

E-boards as a useful tool for chess arbiters

Since my childhood I was always interested in computers and modern technologies.

As a teenager I got a chance to be one of the first arbiters from Slovak Chess Federation to learn and work with serial DGT boards.

It was sometimes tricky to reproduce and insert games correctly from scoresheets after the game, specially when players went into time troubles, so recording of games via E-boards became a great solution for this task. It was something new and I really enjoyed discovering their functions. That time with previous software TOMA it was more difficult to handle it correctly than nowadays with original licensed DGT Livechess software.

When I work as an arbiter I always prefer to use E-boards as much as is possible. It provides a better supervision for the current games. We can easily check possible irregularities of games and find out if illegal move happened during the game which is in progress. When a player claims a draw by three time repetition or 50 moves rule we always need to be sure to give a correct decision during personal analysis. With advanced chess claim tools we can analyze PGN file with games from broadcast to avoid possible mistakes. It is a great way for cross-checking and confirming our decision. We have better overall control of games. We can see from the arbiter's table which game needs a special supervision, when clocks are paused, time trouble is coming or to give another scoresheets.



Czech Youth and Amateur Chess Championship Festival 2022 in Luhacovice covered with 120 E-boards; Photos by: Tomas Danada



When Sofia rule about draw agreement applies we can check if there are enough moves completed and draw is finished correctly.

On the other hand when we use E-boards we need to be more careful about anti-cheating measurements and fair play checks. As we know cheating in chess is a big problem nowadays, there were some cases reported in the last few years.

During festivals with many participants and top level tournaments it is usual to set a time delay for games what can prevent some possibilities of cheating.



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*Photo by:
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*Chess Evolution wireless sets during Chess Ladies 2019
Photo by Denis Nemsak*

Types of electronic chess boards

DGT serial boards during Slovak Closed Championship 2022; Photo below by Patrik Nemergut



When we hear a term of E-board, everyone imagines classical serial DGT board which is most common used.

Their functionality is stable and they are used for years. It is a preferable option for majority of E-board experts. DGT also released Bluetooth, USB and Smart boards which can be connected to the computer with additional functions for online chess playing or training.

For years DGT was the only company which produced E-boards on European market.

Chess evolution company was established in 2011 to create products for chess community. They published chess books written by top level coaches, chess sets with clocks and other accessories. In 2019 they released brand new CE wireless sets, which use Wi-Fi technology for broadcast.

When I heard about this new model, I was impressed by the idea and I wanted to try it. It has completely different architecture, settings and software than DGT that I used to work with for years.

Every new software should be updated to fix some issues and bugs to lead better user interface for clients.

I found some things which could be done better, so I contacted product manager who reviewed my reports and advices, sent it to developers which they fixed. Actual version of software is from my point of view stable. I work with these sets nowadays and everything runs smoothly.

When we compare CE sets to DGT serial boards we got some useful improvements. It works completely wireless. We can set and start all clocks directly from the computer, also it has an option for time delay of broadcast.

I do believe that it can be a powerful alternative in the future.

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All arbiters corner articles of previous ECU E-Magazine editions can be found on the Official website of the ECU Arbiters Council.

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