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Rulebook changes since the 6th edition

Rulebook Changes

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Since the publication of the 6th edition of the US Chess rulebook, changes have been made in US Chess policy or in the wording of the rules. Below is a collection of those changes. Any additions or corrections can be sent to US Chess.

A FREE on-line downloadable version of the rules, chapters 1+2+11 only, digested from the upcoming 7th edition rulebook are available [HERE](#).

US Chess Policy Changes

Please note that policy changes are different than rules changes and often occur more than once per year. Check the US Chess web page for the most current changes.

Scholastic Policy Change: When taking entries for all National Scholastic Chess tournaments with 'under' and/or unrated sections, US Chess will require players to disclose at the time they enter the tournament whether they have one or more ratings in other over the board rating system(s). US Chess shall seriously consider, in consultation with the Scholastic Council and the Ratings Committee, using this rating information to determine section and prize eligibility in accordance with US Chess rules 28D and 28E. This policy will take effect immediately and will be in effect for all future US Chess national scholastic tournaments that have 'under' and/or unrated sections (new, 2014).

Rationale: There are areas of the country in which many scholastic tournaments are being held that are not submitted to US Chess to be rated. As a result, some players come to the national scholastic tournaments with ratings that do not reflect their current playing strength. In order to ensure fair competition, we need to be able to use all available information about these players' true playing strength.

Rules Changes: A Change to the Official Rules of Chess requires a 2/3 vote by the Board of Delegates to become effective. (policy unchanged)

Official Ratings: The official ratings of players are now published once a month in the ratings supplement that is available for download. Unless otherwise stated, the monthly supplement used

to determine a player's official published rating is the same as the month a tournament begins. The supplements are available for Regular, Quick, and Blitz ratings. (Policy unchanged)

(New as of April-1-2016) Rating Floors (as per amended Board motion EB16-038):

- 1.) That the money-based floors in the rating system be reset to \$4,000 for the 1400-1500-1600-1700-1800-1900 and 2000 levels.
- 2.) That any player, retroactive to October 1, 2015, who earned between \$2,000 and \$3,999.99 and was given a money based floor be reset back to their actual achieved rating after that tournament and all subsequent tournaments be re-rated.

For all FIDE rated events in the USA (Note: US Chess policy for submitting FIDE rated events as of 1/1/16), both the US Chess TD Certification level and the FIDE Arbiter level need to be appropriate for the event run, in order to be both US Chess rated and FIDE rated.

- 1.) For non-norm events, the Chief TD for US Chess rating purposes **MUST** be a Senior TD and a Licensed NA/FA or IA. The tournament will not be US Chess rated and not submitted to FIDE if the Chief TD is not qualified to direct the event. The same Chief should/must be listed on the FIDE rating report as the Chief Arbiter.
- 2.) For FIDE norm events in the US, the Chief TD must be a licensed FA or IA. The event will not be US Chess rated nor submitted to FIDE if the Chief is not a licensed FA or IA. The same Chief TD on the US Chess MSA report should/must be the same Chief Arbiter listed on the FIDE report.
- 3.) It is acceptable for a FIDE-only rated event in the USA to have a Chief Arbiter that is not a US Chess member nor a US Chess TD. This will be submitted to FIDE as long as the event has an appropriately licensed Arbiter and pays US Chess the FIDE fee plus a possible small administrative fee.
- 4.) For all FIDE rated events registered by the office with FIDE, there must be an appropriately licensed Arbiter listed as Chief TD. Without this listing, the tournament will not be registered with FIDE.

US Chess is announcing the following changes to its policies for submitting US events to FIDE for rating.

The following changes became effective August 1, 2016.

US Chess will charge a \$60 administrative fee to US Chess affiliates for all FIDE rated events, except for those submitted by exempt organizations.

US Chess will offer a \$40 discount off the administrative fee if a US Chess affiliate submits a FIDE rated event prepared using a pairing program that is compatible with both FIDE requirements and the FIDE General Data Exchange Format (also known as the Krause format).

US Chess will charge its affiliates the rating fees collected by FIDE as defined in Section 9 of the FIDE Financial Regulations, <http://www.fide.com/fide/handbook.html?id=3&view=category>.

The Executive Director, or designee, may adjust the fees on a monthly basis, with a month notice, based on changes to FIDE policy, the current currency exchange rate, and the applicable bank fees.

The following changes become effective January 1, 2017.

Beginning January 1, 2017, US Chess will require any FIDE rated events to be submitted using a pairing program that is compatible with FIDE requirements and the FIDE General Data Exchange Format (also known as the Krause format). After that date, any events not submitted in accordance with these standards will not be submitted to FIDE for rating, and will instead be returned to the submitting affiliate, which must then re-submit the events in the proper format.

Please go to <http://www.uschess.org/content/blogsection/65/733/> then choose Links to FIDE Documents to learn more about this new procedure, as well as other tips and suggestions from our FIDE Rating Officer, Grant Oen (Manager of FIDE Ratings, FIDE and US Chess Titles and Certifications), that will help you make a seamless transition in this new procedure. If you have any questions, please contact Grant at: grant.oen@uschess.org.

The following changes become effective March 1, 2017.

The good faith deposit will be increased to \$50.

Summary of 2019 US Chess Rules Changes

14D. Insufficient material to continue. Replacement wording that makes the rule clearer.

14E. Insufficient material to win on time. Replacement wording that makes the rule clearer.

35F10e. Optional assistance for disabled players. Replacement wording to allow more duties that can be performed by the assistant.

35F10g. Optional assistance for disabled players. New added wording to allow more duties that can be performed by the assistant.

Code of Ethics. Added wording to item 7 to cover US Chess employees.

Summary of 2018 US Chess Rules Changes

9D. Pawn Promotion. New wording makes the procedure of promoting a pawn clearer. Now the pawn is considered touched and must be promoted to the unreleased piece touching the promotion square.

10H. Piece touched off the board. Wording change to be consistent with rule 9D. Once the piece off the board touches the promotion square the pawn must be promoted to that piece.

Variation (unannounced) 28L2a. Giving the bye to a higher rated player. A variation that need not be announced in advance was added to rule 28L2. The variation allows assigning the bye to a higher rated player, rather than the lowest rated player, in the lowest score group in order to improve color assignments for the entire group.

29E8. Variation (unannounced) team pairings take precedence over color equalization. A variation that need not be announced in advance was added to rule 28E. Variation 29E8 avoids pairing players from the same team as a higher priority than equalizing player assigned colors in team/individual tournaments.

Chapter 6: US Chess Code Of Ethics. New Chapter 6 plus Rule 7e revisions.

TD Certification Rule 14. Category I. A new TD TIP was added regarding FIDE/US Chess TD certification for dual rated FIDE/US Chess tournaments.

TD Certification Rule 6. Applicants. A new TD TIP was added regarding TD certification requirements and the eligibility of various tournaments towards those requirements.

TD Certification Rule 20. Category R. The Round Robin requirement changed from eight players with a mean player rating average of 1800 to six players with a mean player average of 1400.

Summary of 2017 US Chess Rules Changes

Rule 11A. Illegal move in last ten moves: Added wording regarding time pressure and time recovered by players.

Rule 11D1. Illegal move in time pressure: Wording defining “time pressure” was added.

Rule 11H. Director corrects illegal move in non sudden death. Rule name changed (**Director corrects illegal move *outside of time pressure***) along with added wording regarding non-time pressure situations.

Rule 14G. Both flags down in sudden death: Added wording regarding the observation of the flag fall and the game result.

Rule 16D. Special rules for time pressure: Deleted wording.

Rule 16D1. Illegal moves: Wording deleted.

Rule 16P1. Delay or increment not set: A new rule dealing with how to address the situation with clocks that are not set with the proper delay or increment.

Rule 16Q. Interruption of game: Added wording defining “interruption.”

Rule 16R. No time adjustment for reinstated position: Rule name change and deleted wording.

Chapter 6: US Chess Code Of Ethics. New Chapter as of 10/6/16

Chapter 8 Rule 5 (Rating Floors) replaced paragraph 1.

Blitz: An editor's Note at the start of the chapter was added.

Blitz: Rule 7c has all new wording regarding the won game.

Blitz: Rule 8 added wording after “Defining a draw” to make clear which draw claims are allowed.

Summary of 2016 US Chess Rules Changes

Rule 5C1: Both players must have the same time control. Addresses “Time odds” games not being ratable along with an additional TD TIP.

Rule 5E: Recommended Increment or delay: Old rule 5E is replaced with recommended increment and delay settings.

Rule 5E1: Increment or delay with mixed time controls: Subrule added to new rule 5E with wording addressing mixed time controls.

Rule 5E2: Organizer fails to specify increment or delay: Subrule added to new rule 5E with wording addressing the lack of a specified increment or delay.

Rule 5F: Standard timer: The entire text was replaced.

Rule 5F1: Standard timer for increment time controls: Defines the clock used for increment time controls.

Rule 5F1a: Increment capable clock not available: What to do when an increment clock is not available while listing preferred clocks.

Rule 5F1b: Setting a non-increment capable clock for use with an increment time control: How to set non-increment clocks used in increment time controls.

Rule 5F1b1: Variation:

How the organizer may specify a different time control for Non-increment clocks.

5F2: Standard timer for delay time controls: Defines the clock that is used for delay time controls.

Rule 5F2a: Delay capable clock not available: What to do if a delay capable clock is not available for a delay time control.

Rule 5F2a1: Variation: How the organizer may specify a different time control for Non-DELAY clocks.

Rule 5F3: Standard timer for time controls with neither delay nor increment: Defines which clocks can be used when a delay clock is not available for a delay time control.

5F4: Digital clock preferred over analog clock: In all cases, a digital clock is preferred over an analog clock plus an added TD TIP

Rule 5F5: Replacement of non-standard timer in increment and delay time controls: The steps to take when a late arriving player substitutes a preferred increment or delay clock for a non-standard clock

Rule 5F6: Same clock used for the entire game.

Rule 5F7: Players responsible for knowing how to set the clock.

Rule 14H: New wording eliminating insufficient losing chances.

Variation 14H: Old rule 14H as an unannounced variation.

TD Certification: Rule 14: Added a TD TIP regarding FIDE/US Chess dual rated tournaments.

Rule 42C: Standard Clocks in games without sudden death: Text replaced with “See rule 5F3.”

Rule 42D: Delay clock preferable in sudden death: Text replaced with “See rule 5F2.”

Rule 42E: Increment clock preferable in increment time controls: Text replaced with “See rule 5F1.”

TD Certification Rules 15N3 and 15N4: Changed wording in example regarding National Open.

TD Certification Rule 28. Limitations: Changed TD Tip regarding FIDE FA and IA credit available to Local TDs.

TD Certification Rule 32. Limitations: Added wording regarding types of events Senior TDs may/may not direct.

TD Certification Rule 42. Title: Added TD Tip regarding FIDE certification.

TD Certification Rule 43. Qualifications: Added TD Tip regarding FIDE certification.

TD Certification Rule 45. Limitations: Added wording to TD Tip regarding FIDE certification.

Chapter 8 Rule 1. Rated games: Added a paragraph defining the terms established rating and provisional rating.

Summary of 2015 US Chess Rules Changes

The following notes summarize the rules changes since the publication of the 6th edition of the rulebook. For the exact wording please refer to the US Chess Rules Changes below.

5B2. Advanced publicity time controls need to contain both the base time control and the delay/increment.

10I2. When castling, the King must be touched first.

10I2 (Variation I). Castling is allowed if the Rook is touched first.

14H2. The 6th edition 14H2 was replaced with wording from the 5th edition.

14K. The 6th edition rule 14K was deleted.

14K (new). The TD (tournament director) can declare a draw if the same position has appeared 5 times in a row. The TD can declare a draw if 75 moves have been made without a pawn move or piece capture

21L1. The “good faith” deposit amount included when filing an appeal can be determined by the ED.

32B1. Special prizes, above and beyond the typical prize fund, should be announced and designated.

32B3. When pooling prizes, no player can receive a prize larger than the largest amount they would be eligible for without the split.

33D1. Added wording regarding announcing special prizes.

32F. Added a “See also 33D1.”

32G. Added a “See also 33D1.”

TD Certification: Rule 10. Chief TD has new wording regarding the Chief TD’s presence at the site.

TD Certification: Rule 14. Category I changed the wording to clarify FIDE arbiter requirements and US Chess TD compliance.

TD Certification: Rule 21. Category T deleted wording for the 12 teams requirement.

Blitz: Added to rule 7d wording regarding placing a king next to a king.

Blitz: Rule 14 deleted some wording regarding the claim of a win.

Blitz: Rule 16 was eliminated.

Blitz: Rules 17 – 19 were renumbered as 16 – 18.

Errata: A list of technical corrections to rules 5C, 11F, 19E, 28A, 28C, 28C1, 29E, 29J, Chapter 8 (US Chess Rating System), and Chapter 13 (About The United States Chess Federation).

US Chess Rules Changes

(Replacement rule 5B2 as of 1/1/15.)

5B2.

In all advance publicity which specifies the time control, the organizer is to indicate the full time control, including the delay or increment, as minutes (mm) and seconds (ss), e.g. G/90 inc/30 (or +30); G/30 d/5; G/10 d3; G/5 d/0. The time control must be specified in Tournament Life Announcements and should be specified in other publicity such as flyer mailings, email and on web sites. It is acceptable for abbreviated publicity to refer the reader to more complete tournament details posted elsewhere.

(New subrule regarding time odds and players having the same time control, as of 1/1/16)

5C1. Both players must have the same time control.

For a game to be ratable, the same time control must apply to both players. “Time odds” games (games in which the time control assigns the two players different base times) are not ratable.

TD TIP: *The director may apply penalties against a player's time before the game begins, causing the players to start the game with different times on the clock. This does not affect the ratability of the game.*

(Replacement rule 5E including new subrules 5E1 and 5E2, as of 1/1/16.)

5E. Recommended increment or delay.

For a mixed or repeating time control, or for a base time of 30 minutes or more, an increment or delay in the range of 5 to 30 seconds is recommended. For a base time of more than 10 minutes and less than 30 minutes, an increment or delay of 3 seconds is recommended. For a base time of 10 minutes or less, an increment or delay of 2 seconds is recommended.

5E1. Increment or delay with mixed time controls.

If a mixed time control includes increment or delay, the increment or delay should apply starting with the first move of the game, and the increment or delay time should be the same for all time control segments in the game.

5E2. Organizer fails to specify increment or delay.

If the organizer fails to specify an increment or delay time in the time control (which may be zero to indicate no increment or delay), the minimum recommended delay specified in rule 5E shall apply.

(Replacement rule 5F with variations, subrules, and TD TIPS, as of 1/1/16.)

5F. Standard timer.

5F1. Standard timer for increment time controls.

An increment capable clock is the standard timer for use with an increment time control.

5F1a. Increment capable clock not available.

If an increment capable clock is not available, one of the following clocks, listed in order of preference from most to least preferred, may be used:

1. A delay capable clock whose delay can be set for the increment time.
2. A delay capable clock whose delay cannot be set for the increment time.
3. A digital clock that is not delay capable.
4. An analog clock.

5F1b. Setting a non-increment capable clock for use with an increment time control.

In all cases, each player starts with the clock set for the base time. If the clock is delay capable and the delay can be set the same as the increment time, the clock should be so configured. Otherwise, if the clock is delay capable, set the delay time to the maximum possible value that does not exceed the increment time. If the clock is not delay capable, the clock is set to the base time.

5F1b1. Variation.

The organizer may specify a different time control to be used with clocks that are capable of neither increment nor delay. This must be specified in all pre-tournament publicity that specifies the time control.

5F2. Standard timer for delay time controls.

A delay capable clock is the standard timer for use with a delay time control.

5F2a. Delay capable clock not available.

If a delay capable (or Bronstein capable) clock is not available, a digital clock that is not delay capable may be used. If a digital clock is not available, an analog clock may be used. In all cases, the clock is set so that each player starts with the base time.

5F2a1. Variation.

The organizer may specify a different time control to be used with clocks that are not delay capable. This must be specified in all pre-tournament publicity that specifies the time control.

5F3. Standard timer for time controls with neither delay nor increment.

The standard timer for a time control with neither delay nor increment is a digital clock. If a digital clock is not available, an analog clock may be used.

5F4. Digital clock preferred over analog clock.

In all cases, a digital clock is preferred over an analog clock.

***TD TIP:** A digital clock operates silently. It can be set so that both players have exactly the same amount of time. Digital clocks time the game more precisely and are not subject to having the two sides of the clock run at different rates.*

5F5. Replacement of non-standard timer in increment and delay time controls.

If either player arrives late for the start of the game, and a clock without delay or increment has already been started the player has the right to furnish and substitute a properly set delay or increment capable clock prior to the determination of black's first move. The player substituting the delay or increment capable clock must also transfer the elapsed times shown on the original clock to the replacement clock without any additional adjustments (except to correct any errors in the display of the elapsed time).

5F6. Same clock used for the entire game.

Except as provided in rules 5F5 and 14H2a, once a game starts, the same clock must be used throughout the entire game. If a defective clock must be replaced as described in rule 16O, the replacement clock shall be set in the same manner as the clock being replaced. See also 5F5, Replacement of non-standard timer in increment and delay time controls; 14H2a, The claim is unclear and a delay clock is available for the game; and 16O, Defective clocks.

5F7. Players responsible for knowing how to set the clock.

Players, not tournament directors, are responsible for knowing how to properly set their digital clocks. In any particular game, if the player providing the clock can not properly set the clock, the opponent may choose which legal clock is to be used. See also 16B, How to set clocks.

(Added wording to clarify pawn promotion procedure and the piece touching the promotion square, as of 1/1/18)

9D. Pawn promotion.

In the case of the legal promotion of a pawn, the move is determined with no possibility of change when the pawn has been removed from the chessboard and the player's hand has released the new appropriate piece on the promotion square, and completed when that player presses the clock (5H). If the player has released the pawn on the last rank, the move is not yet determined, but the player no longer has the right to play the pawn to another square. **The choice of piece is finalized when the piece has touched the square of promotion, regardless of whether the pawn has been physically touched or placed on the promotion square. Once a piece has touched the promotion square a pawn must be promoted to that piece on that square, provided that the move is legal.** See also 8F6, Pawn promotion and 10H, Piece touched off the board.

(Replaced wording to avoid conflict with rule 9D, as of 1/1/18)

10H. Piece touched off the board.

There is no penalty for touching a piece that is off the board. A player who advances a pawn to the last rank and then touches a piece off the board is not obligated to promote the pawn to the piece touched until that piece ~~has been released on~~ **touches** the promotion square. See also 8F6, Pawn promotion and 9D, Pawn promotion.

(New rule 10I2 with a variation, as of 1/1/15.)

10I2. Rook touched first.

If a player intending to castle touches the rook first, castling is not allowed and the player must move the rook as required by rule 10B.

10I2. (Variation I) Rook touched first.

If a player intending to castle touches the rook first, there is no penalty except if castling is illegal, the player must move the rook if legal. This variation does not need to be announced in advanced publicity but should be announced at the start of the tournament.

(Added wording regarding time pressure and recovered time by players as of 1/1/17)

11A. Illegal move during the last ten moves.

If, during a game, it is found that one of either player's last ten moves was illegal *and neither player is in time pressure (11D1)*, the position shall be reinstated to what it was before the illegal move. *The players do not recover the time used after the illegal move.* The game shall then continue by applying Rule 10, The Touched Piece, to the move replacing the illegal move. If the position cannot be reinstated, then the illegal move shall stand. Move counters on clocks that have them may be readjusted. **See also** 11H, Director corrects illegal move in non-sudden death and 16R, No time adjustment for reinstated position.

(Wording was added to define “time pressure” as of 1/1/17)

11D1. Illegal move in time pressure.

Time pressure is defined as a situation where either player has less than five minutes left in a time control and the time control does not include an increment or delay of 30 seconds or more. A director should not call attention to illegal moves in time pressure, only the players may make

that claim. If, during the game, in time pressure, a player's claim that one of either player's last two moves was illegal is upheld by the TD, the position shall be reinstated to what it was before the illegal move and the procedure in rule 11A shall be followed, with no adjustment to the time on the clocks.

(Rule name change plus added wording regarding time pressure exception, as of 1/1/17.)

11H. Director corrects illegal move outside of time pressure.

Except in a time pressure situation (11D1), a director who witnesses an illegal move being made shall require the player to replace that move with a legal one in accordance with 10B, Touch-move rule. The time on the clocks shall not be adjusted; however, move counters on clocks that have them may be readjusted. **See also** 11J, Deliberate illegal moves and 21D, Intervening in games.

(Replacement wording to make 14D and 14E clearer as of 1/1/19)

14D. Insufficient material to continue.

The game is drawn when one of the following endings ~~arises~~ **exists as of the most recently determined legal move**, in which the possibility of a win is excluded for either side.

14E. Insufficient material to win on time.

The game is drawn even when a player exceeds the time limit if one of the following conditions ~~arises~~ **exists as of the most recently determined legal move**.

(Added wording regarding the observation of the flag fall and final game result, as of 1/1/17)

14G. Both flags down in sudden death.

The game is drawn if both flags are down in a sudden death time control and either player points this out. If a player whose flag is still up claims a win on time but does not stop the clock in time to prevent the flag from falling, the game is drawn, unless the flag fall was observed by a director or independent witness. **See also** 14G2, Players apparently unaware of situation; 15H, Reporting of results; 16T, Both players exceed time control; and 16Y, Assisting players with time management prohibited.

(Rule 14H from the 6th edition is replaced as the main rule and is no longer in effect, as of 1/1/16.)

14H. Claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death.

No claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death will be allowed.

(The former rule 14H—allowing ILC claims—is appended to new replacement rule 14H as a variation. Appended rule Variation 14H will still allow ILC claims in tournaments that authorize its use instead of the main rule, as of 1/1/16.)

Variation 14H. Claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death.

This variation need not be announced in advance publicity.

(Editor's Note: rules 14H1 – 14H6 remain in effect, but only as part of Variation 14H. The 14H2 corrections below remain in effect and are included in Variation 14H only. References to 14H in the printed copy of the 6th edition will now generally refer to Variation 14H.)

(6th edition editorial correction: Replace 14H2 with the following, effective 2014)

14H2. Resolution of Variation 14H claim.

When ruling, the director should not consider the ratings of those playing. A low-rated player who claims a draw vs. a Master should obtain the same ruling as a Master with the same position who claims a draw vs. a low-rated player. The director should also not consider the times on the clocks. See also 14H3, Conferring with players.

The director has four possible ways to resolve the claim.

***TD TIP:** Except for rule 5F5 there is no rule allowing players to ask for a properly set delay clock to be placed on their game, which would replace an analog clock or an improperly set delay or increment clock. Only the TD can initiate placing a clock with time delay capabilities on a game after a Variation 14H claim has been made and the steps of 14H2 have been applied. As a result, the player wishing to place a time delay clock on the game must first make a Variation 14H claim.*

***TD TIP:** Remember a Variation 14H draw claim is first a draw offer (Rule 14, The Drawn Game).*

14H2a. The claim is unclear and a delay clock is available for the game.

A director who believes the claim is neither clearly correct (14H2c) nor clearly incorrect (14H2d), but is instead uncertain as to the correctness of the claim, may place a delay clock on the game, setting it as follows: The claimant gets half of the claimant's remaining time (rounded to the nearest second); the opponent's time is unadjusted; the time delay is set for the standard delay announced at the start of the tournament. After the claimant's clock is started, the Variation 14H draw request by the claimant becomes a draw offer under 14B3, Draw offer

before moving. Penalties for rule infractions remain standard. The claimant may win, lose, or draw the game.

14H2b. The claim is unclear and a delay clock is not available for the game.

A director who believes the claim is neither clearly correct (14H2c) nor clearly incorrect (14H2d), but is uncertain as to the correctness of the claim, and does not have a delay clock available, may:

1. Deny the claim while inviting a later re-claim. There is no adjustment of either player's time. After the claimant's clock is started, the Variation 14H draw request by the claimant becomes a draw offer under 14B3, Draw offer before moving. Penalties for rule infractions remain standard. The claimant may win, lose, or draw the game.
2. Watch the game while reserving judgment on the claim. The director should make every effort to resolve the claim before the flag of either player falls (5G). There is no adjustment of either player's time. After the claimant's clock is started, the Variation 14H draw request by the claimant also becomes a draw offer under 14B3, Draw offer before moving. Penalties for rule infractions remain standard. The claimant may win, lose, or draw the game.

14H2c. The claim is clearly correct.

A director who believes the claim is clearly correct should declare the game drawn. The draw shall be awarded if the director believes that a Class C player would have little chance to lose the position against a Master with both players having ample time. The exact losing chances of any position cannot be calculated, but a director wishing a more precise standard may consider little to mean less than 10 percent. A director unsure whether a position meets the above standard should use option 14H2a or 14H2b. See also 14I, Advice on claims of insufficient losing chances in sudden death under rule Variation 14H.

14H2d. The claim is clearly incorrect.

A director who believes the claim is clearly incorrect should deny the claim and may subtract up to one minute from the claimant's remaining time. After the claimant's clock is started, the Variation 14H draw request by the claimant also becomes a draw offer under 14B3, Draw offer before moving. Penalties for rule infractions remain standard. The claimant may win, lose, or draw the game. See also 14I, Advice on claims of insufficient losing chances in sudden death under rule Variation 14H.

***TD TIP:** If a director chooses to resolve the claim by enforcing 14H2a, The claim is unclear, a delay clock is available for the game, or 14H2b, The claim is unclear, a delay clock is not available for the game, then the director should inform the claimant and opponent that when the claimant's clock is started that rule 14B3, Draw offer before moving, is in effect. The opponent has the right to ask the claimant to make a move before the draw offer is rejected or accepted by the opponent; however, if the claimant makes a checkmating (13A) or stalemating (14A) move, the game is over.*

TD TIP: Applying rule 14H2a, The claim is unclear, a delay clock is available for the game, is the preferred method of resolving a Variation 14H claim for directors who wish to ensure the result of the game is determined by the players, rather than any outside influence.

(Delete 14K. Increment Games, as of 1/1/15)

~~14K. Increment Games:~~

~~A claim of Insufficient Losing Chances does not apply in increment games.~~

(Editor's Note: 14K. Increment Games was deleted because the same essential wording can be found elsewhere in the 6th edition; however, the concept that Insufficient Losing Chances does not apply in increment games still applies.)

(Add new rule 14K. Director declares draw for lack of progress, as of 1/1/15)

14K. Director declares draw for lack of progress.

If one or both of the following occur(s) then the TD may declare the game drawn:

1. The same position has appeared, as in 14C, for at least five consecutive alternate moves by each player.
2. Any consecutive series of 75 moves have been completed by each player without the movement of any pawn and without any capture. If the last move resulted in checkmate, that shall take precedence

(Deleted wording 1/1/17)

16D. Special rules for time pressure.

See 15B, Scorekeeping in time pressure, non-sudden death time control and 15C, Scorekeeping in time pressure, sudden death.

(Deleted wording as of 1/1/17)

16D1. Illegal moves.

See 11D1, Illegal move in time pressure.

(A new rule addressing the procedures to use when delay or increment is not set, but should be, as of 1/1/17.)

16P1. Delay or increment not set.

If a delay- or increment-capable clock is used at an event with a delay or increment time control and the delay or increment is not set, this is handled in the same fashion as an erroneously set clock. The delay or increment should be set for the remainder of the game. The director should use his or her best judgement when determining the clock settings.

(Added wording defining “interruption” as of 1/1/17)

16Q Interruption of game.

If the game is to be interrupted for some reason beyond the control of the players, such as a defective clock, disruption of the pieces, re-establishing the position after an illegal move, making the claim of a draw or win or a rules violation, or for any other reason that assistance by the tournament director may be required both clocks should be stopped by one of the players. When doing so, the player must state the reason for stopping the clocks, and see the director if necessary to resolve the situation. See also 5I, Stopping the clock; 13C6, Claimant's clock; 21F, Player requests for rulings; and 21F1, Timing of requests.**21L1. Procedure.**

(Rule name change and deleted wording as of 1/1/17)

16R. Illegal Moves

See 11A and 11D Illegal moves. See also: 16Q. Interruption of game

(Delete: “A good-faith deposit of \$25 must be included with the appeal.” Replace with new wording boldfaced below, as of 1/1/15).

21L1

Appeals in writing must be postmarked within seven days of the end of the tournament to the US Chess office. Appeals submitted after the seven-day deadline may be considered at the discretion of the committee hearing the appeal. Appeals may be submitted via e-mail, but the business office or the committee(s) hearing the appeal may require a signed statement. The office will refer an appeal to the appropriate committee(s) but may immediately reject obviously groundless appeals. Most appeals will be referred to the Rules Committee, but some appeals may be more appropriate for the Tournament Director Certification Committee or the Ethics Committee. **A good-faith deposit must be included with the appeal. The executive director shall from time to time review and set the required deposit amount in consultation with those committees that handle appeals.** The deposit will be returned unless the ruling authority finds the appeal to be groundless and rules that the deposit is to be forfeited. US Chess reserves the right to make final decisions concerning the rules and procedures that govern its competitions. **See also** 24A, Rules Committee; and 24B, Appeals to US Chess.

(Added unannounced variation to rule 28L2 for assigning the bye, as of 1/1/18)

Variation (unannounced) 28L2a. Giving the bye to a higher rated player.

Give the bye to a higher rated player if doing so improves the overall color allocation for the lowest score group, subject to the limits specified in rules 29E5a and 29E5b. See also 29E5a, The 80-point rule; and 29E5b, The 200-point rule.

(Added unannounced variation to rule 29E regarding team priority over color priority in assigning pairings in individual/team tournaments as of 1/1/18.)

29E8. Variation (unannounced) team pairings take precedence over color equalization.

In a combined swiss individual and team tournament, the need to avoid pairing players from the same team shall take precedence over the need to equalize colors.

(Added wording to 32B1, as of 1/1/15)

32B1. One cash prize per player.

No winner shall receive more than one cash award. The award may be one full cash prize if a clear winner, or parts of two or more cash prizes if tied with others. Prizes such as biggest upset, best game, or brilliancy are standard exceptions from this rule. **Any other special prizes should be announced and designated as such.** A clear winner of more than one cash prize must be awarded the most valuable prize.

(Added wording to Rule 32B3—effective 2014.)

Rule 32B3. Ties for more than one prize.

If winners of different prizes tie with each other, all the cash prizes involved shall be summed and divided equally among the tied winners unless any of the winners would receive more money by winning or dividing only a particular prize for which others in the tie are ineligible. **No player may receive an amount greater from the division of those prizes than the largest prize for which he would be eligible if there were no tie. No more than one cash prize shall go into the pool for each winner.** For examples see 32B5, Offering a choice of prizes.

(Added **See also** to rules 32F and 32G, as of 1/1/15)

32F. Trophies.

No player should receive more than one individual trophy or plaque, the most desirable to which he or she is entitled. It is recommended that no class, age, or school grade trophy be as desirable as any of the place trophies. A player should not have a choice of trophies, since such a choice would decide which trophies are available to be awarded to others. **See Also** 33D1 one non-monetary prize per player.

32G. Other non-cash prizes.

No player shall receive more than one non-cash, non-trophy prize, the most valuable to which he or she is entitled. **See Also** 33D1 one non-monetary prize per player.

(Added wording to rule 33D1, as of 1/1/15)

33D1. One non-monetary prize per player.

No winner shall receive more than one non-monetary award. Prizes such as biggest upset, best game, or brilliancy are standard exceptions from this rule. **Any other prizes should be announced and designated as such.** A clear winner of more than one non-monetary prize must be awarded the highest-ranked prize (ranking is described below).

(Replacement wording so that more duties can be performed by assistants to disabled players as of 1/1/19)

35F10. Optional assistance. (e)

e. to claim a win on time for the blind or disabled player or inform the blind or disabled player when the opponent has touched a piece without moving it.

(New duties that can be performed by assistants for disabled players as of 1/1/19)

35F10. Optional assistance. (g)

g. to pause the clock and summon a tournament director at the request of the blind or disabled player.

(Replacement text for 42C, 42D, and 42E, as of 1/1/16)

42C. Standard clocks in games without sudden death.

See rule 5F3.

42D. Delay clock preferable in sudden death.

See rule 5F2.

42E. Increment clock preferable in increment time controls.

See rule 5F1.

(Editor's Note: rule 42E1 remains and is not replaced)

Chapter 6: US Chess Code Of Ethics

(New Chapter 6 as of 10/6/16 + rule 7e revisions as of 1/1/18)

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1.** The purpose of this code of ethics is to set forth standards to which the conduct of players, tournament directors, sponsors, and other individuals and entities participating in the affairs of the United States Chess Federation (US Chess), including tournaments and other activities sponsored by or sanctioned by US Chess, should conform; to specify sanctions for conduct that does not conform to such standards; and to specify the procedures by which alleged violations are to be investigated and, if necessary, the appropriate sanctions imposed.
- 2.** The standards, procedures, and sanctions set forth in this code of ethics are not equivalent to criminal laws and procedures. Rather, they concern the rights and privileges of US Chess membership, including, but not limited to, the privilege of participating in tournaments, events, or other activities as a member of US Chess.
- 3.** The standards, procedures, and sanctions set forth in this code of ethics shall apply only to actions and behavior by:
 - (a) Members of US Chess, that occur in connection with tournaments or other activities sponsored by or sanctioned by US Chess; and
 - (b) Individuals and entities acting in an official capacity as officers or representatives of US Chess. This code shall not apply to actions or behavior by employees of US Chess acting in the scope of their duties. Such actions fall instead under the province of the Executive Board.

4. Each member of US Chess and each participant in a US Chess activity shall be bound by this code of ethics.

THE US CHESS ETHICS COMMITTEE

5. The US Chess Ethics Committee is appointed in accordance with procedures consistent with the bylaws of US Chess. The committee exists to consider allegations of unethical conduct at or in connection with events sanctioned by US Chess, and allegations of unethical conduct involving US Chess and its activities, in accordance with the standards and procedures contained in this code. The committee will exercise all other duties as may be assigned by the Bylaws or by action of the US Chess Board of Delegates.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

6. The actions and behavior of players, tournament directors, sponsors, and other individuals and entities participating in US Chess activities, or in events sponsored by or sanctioned by US Chess, shall be lawful and in accordance with all US Chess rules and regulations, and consistent with the principles of fair play, good sportsmanship, honesty, and respect for the rights of others. The following is a list of examples of actions and behavior that are considered unethical. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, and any action or behavior that is unlawful or violates US Chess rules and regulations, or is inconsistent with the principles of fair play, good sportsmanship, honesty, and respect for the rights of others, may be considered to fall within the scope of this code of ethics.

(a) Intentional violations of tournament regulations, or of any other regulations pertaining to USCF activities and goals, particularly after being warned.

(b) Cheating in a game of chess by illegally giving, receiving, offering, or soliciting advice; or by consulting written sources; or by tampering with clocks; or in any other manner.

(c) Deliberately losing a game for payment, or to lower one's rating, or for any other reason; or attempting to induce another player to do so. Deliberately failing to play at one's best in a game, in any manner inconsistent with the principles of good sportsmanship, honesty, or fair play.

(d) Deliberately misrepresenting one's playing ability in order to compete in a tournament or division of a tournament intended for players of lesser ability; players with foreign ratings are expected to disclose those ratings.

(e) Participating in a tournament under a false name or submitting a falsified rating report.

(f) Participating in a tournament while under suspension.

(g) Purposely giving false information in order to circumvent or violate any rule or regulation or goal recognized by US Chess.

(h) Attempting to interfere with the rights of any US Chess member, such as by barring someone from entering a US Chess-sanctioned event for personal reasons. Generally, no individual should be barred from a US Chess-sanctioned event for which he or she meets the advertised qualifications, without appropriate due process, and then only for behavior inconsistent with the principles of this code and/or the rules of chess. If a ban on future participation is imposed, the individual should be notified of the ban prior to his attempting to appear at future events.

(i) Violating federal, state, or local laws while participating in activities that are associated with US Chess.

PROCEDURES

7. Any US Chess member may initiate procedures under this code of ethics by filing a complaint in a timely manner with the US Chess Ethics Committee. A good-faith deposit must be submitted by the complainant. The amount of the deposit shall be set by the US Chess Executive Director, who shall review it from time to time in consultation with the Ethics Committee. The deposit shall be returned unless the Committee rules that the case is frivolous. The Committee may determine whether to return the deposit even before it determines jurisdictional and merit questions. The Committee may also, by a two-thirds vote, accept complaints submitted without the deposit. **Complaints submitted by a US Chess employee as a result of actions related to official US Chess activities shall not require the payment of the deposit** (as of 1-1-19).

In the case of any accusation that does not fall clearly under the Standards of Conduct above, the Ethics Committee shall have the authority to decide whether the alleged conduct is within the scope of the code of ethics. In the case of each alleged violation that is within the scope of the code of ethics, the following steps shall occur in a timely manner:

- (a) A factual inquiry shall be made by the Ethics Committee, assisted as necessary by the US Chess staff. Previous findings of the Ethics Committee or other US Chess entities may be included among the evidence considered by the Ethics Committee, if relevant to the circumstances of the present case. As a part of such an inquiry, any person accused of unethical conduct shall have the right to examine the evidence against him or her, the right to respond to the accusation, and the right to produce written evidence in his or her behalf.
- (b) When issuing a decision, the Ethics Committee will provide a rationale for its decision to the parties involved and to the Executive Board.
- (c) Appropriate sanctions, if any, shall be recommended to the Executive Board by the Ethics Committee. In recommending sanctions, the Ethics Committee may consider

- any previous ruling or finding of the Ethics Committee, or other US Chess entity, pertaining to the past conduct of the person being sanctioned. In recommending sanctions, the person being recommended for sanctions must be informed of this fact. Any person against whom sanctions have been recommended shall be promptly notified. If appeals are filed, the Ethics Committee shall be promptly notified.
- (d) Except as specified in 7(f) sanctions recommended to the Executive Board shall be deemed final unless appealed to the Executive Board by the person or persons upon whom the sanctions have been imposed, or upon the initiative of any member of the Executive Board. Such an appeal must be made within thirty days of the date that notification of recommended sanctions occurred, except that the Executive Board may extend the deadline for appeal if in its judgment an unavoidable delay in communications or other valid cause prevented a timely appeal. If an appeal has not been filed by the deadline the recommended sanctions shall be placed into effect. No appeals shall be permitted in cases where the Ethics Committee has found in favor of the defendant and has recommended no sanctions.
 - (e) Upon appeal, a review of the facts and the appropriateness of the recommended sanction shall be undertaken by the Executive Board. The person against whom the sanction has been recommended, as well as the person filing the initial complaint, shall be given notice of the time and place the Executive Board will review the case. The person against whom the sanctions have been recommended shall have the right to appear before the Board and present evidence from the record. Any person appearing before the Executive Board upon appeal may be represented by counsel with the permission and at the sole discretion of the Executive Board. In all appeals the recommended sanctions imposed by the Ethics Committee shall not be in effect until the appeal hearing is completed. The recommended sanctions shall be either confirmed, modified, or revoked by the Executive Board.
 - (f) If the person against whom sanctions have been recommended is a member of the US Chess Executive Board, he or she may not appeal the sanctions to the Executive Board, but may appeal to the US Chess Board of Delegates at its next scheduled meeting.
 - (g) If any member of the Ethics Committee or of the US Chess Executive Board has a conflict of interest of any kind that might preclude objective participation in the consideration of any case, that person may not act in the capacity of a committee or board member on the case.

SANCTIONS

8. The following are some of the sanctions that may be imposed as a result of the procedures specified above. In unusual cases, other appropriate sanctions may be imposed, or these sanctions may be varied or combined.

- (a) Reprimand. A determination that a member has committed an offense warranting discipline becomes a matter of record, but no further sanction is imposed at the time. A reprimand automatically carries a probation of at least three months, or longer if so specified. If the member is judged guilty of another offense during the probation, he or she is then liable to further sanctions for both offenses.
- (b) Censure. A determination that a member has committed a serious offense warranting discipline becomes a matter of record, but no further sanction is imposed at the time. Censure automatically carries a probation of at least one year, or longer if so specified. If the member is judged guilty of another offense during the probationary period, he or she is then liable to further sanctions for both offenses.
- (c) Suspended sentence with probation. A determination is made that the member has committed an offense warranting discipline. When the discipline is imposed and execution thereof suspended, such suspension shall include probation for at least six months longer than the discipline imposed. If the member is judged guilty of another offense during this period, unless otherwise decreed, the original discipline shall be added to such new discipline as may be imposed for the new offense.
- (d) Suspension. Suspension is a determination that the member has committed an offense warranting abrogation, for a specified period of time, of all membership rights and privileges.
- (e) Expulsion. Expulsion is a determination that a member has committed an offense warranting permanent abrogation of all membership rights and privileges. An expelled member may be readmitted to membership only by the US Chess Executive Board or by the US Chess Board of Delegates.
- (f) Exclusion from events. This is a more selective determination that a member has committed an offense warranting abrogation of the right to participate in certain specified events or activities.

9. If the person being sanctioned is a member of the US Chess Executive Board, the Ethics Committee may recommend to the Executive Board no sanctions other than censure or reprimand, but may also recommend to the Board of Delegates other actions.

10. In the case of every sanction that involves suspension or expulsion, a member may not hold any office in US Chess or participate in any capacity in any event or activity sponsored by or sanctioned by US Chess.

11. The US Chess Business Office shall be informed in writing of all official determinations by the Ethics Committee, and shall record any recommendations of any sanctions. The US Chess Business Office shall inform the Executive Board of any sanctions recommended.

Implementation and modification history: the previous Code of Ethics was replaced in its entirety with the above Code by DM 97-16/ADM 97-24 and passed as amended at the 1997 Annual Meeting. This Code of Ethics was further amended by DM 98-71/ADM 98-80 and the amendments were passed at the 1998 Annual Meeting. This Code of Ethics was further amended by DM 99-75/NDM 99-68 and the amendments were passed at the 1999 Annual Meeting. This Code of Ethics was further amended by DM 04-22/ADM 04-16, DM 04-23/ADM 04-17 and DM 04-25/ ADM 04-19 and the amendments were passed at the 2004 Annual Meeting. This Code of Ethics was further amended by DM 15-20/NDM 15-05 and the amendments were passed at the 2015 Annual meeting. This Code of Ethics was further amended by DM16-31/ADM 16-32, DM 16-51/ADM 16-49, DM16-52/ADM 16-50, DM 16-53/ADM 16-51, DM 16-54/ADM 16-52, DM 16-59/ADM 16-58 and the amendments were passed at the 2016 Annual Meeting. This Code of Ethics was further amended by ADM 17-36 and ADM 17-37 and the amendments were passed at the 2017 Annual Meeting.

Chapter 7: Tournament Director Certification

(Added TD TIP regarding TD tournament requirements eligibility, as of 1/1/18)

6. Applicants.

TD TIP: Tournament categories are backwards compatible for TD credit. For example: A five round Category C tournament (or a single Category C section of a tournament) with 55 players can be used to meet a Category D TD requirement; being the chief assistant at a 180-player five round Category B event can be used to meet a Category D or Category C chief assistant TD requirement.

(New definition of Chief TD as of 1/1/15.)

10. Chief TD.

The Chief TD has the ultimate authority and responsibility for the tournament. The Chief TD of an event is expected to be physically present during tournament play. If the Chief TD must be absent for short periods of time, another certified TD shall be present on-site. The Chief TD should not himself be a player in the tournament. **See also** 21E.

(Addition of 14I.c. as of 1/1/15 plus TD TIP as of 3/15.)

14. Category I.

A Tournament held in the United States that will be submitted to both FIDE and US Chess for rating.

c. Effective January 1, 2014, no tournament will be rated by FIDE without the arbiter being licensed which applies to FIDE Arbiters and International Arbiters. A new category was introduced called the National Arbiter. In US Chess, the National Arbiter must be a SrTD or higher and apply/pay the license fee through the US Chess office in order to direct FIDE rated events.

(TD TIP regarding certification needed to direct at dual rated FIDE/US Chess events, as of 1/1/18)

TD TIP: When a tournament is dual FIDE and US Chess rated the National Arbiters, FIDE Arbiters and/or International Arbiters must be licensed by FIDE and currently certified as US

Chess TDs with the chief TD/Arbiter being the appropriate level to direct the tournament for the event to be rated by FIDE and US Chess; i.e., all TDs of dual rated FIDE/US Chess tournaments (or the FIDE/US Chess rated sections of a tournament) must be certified by both FIDE and US Chess.

(Changed wording for 15N3 and 15N4 regarding National Open reference.)

15. Category N.

Subcategory N3: One section of a N1 tournament where the TD is limited to solving problems and making rulings on the floor only (floor TD). Examples: The K-3 section of the National Elementary Championship or any section of the National Open.

Subcategory N4: One section of a N1 tournament where the TD is limited to the duties of pairings in a backroom capacity using a pairing program (backroom TD). Examples: The K-3 section of the National Elementary Championship or any section of the National Open.

(Round Robin requirement changes from 6 to 8 players with a mean of 1400 instead of 1800, as of 1/1/18)

20. Category R.

A US Chess-rated round robin tournament of ~~eight~~ six or more rated entrants with a mean rating of at least ~~1800~~ 1400, with the mean being calculated by using the ratings of the players in the applicable ratings supplement on the starting date of the event.

(6th edition editorial correction: Eliminate twelve team wording.)

21. Category T.

A US Chess-rated team-vs.-team, or individual/team, Swiss system tournament involving at least fifty players. It is strongly recommended that for these types of tournaments, TDs have experience with computer pairing programs, back room pairing procedures, and on site player contact, or “floor,” problem solving procedures.

28. Limitations.

***TD TIP:** Neither FA nor IA norm experience credit is available at Category I tournaments to Local TDs.*

(Added wording regarding Senior TD tournament restrictions.)

32. Limitations.

A senior TD may not be the Chief TD for Category N tournaments and should not be the Chief TD of Category A tournaments, which includes any tournament, or section of a tournament, expected to draw more than 300 players. Computer assisted senior TDs can be the Chief TD of any tournament or section of a tournament (**excluding category A or category N tournaments**) expected to draw up to 360 players with the aid of one assistant TD.

(Added TD Tips regarding FIDE Certification to rules 42, 43, and 45.)

42. Title.

***TD TIP:** FIDE has other titles and licenses, such as national arbiter (NA).*

43. Qualifications.

***TD TIP:** All applications for titles and licenses must meet FIDE requirements and go through (be submitted by) US Chess.*

45. Limitations.

***TD TIP:** Contact the US Chess office BEFORE any FIDE tournament is run to make sure all US Chess/FIDE current requirements for both the tournament and TD qualifications (experience requirements, fees,...) are met. Category I tournaments have arbiter limitations and qualifications set by FIDE that must be met before they can be submitted to FIDE.*

Chapter 8: The US Chess Rating System

(Added a paragraph to Rated Games that defines established and provisional ratings.)

1. Rated games.

All games played in US Chess-rated events are rated, including games decided by time-forfeit, games decided when a player fails to appear for resumption after an adjournment, and games

played by contestants who subsequently withdraw or are not allowed to continue. Games in which one player makes no move are not rated. There are three separate rating systems. A player's Blitz rating is calculated if he or she participates in events with total playing times of G/5 – G/10. A player's *Quick* rating is calculated if he or she participates in events with a total playing time greater than 10 minutes and less than 30 minutes. A player's *Regular* rating is computed if he or she enters a tournament with the total playing time of G/30 or slower. Games with total playing times of G/30-G/65 are used to calculate both *Regular* and *Quick* ratings at the same time. For an explanation of how to calculate total playing time, **see also 5C, Ratable time controls**.

An established rating is a rating based on at least 26 games. A provisional rating is a rating based on fewer than 26 games. In order to be published in a rating supplement, a rating must be based on at least four games.

(Replacement paragraph 1, as of 1/1/17)

5. Rating floor.

Each rated player has a rating floor. Every player has a personal absolute floor between 100 and 150. A player with an established rating may have a rating floor higher than the absolute floor. In most cases, floors are calculated by subtracting 200 points from the individual's highest rating achieved and setting the last two digits to zero. If a player's highest rating achieved is greater than or equal to 1400 but less than 1500, the individual's floor is 1200. If the highest rating achieved by a player is below 1400, then the individual's floor is the same as his or her absolute floor. No floor can be above 2100 or below 100, except that a player who achieves the Original Life Master (OLM) title is given a floor of 2200. The OLM title is earned by playing 300 games, not necessarily consecutive, with an established rating of 2200 or higher.

Chapter 11: Blitz

Editor's Note:

Most of the US Chess rules for regular and quick chess also apply to blitz chess. This chapter covers the rules that are different for blitz and also restates some of the fundamental rules that apply to all three forms of chess and that are important to blitz.

(All new wording for 7c regarding the won game, as of 1/1/17)

7c.)

Who correctly points out that the opponent's flag has fallen first, at any time before the game is otherwise ended, provided the player has mating material. Mating Material consists of (at a minimum) two minor pieces, a pawn, a rook, or a queen provided it isn't a position where one could claim a draw under rule 8. If a player who claims a time forfeit states the claim with

claimant's flag still up, but then fails to stop the clock in time to avoid also exceeding the time limit, the claim will be void, unless the flag fall was observed by a director or independent witness.

7c.)

~~Whose opponent's flag falls first, at any time before the game is otherwise ended by stopping the clock prior to the player's own clock's flag fall, and who has mating material. Mating material consists of (at a minimum) two minor pieces, a pawn, a rook or a queen provided it isn't a position where one could claim it to be a draw under section 8, [Defining a draw](#).~~

(Added to 7d. as of 1/1/15.)

7d.)

A player who moves his king adjacent to the opponent's king and then attempts to claim a win under this rule based on the opponent's failure to notice the check shall lose the game.

(Added wording after "Defining a draw" to make clear which draw claims are allowed as of 1/1/17)

8.)

Defining a draw.

Except as listed here, draw claims allowed under the regular rules are also allowed under the blitz rules.

A game is a draw:

8a.)

If one of the kings is stalemated.

8b.)

By agreement between the players.

8c.)

If the flag of one player falls after the flag of the other player has already fallen and a win has not been claimed, unless either side mates before noticing that both flags are down.

8d.)

If one player has insufficient mating material when the opponent's flag falls or makes an illegal move. "Insufficient Losing Chances" (ILC) claims are not allowed.

TD TIP: Blitz tournaments allowing "Insufficient Losing Chances" (ILC) claims should be advertised and announced in advance. The TD should be aware that common practice has shown

that in addition to the official Blitz rules that “Insufficient Losing Chances” claims are upheld only:

- 1.) If both players each have just one identical piece and if neither side can show a forced win.*
- 2.) In K+bishop vs. K+bishop of opposite colors, with only 1 pawn on the board, provided there is no forced win.*
- 3.) K+rook pawn vs. K can be claimed as a draw once the defender is on the rook file in front of the pawn. K+pawn vs. K can be claimed as a draw once the defender is immediately on the square directly in front of the pawn as long as it’s not on the 7th rank.*
- 4.) K= + rook+rook pawn vs. K+rook is a draw if the pawn is blockaded by the king and there is no immediate win.*
- 5.) The claimant has a significant material and positional advantage.*

(Deleted wording to Rule 14 as of 1/1/15.)

14.)

A player who has played an illegal move must retract it and make a legal move with the piece touched prior to pressing the clock. If no legal move exists with that piece then he may make any legal move. Illegal moves unnoticed by both players cannot be corrected afterwards. An illegal move is completed when the player presses the clock. ~~whereupon the opponent may claim a win.~~

(Deleted Rule 16 and renumber subsequent rules as of 1/1/15)

16.)

~~Moving the King next to another King is an illegal move. Intentionally playing a king next to the opponent’s in order to take the opponent’s king on the next move (if not caught) is a cheap shot and will not be tolerated! Stop the clock and claim a win because of an illegal move.~~

16.)

If a player is promoting a pawn and the desired piece is not available, the player may stop both clocks in order to locate the piece and place it on the board. It is improper for the player to press the clock to start the opponent's time with the pawn still on the last rank. If this is done, the opponent may immediately restart the player's clock without moving.

17.)

Standard penalty for first offense is to add one minute to the opponent’s clock. There may be circumstances where a penalty assessed may not be standard (e.g. repeat offenses, unsporting behavior, etc...) and is left to the discretion of the tournament director.

***TD TIP:** Illegal moves for any reason lose instantly if claimed correctly. The one minute penalty does not apply to illegal moves. The standard penalty of one minute applies to other Blitz rules infractions.*

18.)

The decision of the tournament director is final.

Errata

5C. Ratable time controls.

Dual (both regular and quick): Total playing time for each player is from 30 to 65 minutes (~~30 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 65~~) (**30 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 65**).

Blitz: Total playing time for each player is from 5 to 10 minutes inclusive and the primary time control must be at least 3 minutes. (~~5 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 10~~) (**5 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 10**). All rounds must use the same time control.

TD TIP:

***Dual Rating:** All events with total playing time for each player of 30 to 65 minutes inclusive (~~30 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 65~~) (**30 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 65**) will be dual rated, that is, rated under both the Quick and Regular rating systems.*

***Blitz:** Any event that the total playing time 5 minutes or greater and is 10 minutes or less (~~5 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 10~~) (**5 ≤ mm+ss ≤ 10**) will be **Blitz rated**. (Blitz rules apply, see Chapter 11.) For clarity, it is advisable to state Blitz in the title or in the time control of the event.*

11F. Incorrect initial position.

See also 16R, No time adjustment **for reinstated position**.

19E. Sealed move envelope missing.

See also 1C2, Director Discretion; 14J, Draw declared **by director**; and 21K, Use of director's power

28A. Swiss System Pairings, Procedures

TD TIP: ~~There are several ways~~ To verify a player's ID number and rating. ~~A player's Chess Life mailing label,~~ you can check the US Chess rating list (imported to the hard drive) and, ~~or~~ the Internet at www.uschess.org. To save a lot of time at registration, check the manuals for the pairing programs to see if they can directly import player information from the data downloaded to a hard drive from the US Chess rating list or the US Chess web site. Contact US Chess for more information.

28C. Ratings of players.

TD TIP: Players sometimes show the director ~~their Chess Life mailing label,~~ a US Chess crosstable, or their rating from the US Chess web page.

28C1. Multiple US Chess ratings.

b. If a player with an old established rating of 1900 is erroneously started over as 1700/5 (1700 based on 5 games), the rating used should be that of a 1900 player who draws 5 games vs. 1700 player, or 1860. See the chapter on the US Chess **Rating System**.

29E. Color allocation.

For example, a player who had white in rounds one and two and black in round three has a due color of ~~black~~ **black** in round four, as equalization has priority over alternation

29J. Unrateds in class tournaments.

See also 28C, Ratings of players; 28D, Players without US Chess **ratings**; and 33F, Unrateds.

Chapter 8: The US Chess Rating System

(Added Editor's Note at the start of Chapter 8)

Editor's Note:

The material in this chapter is a mix of ever changing ratings formulas, ratings policies, and rules changes. This chapter does not reflect the exact system used to calculate ratings. Instead, it

demonstrates the ideas behind the Ratings System. For the exact current formulas, policies, and rules please contact US Chess directly.

5. Rating floor.

A player with an established rating has a rating floor. (An unrated player and a provisionally rated player do not have rating floors.) In most cases, floors are calculated by subtracting 200 points from the individual's highest rating achieved and setting the last two digits to zero. **Peak rating based ratings floors are based on post-event established ratings. Players who do not yet have established ratings (26 or more games) do not have peak rating based floors.** ~~If a player's highest rating achieved is greater than 1200, but less than 1600, the individual's floor is 1200. If the highest rating achieved by a player is 1200 or below, then the individual's floor is 100. No floors above 2400 or below 100 are permitted. And, once a rating goes above 1200 it cannot go below the 1200 floor.~~

6. Rating entire events.

In general, these are the steps US Chess takes when a tournament gets rated.

- a. Set the initial ratings for unrated players.
- b. Compute first-pass ratings for unrated players.
- c. Calculate a rating for everyone.
- d. Based on the opponents' ratings from (c), recalculate a rating for everyone.

10D. Other considerations.

~~Official ratings for individuals appear on each player's Chess Life mailing label every month. The entire official list of rating changes are published in the Ratings Supplement, available as a download, every month and used for pairing, prize, and wall chart purposes. Players may also view their individual rating, and any official (plus unofficial) rating changes, by accessing the "Players & Ratings" (Membership Services Area, or MSA) located on US Chess's web site (www.uschess.org).~~

Chapter 9: Official US Chess Correspondence Chess Rules

Reflection time: The time between a player's receipt of a move and the posting or sending of his/her response. Time control: Each player must make 10 moves in 30 days of reflection time. Time saved in a control carries forward.

Unusual delays within this limit warrant advance notice to the opponent(s).

Should be:

Reflection time: The time between a player's receipt of a move and the posting or sending of his/her response.

Time control: Each player must make 10 moves in 30 days of reflection time. Time saved in a control carries forward. Unusual delays within this limit warrant advance notice to the opponent(s).

Chapter 13: About The United States Chess Federation

Chess rating service.

You can trace your improvement with the US Chess's rating service for tournament play. ~~Your updated rating is on your magazine label.~~ **You may view your individual rating, and any official (plus unofficial) rating changes, by accessing the "Players & Ratings" (Membership Services Area, or MSA) located on US Chess's web site (www.uschess.org).** It shows how your skill matches up against other chessplayers coast-to-coast, and the system is recognized internationally.