptable to the chess community), like having to face doping controls (not to my personal opinion), being searched for electronic equipment, or be obliged to keep silent when walking around. Tournament directors are allowed to make special rules; FIDE can use them in its own tournaments and advise them to others.

But for the vast majority of the chess players, playing chess is a social event. When you compete in (or visit) a chess tournament, you meet old friends. How many people will be driven away by imposing professional standards on the amateur (or beginning) player? Is the next step that any player in any tournament has to show the contents of his pockets before entering the playing hall? (By your reasoning: a player may say he has no notes in his pockets, but how else can an arbiter ascertain this.)

Is it true that forbidding talking to other players will be explicitly mentioned in the Laws of Chess in the near future? **Frits Fritschy (The Netherlands)**

Answer I understand your concern. The rules applied to a world championship match must be stricter than for a weekend tournament, to mention two extremes. However, it is very difficult to determine in which situations more flexibility is possible.

Let me relate a personal experience. When I still actively played chess, it happened many times that another player would watch my game, and then walk and talk with my opponent. I never complained, but I felt annoyed and distracted by it. Also, I accompanied a school team for several years. It was well known that some teachers would tell their pupils what to play during the round. Certainly, these are not examples of the social niceties to which you refer, but they highlight the problem facing the arbiter.

A well known trainer once told me about a player who gained about 300 rating points in a very short time and was therefore selected for a national team. However, he never took part in the analyses during training sessions and he easily lost the only game he ever played in the national team. The player then lost the 300 rating points, step by step, in open tournaments.

There is no easy way to solve these problems. It will be more and more difficult to avoid cheating on all levels in the future. Very strong chess programs are now available as mobile phone applications. In which tournaments do we have to check the players, and in which tournaments do we not? I don't know. You are correct that Draconian anti-cheating measures will discourage tournament participation, but so will allowing cheating to take place.

Question Dear. Mr. Gijssen. What are the most convenient tie-break systems for use in the Swiss system, round robin, and Swiss system for team, as they change nearly every day. Is it convenient to raffle the Tie-Break at the end of the tournament, or let the players know which tie-break you will use before the first round. **Wilfredo Paulino (Dominican Republic)**

Answer Let me begin with your last question. The way a tie will be broken should be announced before the tournament starts. Furthermore, I refer to the

FIDE Handbook: the Annex of the Tournament Rules: Tie breaks:

(a) Individual Round Robin Tournaments: Direct encounter; Playoff; Number of games played with Black; Koya System; Sonneborn-Berger; Number of won games.

(b) Team Round Robin System: Games points; Match points; Direct encounter; Playoff; Sonneborn-Berger.

(c) Individual Swiss Systems (all players have consistent ratings): Direct encounter; Tournament Performance; Rating Playoff.

(d) Individual Swiss Systems (where not all the ratings are consistent): Direct encounter; Sum of progressive score; Buchholz; Playoff; Sonneborn-Berger; Won games; Games played with Black.

(e) Team Swiss Systems: Games points; Match points; Direct encounter; Playoff; Buchholz; Sonneborn-Berger.

By the way, this is only a partial list.

Question Dear, Geurt. In your October 2010 column, Christian Sánchez from Argentina asked you a set of questions regarding an incomplete promotion move, the last one of which was: "would the questions be more important if the promotion stalemates?"

You replied, "No. As long as I don't know which piece he intends to promote to and this piece has not touched the promotion square, I don't know whether it is stalemate."

Imagine a situation in which promotion stalemates regardless of the promoted piece. Does this change your answer? Best regards, **Wojciech Pietrzak (Poland)**

Answer I am ready to change my answer, based on the following example:
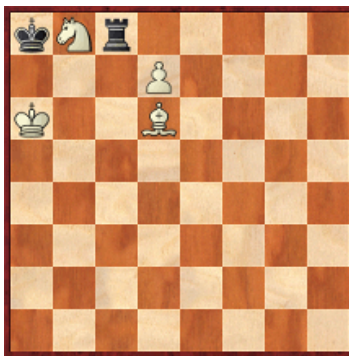
[FEN "kNr5/3P4/K2B4/8/8/8/8/8"]

If White plays dxc8, it doesn't matter how White promotes, because it is stalemate. Nevertheless, this example is an exception. In general, I like to know what piece a player intends to choose.

Question Dear, Geurt. I have three questions regarding the Monroi electronic scoresheet.

1. One of our players brought her personal Monroi device to the FIDE Olympiad, but they didn't allow her to use it. Isn't the Monroi FIDE approved? Why was it forbidden at the Olympiad? She has used the device in other FIDE events.
2. Article 8 of the FIDE rules states that you have to use the scoresheet prescribed for the competition. Is she allowed to use the Monroi in a competition where it is not the scoresheet prescribed for the competition? If they allowed her to use the Monroi, is she obligated to also write the moves on the prescribed scoresheet as the FIDE rules states?
3. Can an event using FIDE rules prohibit the use of the Monroi? Is there

any link on the FIDE website that states that the Monroi is FIDE approved?

Best Regards, **FA Edgar A. Murray Ortiz (Puerto Rico)**

Answer I refer to two Articles of the Laws of Chess:

> *8.1 In the course of play each player is required to record his own moves and those of his opponent in the correct manner, move after move, as clearly and legibily as possible, in the algebraic notation (See Appendix C),* **on the scoresheet prescribed for the competition**.

> *8.3 The scoresheets are the property of the organisers of the event.*

In my opinion, it is very clear from these two Articles that the exclusive use of a Monroi is impossible in a tournament in which another scoresheet is used. A player has to use the scoresheet of the tournament. It is up to the organizer or arbiter to allow the Monroi device as a second scoresheet. However, the arbiter then has to check the Monroi device during the game. For instance, did the player "write" the move on the Monroi *after* he made a move? The reason I mention this is that a player has the possibility of seeing a future position on his screen if he "writes" it beforehand to the Monroi.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. This is about a blitz game. The time is monitored by a digital clock. Player A ran out of time; his flag is down. Then Player B ran out of time. Is it a draw or victory for Player B? Thank you. **Tomislav Biljak (Croatia)**

Answer I have to be careful with questions about Blitz and rapid games, because we have to consider the situations with and without adequate supervision.

> With adequate supervision: in this case the normal Laws of Chess apply. This means, for instance, that the arbiter my call a flag fall. If it is clear which flag fell first, the decision is also clear. Only if it is unclear which flag fell first, should the arbiter declare the game drawn.

> With inadequate supervision: I refer to Article A4d of the Rules of Rapid Chess, also applicable for Blitz games:

> 1. *The flag is considered to have fallen when a player has made a valid claim to that effect. The arbiter shall refrain from signalling a flag fall, but he may do so if both flags have fallen.*
> 2. *To claim a win on time, the claimant must stop both clocks and notify the arbiter. For the claim to be successful, the claimant's flag must remain up and his opponent's flag down after the clocks have been stopped.*
> 3. *If both flags have fallen as described in (1) and (2), the arbiter shall declare the game drawn.*

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. In a recent blitz chess tournament at my local chess club, a player with king and two queens mated another player who had just a bare king. Right after being mated the other player claimed a flag fall. Indeed, the flag of the first player had fallen and it was obvious that it had fallen at an earlier stage of the game. The mated player still had time on his clock. I decided the game is a draw, since the flag has fallen, but the other player has no mating material. Other chess peers claimed that after being mated the player can no longer make a claim since mate ends the game immediately. Who is right? Thank you very much for your most interesting contributions. Best regards, **Wolfgang Küchle (Germany)**

Answer See the previous question and answer:

> With adequate supervision: in this case the arbiter, when he noticed the flag fall, has to stop the game and declare the game drawn, because the player with a bare king cannot win the game by any series of legal moves. See Article 6.9 of the Laws of Chess:

Except where one of the 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 the 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.

With inadequate supervision:

I refer to point one of Article A4d (See again previous question):

A flag has fallen at the moment a player claims the flag fall. Notice, that the arbiter may not signal the flag fall. In the case you mentioned, the claim was made after the player was checkmated. The checkmate took place before the flag has fallen, not physically, but according to the rules. This means that checkmate is valid.

Question Dear, Mr. Gijssen. I would like to know how I should indicate a draw offer or resignation to someone who doesn't understand English. Thank you. **Darren (Singapore)**

Answer One way to show that you resign is to lay the king flat on the chess board. Another is to write the result on your scoresheet, indicating that you resign. If you write on a little piece of paper "½-½?" and show it to your opponent, I am sure that he will understand your proposal. It is also somewhat common to cross the two forefingers and show this to your opponent by way of a draw offer.

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