

Text by IA Geert Bailleul
Secretary of the ECU
Arbiters Council



Once upon a time during chess tournaments: two different cases

Part 1: The unauthorized pressure of the much stronger opponent.

I would like to present you an interesting case of intimidation of the opponent. At the youth championship, the highest ranked player (Joe) and favourite for the title only scored ½ point in first 2 rounds.

In the third round Joe was supposed to face a fellow member (Marc) of his own club. It was crystal clear that there would be no hope of winning the tournament if Joe didn't win this game against his friend, who was a much weaker player. However, after 44 moves Joe had a completely losing position. Following another check from the opponent it was clear that checkmate is inevitable.

After about fifteen minutes of "thinking" and realising that he would lose again, Joe proposed a draw without playing his move first. At first Marc refused, not only because of the illegal proposal, but also because he knew that it was checkmate in two moves. Joe started to discuss with his opponent about the serious consequences for him if he would lose this game. The match arbiter who saw this all happening, intervened. He pointed out to Joe the irregularity of the proposal for draw and gave him a warning.

Despite all that Joe kept on offering a draw (without playing a move) and again informing his opponent about the consequences for him if he would lose a second time. Before the match arbiter could intervene a second time, Marc accepted the draw offer.

They both filled in the score sheet, however without signing it. As quick as possible they left the playing venue. The match arbiter informed the chief arbiter about this incident.

In this case, there is a violation of several articles of the "Laws of Chess". According to Article 9.1.2.1 Joe made an incorrect proposal for a draw, even repeatedly. There was a correct intervention of the arbiter, who gave Joe a warning. Despite all that, Joe repeated his incorrect proposal, intimidating his opponent. However the arbiter didn't get the chance to intervene again because Marc already accepted the offer for draw which ended the game.

We can also take into account article 11.5 of the "Laws of Chess" about distracting or annoying the opponent in any manner whatsoever (several unreasonable offers of draw). What Joe did for sure may be considered as pure intimidation of the opponent.

Also article 11.1 of the "Laws of Chess" has to be taken into account. It is obvious that the attitude of Joe is unacceptable. It is disrespectful towards his opponent. A good example of how chess can be brought into disrepute.

Two different cases

ECU Arbiters Council would appreciate very much if you, dear colleagues, would be so kind to share your opinion on both cases with us!

Please send your opinion to:
ecuarbiterscouncil@gmail.com.

Data _____ Round _____ Result ____ / ____
 White _____
 Black _____

Nr	White	Black	Nr	White	Black
1			21		
2			22		
3			23		
4			24		
5			25		
6			26		
7			27		
8			28		
9			29		
10			30		
11			31		
12			32		
13			33		
14			34		
15			35		
16			36		
17			37		
18			38		
19			39		
20			40		

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Another thing that could lead to discussions is the fact that both players didn't sign the score sheet. Fortunately, both players had filled in the same result.

To conclude, the arbiter has to use the possible penalties which are described in art 12.9 of the "Laws of Chess". The arbiter might even consider article 11.7 specifying the loss of the game for Joe basis on his persistent refusal to comply with the "Laws of Chess" and also for multiple infringements. The conduct of Joe in many ways is unacceptable.

Part 2: The often forgotten article.

I have the strong impression that some articles in the "FIDE Laws of Chess", for some strange reason, are being forgotten. As an example I would like to mention article **8.1.1**:

8.1.1 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 legibly as possible, in the algebraic notation (Appendix C), on the 'scoresheet' prescribed for the competition.

Very interesting is to emphasize the part: "*as clearly and legibly as possible*". It seems that, not only the players have forgotten about this article, but also a rather large number of arbiters. How should an arbiter react if he was faced with the following score sheet (of the black player).

The question that can be asked is: what is illegible?

An illegible score sheet can penalise the player himself. For sure, this kind of score sheet cannot be used to check any claim of the player.

The line that shouldn't be crossed is to leave blanks or to just put lines when the notation is required. For sure, the arbiter should intervene as soon as possible and not wait for more than 20 moves. The arbiter should penalise the player according to article 12.9 of the "Laws of Chess".

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