

IA Tomasz Delega
together with
IA Marika Japaridze,
IA Shohreh Bayat and
IA Tania Karali
during the
World Rapid & Blitz
2021 in Warsaw



The difference between a good arbiter and not the best one – episode 2

As the first article under this somewhat provocative title aroused great interest, and more importantly suggestions included there are being implemented by arbiters in practice, I decided to continue the series. This time it will be about the difference in competences of arbiters, which comes from arbiter's own experiences as a chess player. Being a practising player definitely helps to understand what is happening in the chess game and to understand emotions of the players that accompany it.

Imagine a situation, where in a standard game one of the player is not recording some moves on his scoresheet. Both are in time trouble having about one minute on the clock plus 30 second increment, one player started skipping writing moves after move 43, and after move 47 the difference on the scoresheets was four moves, two whites and two black. An arbiter being present at the chessboard the whole time and seeing the difference between scoresheets did nothing for the next twenty moves. On move 67 the player writing correctly blundered a rook and then, annoyed made a claim that the opponent didn't write all moves. The arbiter said to the opponent "please complete the scoresheet on your time". The offending player said to the arbiter that his scoresheet is correct, so the arbiter started comparing moves on the scoresheets and explained exactly the offending player where he started skipping moves. Then the arbiter gave both scoresheets to the offender, started the clock and violating player completed his scoresheet based on the opponent scoresheet, and made his next move. For the arbiter the case was over, but from the perspective of the claimant, you can imagine how he felt. Finally, the player writing correctly resigned.

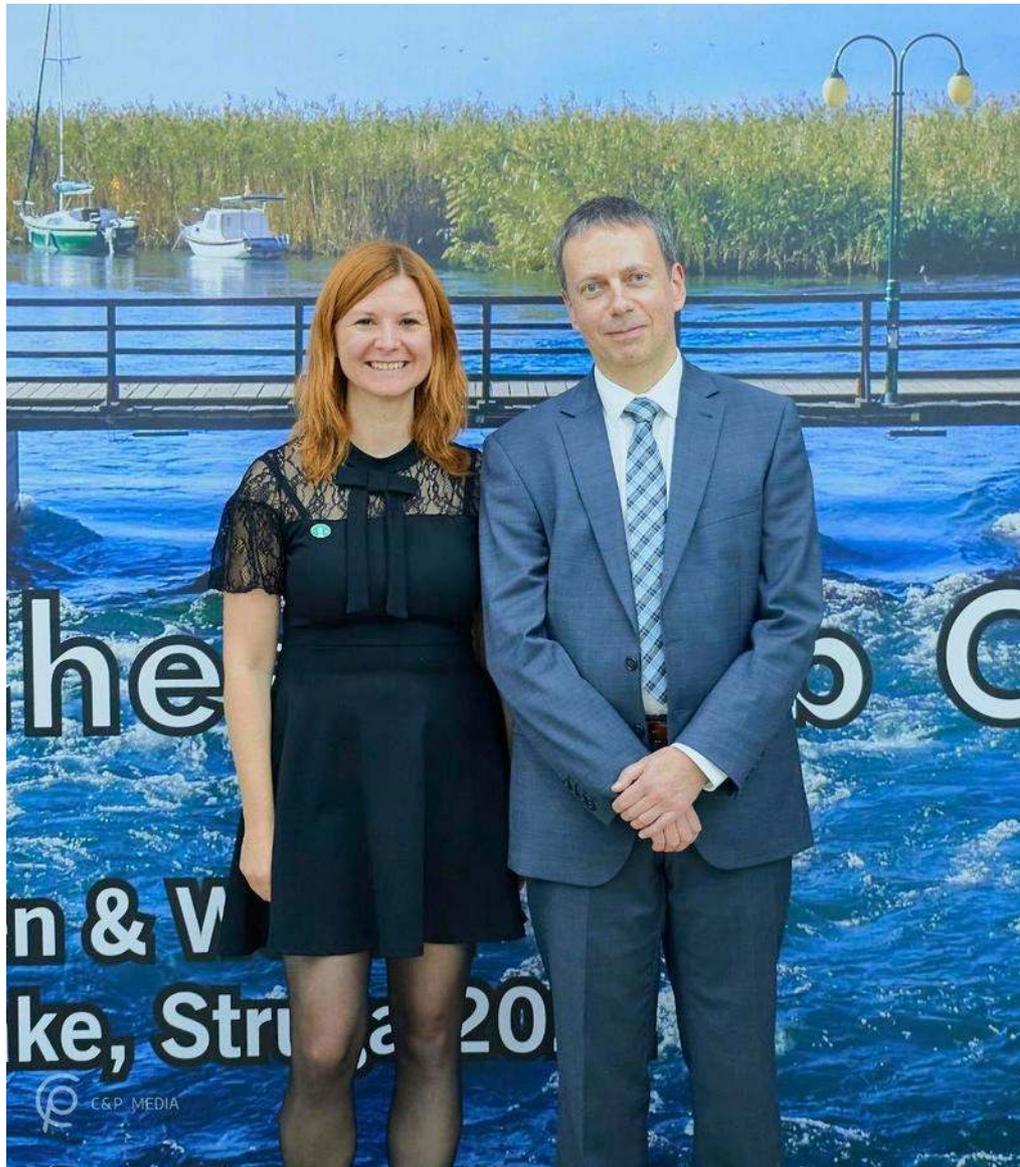
Two things seem to be obvious. First, the arbiter was completely passive. According to Laws of Chess 12.1 *The arbiter shall see that the Laws of Chess are observed* 12.2.1 *The arbiter shall ensure fair play* 12.3 *The arbiter shall observe the games, especially when the players are short of time, enforce decisions he has made, and impose penalties on players where appropriate.* Second, the player writing correctly could have made a claim earlier, before he blundered the rook, but he didn't. A more interesting for us is why this happened. The player was waiting for the arbiter to intervene, because he had seen the arbiter present at the chessboard. The arbiter didn't react because, according to him, he was not sure if the claimant scoresheet was correct and he didn't consider the violation as something important for the player. But every experienced player knows, that not recording the moves may give an advantage, especially in case of playing in time trouble, when the players have about one minute on the clock, plus increment. Writing moves takes time and causes the player turn away from thinking for a while, not writing saves time and does not cause loss of concentration and it can be a decisive in some situations.

Text by:

**IA Tomasz Delega
Chairman of ECU AC**

"The difference between not the best arbiter and a good one is that good one is able, based on his experience as a player, catch all nuances that may affect the chess game."

IA Tomasz Delega
together with
IA Ana Srebrnic
during the
European Club Cup
in North Macedonia
Lake Ohrid 2021



Text by:
IA Tomasz Delega
Chairman of ECU
Arbiters' Council

The difference between a good arbiter and not the best one – episode 2

C

ontinuing, why the arbiter, after the claim, ordered the opponent to complete the scoresheet, giving him the scoresheet of the player? Probably he intended to follow 8.5.2 *If only one player has not kept score under Article 8.4, he must, as soon as either flag has fallen, update his scoresheet completely before moving a piece on the chessboard. Provided it is that player's move, he may use his opponent's scoresheet, but must return it before making a move.* But the mentioned article is about the case, where the player is allowed not to write, in case of no increment is given, but not a general rule for completion of the scoresheet. Moreover, showing the offender the exact places, where he skipped the moves, the arbiter helped him to correct and complete the scoresheet.

So how the correct procedure should look like in such case? Seeing a difference of four moves between both scoresheets, the arbiter should immediately order the offender to keep writing the moves and should give him at least a warning, as a first penalty form article 12.9 (depending on the stage of the game and importance of violation). It is not the matter of arbiter to help the offender to complete the scoresheet. If the offender is not able to have a correct scoresheet, the arbiter should use next, more strict penalty form article 12.9 and finally should declare the game lost by the offending player based on article 12.9.6. The difference between not the best arbiter and a good one is that good one is able, based on his experience as a player, catch all nuances that may affect the chess game.