

Rulebook changes since the 5th edition [Official Rules](#)  
2003 -2014

## Rulebook Changes

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(2003 - 2014)

Since the publication of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the USCF rulebook changes have been made in USCF policy or in the wording of the rules. Below is a collection of those changes. Any additions or corrections can be sent to the USCF.

### USCF Policy Changes

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

**Scholastic Policy Change:** When taking entries for all National Scholastic Chess tournaments with “under” sections, the USCF will require players to disclose whether they have one or more ratings in other over the board rating system(s). **The USCF may use this rating information to determine section and prize eligibility in accordance with USCF rules 28D and 28E.** This policy will take effect immediately and will be in effect for the 2013 SuperNationals and all future USCF national scholastic tournaments that have “under” sections.

**Rationale:** There are areas of the country in which many scholastic tournaments are being held that are not submitted to the USCF for rating. As a result, some players come to the national scholastic tournaments with ratings that do not reflect their current playing strength. In order to insure 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.

**Official Ratings:** The official ratings of players are now published in the ratings supplement that is available for download once a month instead of in the discontinued every-other month paper ratings supplement. 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. See also chapter 8.

**Rating Floors:** The minimum prize required for assignment of a prize-based rating floor is \$2000. Prize-based rating floors shall continue to be based on class or section prizes for Under 2000 or lower only.

Rules changes include:

**Changes for 2014**

**Rule 20E:** The opening paragraph was replaced regarding advice received during a game.

**Rule 20N. Electronic communication devices:** There is new wording and directives regarding electronic devices, such as cell phones, as well as players leaving the site during the game.

**Rule 29L1:** The 1 vs 2 pairing rule has changed, in part, how the odd man in a score group is handled.

**Past Changes abridged:**

**Rule 5A:** Paragraph two in rule 5A has been replaced with new wording that reflects some of the changes in the new language of other related rules passed by the Delegates.

**Rule 5B:** The wording has been replaced to reflect the regulations regarding current Delay and Increment time control limits as well as the organizer's responsibility for publicizing those limits.

**Rule 5C has been renamed "Ratable time controls."** Furthermore, extensive explanations, definitions, and wording (from 2012) regarding all time controls have been updated.

**Rule 5Fa: This variation has been deleted** (subtracting time for using a delay clock). All clocks, including digital, delay, analog, ...) are to be set for the same base (starting) time. Example: If the TLA indicates G/30, d/5 then there is no subtraction of 5 minutes on the delay clocks. Both analog and delay clocks (with the delay set for 5 seconds) are set for 30 minutes at the start of the game.

**Rules 11A and 11D. Illegal Moves:** Some wording was removed so that those USCF rules are more closely aligned to their FIDE counterpart rules.

**Rule 11H1. Director As Witness Only:** Added new language regarding not needing to announce this variation in advance.

**Rule 14H. 14H. Claim of insufficient losing chances:** There is one additional variation, that does not need to be announced in advanced publicity and must be announced at the site, that allows for the non-enforcement of 14H (No Claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death). (2011)

**Rule 14H2d.** The first TD TIP is eliminated (new rules have made this TIP moot).

**Rule 15A. Visible Scoresheet:** Has added wording indicating that the scoresheet, or score keeping device, shall be visible at all times to the TD and opponent.

**Rule 15A. Method of keeping score:** In order to comply with FIDE laws and with the advent of electronic scoring devices, 15A was modified to require that the move be made prior to recording as the standard. If an event allows recording prior to the actual move on the board warnings are given regarding the use of that recording as note taking or as a memory aid (20B and C). (Aug 2006, modified Aug 2007)

**Rule 16B. How To Set Clocks:** Was rewritten so that there is less confusion regarding the setting of various clocks.

**Rule 16P added a TD Tip** which encourages TDs to intervene in a game without a player request if the clocks are set incorrectly.

**Rules 20N and 20N1:** Electronic communication devices/disturbing noises from those devices are covered.

**Rule 28T. FIDE title and rating tournaments:** This rule has been eliminated. Rule 28U is renumbered as 28T. (2011)

**Rule 31A1. Rollins Military System:** A new rule variation regarding an additional acceptable individual/team tie breaking system.

**Rules 31B and 31B1** added some TD Tips to help clarify the meaning of the terms “highest rated and lowest board number.” Plus there is a TIP regarding “how to calculate board prizes for players on multiple boards.”

**Rule 32C6. Limited Prizes:** This rule deals with how to distribute the leftover prize(s) when one or more players are limited to a maximum prize amount, and also qualify for a larger place or section prize. (2011)

**Rule 35F5. Special Clocks:** Special clocks for handicapped players are exempt from rule 16B.

**42D. Delay clock preferable in sudden death:** Outlines the procedure for replacing an analog clock (or any non-standard clock) with either a delay or increment clock (depending on the announced time control and TD approval), even if one player is late for the game. This new rule allows a player to arrive late, not determine their first move and still be allowed to replace a standard analog clock (or any non-standard clock) with their own properly set more standard delay or more standard increment clock.

**Blitz TD Credit:** In Chapter 7 the wording for TD certification was revised so that Blitz TD credit counts the same as Quick Chess TD credit.

**The Blitz Rules were revised** to reflect the implementation of the Blitz Rating System as well as some additional TD TIPs.

**Rule 4** has new wording regarding the use of the same hand to move the piece and press the clock. No exceptions (one hand only is to be used when castling, capturing or promoting, and that same hand must press the clock.

**Rule 7d** inserts the phrase "provided the player has sufficient mating material as defined in rule 7c" at the end of the last sentence.

**Rule 17** addresses the new procedure for promoting a pawn.

**Based on Prizes:** Chapter 2 section 32 wording was clarified and specific penalties suggested for violators of the "based on" prize distributions. (Aug 2006)

**Electronic Scoresheets:** Electronic scorekeeping devices are allowed in many events. Standards for those devices were established and chapter 4, section 43 on equipment standards were modified to accommodate such devices. (Aug 2005)

**Tournament Director Certification:** Chapter 7 has several revisions including some tournament categories and limitations and requirements for various certification levels. (Incorporating all changes from 2006 through January 2012). 14. Category I was reworded to reflect FIDE rules. The wording for TD certification was revised so that Blitz TD credit counts the same as Quick Chess TD credit.

**Rating Floors:** Chapter 8, section 5, paragraph 2 and 3. The wording for prize-based rating floors was changed to more general wording. The actual amount of the minimum prize for such a floor is set by the Executive Board and will be given in the Policy Changes section (see above.) Ratings based floors were not changed. (Mar 2006)

**Matches:** In Chapter 8 the rules and definitions for matches were changed and refined based on a motion passed by the Board at their February 2012 meeting.

**Guidelines for Internet Play:** Chapter 10 was completely replaced by these guidelines. It was recognized that the Rules do not forbid any kind of remote competition (internet, telephone, radio or other forms of communication). These guidelines were established in order to assist a tournament director in enforcement of the Rules, to allow certain advantages that the internet has to offer, and to offer protection against abuse. (Aug 2007)

**Blitz Rules:** Chapter 11 was completely rewritten to comply with the most common practices of blitz chess and to standardize their application. (Oct 2007)

**FIDE:** Chapter 15 of the rulebook will be deleted and be replaced with the [FIDE laws of chess](#). (2011)

**Fischer 960 Chess:** The USCF adopts appendix F of the FIDE Laws of Chess for Chess 960 (Fischer 960) <http://www.fide.com/fide/handbook.html?id=125&view=article>.

**All Changes, Complete Text:**

**Chapter 1: USCF Section-Rules Of Play**

**5A.** Delete paragraph 2 and replace it with:

Time controls appear in tournament publicity as number of moves (#), slash (/), time in minutes (mm): # / mm. For instance, if each player must make 40 moves in 1½ hours, this is abbreviated 40/90.

**5B. Sudden Death time controls.** For example, 40/120 SD/60 indicates 40 moves in two hours (120 minutes) followed by the rest of the game in one hour (60 minutes).

**5B1. Delay and increment.**

**5B1a. Delay time controls:** If the time control indicates a delay (pause) time, the abbreviation d/ is used , the delay time is given in seconds.

**5B1b. Increment time controls.** If the time control indicates an incremental (added) time, the abbreviation inc/ (or +) is used, the added time is given in seconds of added time.

**5B1c.** If no delay or increment is to be used then d/0 indicates no delay or increment time.

**5B2. The organizer is to indicate the time control,** including the delay or increment in all advance publicity as minutes (mm) and seconds (ss). e.g. G/90 inc/30 (or +30); G/30 d/5; G/10 d/3; G/5 d/0.

**5C. Ratable time controls.** There are three rating systems. Regular (slow), Quick (fast) and Blitz. For the purposes of rating G/minutes and inc/seconds (or d/seconds), add minutes (mm) and seconds (ss) for total playing time for each player. (i.e. total time equals minutes plus (seconds times 60)) or mm+ss; e.g.: G/60 d/5 = 60+5 = 65 minutes total playing time for each player. Multiple time controls add all mm for each control: mm = mm(1) + mm(2) + ...

**Regular only:** total playing time for each player is greater than 65 minutes.  $mm+ss > 65$

**Dual (both regular and quick):** total playing time for each player is from 30 to 65 minutes.  $30 \leq mm+ss \leq 65$

**Quick only:** Total playing time for each player is more than 10 and less than 30 minutes.  $10 < mm+ss < 30$

For Regular, Dual and Quick the primary time (mm in minutes) must be at least 5 minutes.

**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.  $5 \leq mm+ss \leq 10$  All rounds must use the same time control.

**TD TIP:** Examples of standard time controls:

40/90 SD/30 inc/30	Regular
40/120 SD/60 d/5	Regular
40/115 SD/60 d/5	Regular
G/120 inc/30	Regular
G/120 d/5	Regular
G/115 d/5	Regular
G/90 inc/30	Regular
G/90 d/5	Regular
G/60 inc/30	Regular
G/60 d/5	Dual
30/30 SD/30 d/5	Dual
G/30 d/5	Dual
G/25 d/5	Dual
G/25 d/3	Quick
G/15 d/3	Quick
G/10 d/3	Quick
G/10 d/0	Blitz
G/5 d/0	Blitz
G/3 inc/2	Blitz

When used, standard increment is 30 seconds (Regular).

Standard delay is 5 seconds (regular or dual); and 3 seconds (quick).

Standard blitz uses no delay or increment (see chapter 11).

Although these are not all of the possible time controls, organizers are encouraged to select one of the above (or very similar) so that all participants are clear as what to expect and under which system the event will be rated.

**TD TIP:** Here is how the changes referred to in 5C will be implemented and administered:

**Quick Chess:** A Quick Chess event is for a person who wishes to play many games in one day and not have the results affect his regular rating. The time controls in a Quick Chess tournament are designed to be a single time control of more than 10 to less than 30 total playing minutes per player, one second delay or increment counting as 1 minute playing time.  $10 < mm + ss < 30$ . Sudden-death rules are used in Quick Chess events, except scorekeeping is not required.

**Dual Rating** - All events with total playing time for each player of 30 to 65 minutes inclusive ( $30 \leq mm+ss \leq 65$ ) 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 ( $5 < \text{mm} + \text{ss} < 10$ ) 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.

**Note 1:** Game/60 d/5 is Dual Rated. If you wish for the games not to be Quick Rated, make the total basic time control at least Game in 61 minutes or longer and use a 5 second delay ( $61 + 5 = 66$ ). Game/25 d/5 is also Dual Rated ( $25 + 5 = 30$ ). If you do not want these games to be Regular Rated, make the time control Game/26 d/3 ( $26 + 3 = 29$ ) or quicker.

**Note 2:** The TD must indicate what the time control is for all sections of all events, including the delay or increment used. If submitting by disk or paper, the time control is to be indicated. If different sections have different time controls, indicate the time control for each section. If submitting the report on-line, the TD is to enter the time control for all sections. The time control used indicates whether the event is regular, dual, quick or blitz.

**Note 3:** If a section has different schedules that merge, the slowest control is all that is needed, provided all games meet the criteria for the slowest time control. This applies when early rounds might fall in the dual rated group (which is regular rated, and the slower time control is regular only. All rounds will then be regular rated only.

**Example:** 3-day schedule is 40/120 SD/60. The 2 day schedule plays rounds 1 and 2 at game 45 and then merges with the 3-day schedule for round 3. All that needs to be reported is the 40/120 SD/60 ( $120 + 60$ ) as USCF cannot separate the schedules at this point.

If any games in a section use a time control that is quick-ratable only (i.e. total time greater than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes), then all games in that section must use time controls that are quick-ratable only.

If any games in a section use a time control that is blitz ratable (i.e. total time between 5 and 10 minutes), then all games in that section must use time controls that are blitz ratable.

**5F1. Standard timer for increment.** An increment clock (a clock with added time capabilities) is the standard timer.

- a. The increment clock is set to add time for each move, called an increment. The standard increment is 30 seconds per move. For quick chess the standard increment is 10 seconds per move. A game with an increment time control should be set with the increment in effect from move one, even if the time control is mixed. (e.g. 40/90, SD/30, Inc/30) A game started without an increment capable clock should remain the timer for the game.

**TD tip:** *Increment mode, added time, and Fischer modes are equivalent.*

- b. If an increment clock or a similar clock is not available, 5F applies and the increment time may be applied as a delay.
- c. If an increment clock is not available, and the only delay clock available cannot be set to the equivalent delay time, then the delay clock may be set to the maximum allowable delay time (for the clock) not to exceed the increment time.

- **Variant.** Total time may be adjusted to compensate for increment time lost.  
*TD tip (variant): Suggested time adjustment is one minute for each second of increment or delay time lost.*
- d. If neither an increment capable clock, not a delay capable digital clock (e.g. analog clock), then the game may be played without increment or delay, and follow the time control rules (regular or sudden death) as appropriate.
  - **Variant.** Total time may be adjusted to compensate for increment.  
*TD tip (variant): Suggested adjusted time is one minute for each second of increment.*

5Fa has been deleted along with the accompanying TD TIP. 5Fb is renumbered as the new 5Fa.

**11A. Illegal move during last ten moves:** Remove the words “except in sudden death (11D), the time on the clocks shall not be adjusted; however,” and “this rule is not in effect during sudden death time pressure.”

**11C. Accidental piece displacement. ...**

*TD TIP: If using increment time control it may not be to a player’s advantage to start the opponent’s clock if the opponent created an illegal position or accidentally displaced pieces. In that case the players may stop or pause the clock until the correct position is reinstated.*

**11D. Illegal move in sudden death:** Remove the references to sudden death. Now the start of the rule is as follows: Rule 11D, “Illegal move: If, a player completes an illegal move by pressing the clock, in addition to the usual obligation to make a legal move with the touched piece if possible, the standard penalty specified in rule 1C2a applies (i.e. two minutes added to the opponents clock).”

(Editor’s note: The “See also...” references still remain the same.)

**11H1. Director As Witness Only.**

Add: "This variation does not need to be announced in advance."

**13C7 Definition of reasonably completed scoresheet. ...**

at the end add **See also:** 15 The recording of the games.

**14G Both flags down in sudden death. ...**

*TD tip: An increment time control of 30 seconds or more is not considered sudden death, therefore 14G does not apply.*

**14H: Effective as of 1-1-2011:** 14H as published in the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the rulebook and as amended before 1-1-10 will replace the 2010 version of 14H. The 2011 replacement version contains new Variation 14H6: No Claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death.

**14H. Claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death.****14H1. Explanation.**

This procedure is not available for games in which a clock is being used with time delay or increment, whether the game begins with such a clock or one is added during the game (14H2a). If such a clock is not being used, or such a clock is being used without the time delay or increment feature in operation, the following procedure is available.

In a sudden death time control, a player on the move with two minutes or less of remaining time may stop the clock and ask the director to declare the game a draw on the grounds that the player has insufficient losing chances. **See also** 15H, Reporting of results.

**14H2. Resolution of 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: Remember a 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 14H claim for directors who wish to ensure the result of the game is determined by the players, rather than any outside influence.*

**14H3. Conferring with players.**

A director who is unsure how to rule may confer privately with either player or with both players separately regarding the player's plans. The director should be careful not to say anything that might assist the player if the game is resumed.

**14H4. Player with fallen flag may not claim.**

A player whose flag is down (5G) may not claim insufficient losing chances.

**14H5. Delay Clock, a clock with time delay capabilities.**

If a Delay Clock (5F) is used and set for the required time delay on each move, 14H and 14I are not in effect; i.e., no claim of insufficient losing chances may be made. The reaction time provided for each move is likely to be sufficient for a player with insufficient losing chances to hold the position.

**Variation 14H6: No Claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death.** No claim of insufficient losing chances in sudden death will be allowed. This variation does not need to be announced in advance publicity.

**14K** Claim of Insufficient Losing Chances does not apply in increment games.

### **15A. Manner of keeping score.**

In the course of play each player is required to record the game (both the player's and the opponent's moves), move after move, as clearly and legibly as possible, on the scoresheet prescribed for the competition. Algebraic notation is standard, but descriptive or computer notation is permitted. The player must first make the move, and then record it on the scoresheet. The scoresheet shall be visible to the arbiter (tournament directors) and the opponent throughout the game. **See also** Chapter 3, Chess Notation; 13C3, Filling in moves with flag down; 13I, Refusal to obey rules and 35F6, Scorekeeping options; 43, Scoresheets.

**TD TIP:** *While the rule's wording indicates making the move first and keeping the scoresheet (paper or electronic) visible at all times, it brings the USCF in alignment with FIDE procedures and soothes many of the fears surrounding electronic scoresheets (see new rule 43) it is a huge change for many players. TDs are advised to first (and possibly second and third) issue warnings to players that do not comply with this revised rule before enforcing any time penalties (1C2a. prescribes adding two minutes to the opponent's unused time).*

### **15A. (Variation I) Paper scoresheet variation.**

The player using a paper scoresheet may first make the move, and then write it on the scoresheet, or vice versa. This variation does not need to be advertised in advance. The scoresheet shall be visible to the arbiter (tournament directors) and the opponent throughout the game.

**TD TIP:** *TDs may penalize a player that is in violation of 20C. "Use of notes prohibited" if the player is first writing the move and repeatedly altering that move on their scoresheet before completing a move on the board.*

**TD TIP:** *When TDs enforce the "visible scoresheet" portion of this rule they are advised to first warn players that do not make their scoresheet (or score keeping device) visible to the TD and their opponent.*

**15B. Scorekeeping in time pressure, non-sudden death time control.** If either player has less than five minutes remaining in a non-sudden death time control and does not have additional time (increment) of 30 seconds or more added with each move, both players are excused from the obligation to keep score...

**TD TIP:** *Only players in games with increment time controls of 30 seconds or more and using properly set increment capable clocks are required to keep score at all times, even in the last five minutes of any time control period. Players using improperly set*

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*increment clocks or non-increment capable clocks, even those clocks adjusted for an increment time control, are regulated by rule 15B.*

**15C. Scorekeeping in time pressure, sudden death time control.** If Either Player has less than five minutes remaining in a sudden death time control and does not have additional time (increment) of 30 seconds or more added with each move, both players are excused from the obligation to keep score....

***TD TIP:** Only players in games with increment time controls of 30 seconds or more and using properly set increment capable clocks are required to keep score at all times, even in the last five minutes of any time control period. Players using improperly set increment clocks or non-increment capable clocks, even those clocks adjusted for an increment time control, are regulated by rule 15C.*

## **16B. How to set clocks.**

**16B1. Analog clocks.** Clocks should be set so that each unit will register six o'clock when the first time-control period expires. If there is a second time control of any length of one hour or less it should expire at seven o'clock (even if that requires that the clocks be reset), a third such control at eight o'clock, etc. For more information on clocks see Chapter 4, Equipment Standards; 5E, Standard timer for non-sudden death; 35F5, Special Clock; and 42C, Standard clocks.

**16B2. Digital clocks.** Time delay or increment clocks should be set according to the manufacturer's directions so that any visual device used to indicate that a player's time has been exhausted for all time control periods is activated. Such mechanisms may include one or more of a light, a display of all zeros, or a display of a flag. Players should explain the flag fall mechanism and the clock's operation to their opponents. The time delay or increment should be set according to the director's instructions, with the time delay or increment in force starting at move one (5Fb) unless the time control specifies otherwise. Clocks equipped to do so should be set for a Bronstein or a delay mode for delay controls or for Fischer, added time, or increment mode for increment time controls.

**16B2a. Sound.** Digital clocks must be set to produce no sound. This includes, but is not limited to: beeping when a player has run out of time in the final time control; beeping when a player reaches the end of any time control; warning beeps to indicate a player is approaching the end of a time control; and beeping when a player presses the clock. A digital clock that can be set to produce no sound is preferable to a clock that cannot.

**16B2b.** Clock of player not out of time continues to run. If possible, digital clocks must be set so that when one player runs out of time in a time control, the opponent's clock continues to run normally. This capability is variously called "halt on end," "claim mode," or "freeze." A digital clock that can be set to satisfy the requirement of this rule is preferable to a clock that cannot.

**16B2c.** Players are responsible for setting clock correctly. Players are responsible for knowing how to set their own clocks to conform to rule 16B2. Players should be prepared to explain the clock's operation to the opponent before the start of the game. This includes how the clock

indicates a player has run out of time and how to pause both clocks if necessary to summon a director.

For more information on delay or increment clocks see Chapter 5, Equipment Standards; 5F, Standard timer for sudden death; 35F5, Special clock; 42B, Signaling devices; 42C, Move counters; 42D, Digital clocks; and 42F, Delay clock preferable in sudden death.

**TD TIP:** *Directors are not expected to know how to set delay or increment clocks (5F) but...*

**TD TIP:** *Some players due to incapacity or due to religious reasons cannot use some types of clock such as electric, electronic or with digital displays. After a director...*

**16P: Add the following TD Tip:** *TD Tip: Directors are encouraged to intervene in the game to correct an incorrectly set clock without requiring a player to make a claim first. Incorrectly set clocks can cause multiple problems for the entire tournament. This intervention is best done early in the game.*

#### **16T Both players exceed time control**

**TD Tip:** *An increment time control of 30 seconds or more is not considered sudden death, therefore if both players should exceed time control, the clocks should be reset the “next” time control of the time increment (e.g. 30 seconds) per move.*

**20C. Use of notes prohibited.** The use of notes made during the game as an aid to memory is forbidden, aside from the actual recording of the moves, draw offers, and clock times, and the header information normally found on a scoresheet. This is a much less serious offense than 20B; a warning or minor time penalty is common, with more severe punishment if the offense is repeated. **See also** 1C2, Director discretion; 15. The Recording of Games; and 21K, Use of director's power.

**20E. Soliciting or using advice prohibited.** During play the players are forbidden to make use of any notes, sources of information or advice (solicited or not), or analyze on another chessboard. See also 1C2, Director discretion; 21K, Use of director's power; and 20N, Electronic communication devices.

#### **20N. Electronic communication devices.**

Players are not allowed to leave the playing venue without permission from the arbiter. The playing venue is defined as the playing area, rest rooms, refreshment and smoking area, adjacent hallways and other places as designated by the arbiter/TD.

Without the permission of the arbiter/TD a player is forbidden to have a mobile phone or other electronic means of communication in the playing venue, unless they are completely switched off.

**TD TIP:** *“Permission of the director” allows for maximum flexibility. No specific penalty is prescribed. In the absence of announced rules for a specific event, the standard penalties apply (see 20N1). Organizers are free to announce whatever penalty is appropriate for their*

*event. This rule addresses possession of a communications device. In practice, the device ringing or making some other sound may be the only practical way to detect a cell phone—but this rule is not aimed at penalizing the noise; it is aimed at penalizing the possession of a communications device.*

**20N1. Disturbing noise or disruption of games.** Audible disruptive noises such as a cell phone ring tone, pager beep, alarms and other noises cause a disruption in the playing hall. These noises are often very loud and disturb the entire room. The following are guidelines for penalizing such disturbances:

- a. First offense standard penalty is to subtract 10 minutes or half the remaining time from a player's clock, whichever is less. *Variant: Depending on the importance of the event the standard penalty may be up to immediate loss of the game in progress. If a variant is used, it must be announced at the opening remarks for the event and posted prominently in the playing hall and at all entrances.*
- b. Second (and subsequent) offense for the same player during the same event is loss of the game currently in progress.
- c. If the incident occurs in the playing hall, but after the offender's game for the round is completed while other games are still in progress, then the above penalties apply to the subsequent round. In the case of a loss (e.g. second offense), that player is not paired for the next round.
- d. If the incident occurs after the game for the last round is complete while other games are still in progress, the offender is treated like a non-participating spectator and is ejected from the playing hall. *Variant: Depending on the importance of the event and the disturbance created, the player may receive a ½ point total score penalty for prize distribution.*

### **21E. The playing director.**

A tournament director must not only be absolutely objective, but must also be able to devote full attention to directing duties; for this reason, a director, on principle, should not direct and play in the same tournament. In USCF National Events, the director cannot be a playing director.

However, in club events and others that do not involve substantial prizes, it is common practice for the director to play. A director may also serve as a house player (28M1). Those who choose this double role should be especially careful to maintain objectivity. If possible, a playing director should appoint another director to make rulings involving his or her own games.

A player director who must devote time to a dispute in another game may stop his or her own clock during this period. While the clock is stopped, the director should not look at the position of his or her own game, but the director's opponent is permitted to do so.

**Variation 29L1. 1 vs. 2 pairings.**

This pairing system is exactly the same as the Swiss pairing system except that the players in the upper half do not play the players in the lower half in the first or any other round. Instead, in round 1 after the players have been ranked, each odd ranked player is paired with the even ranked player following them on the ordered ranking list; i.e.; 1 vs. 2, 3 vs. 4, 5 vs. 6, etc. In all other rounds the players are ranked in rating order within their respective score groups and paired in groups of two starting with the top two top rated players in the top score group. Odd players should be paired to the player in the next lower score group who closest matches with them in rating, using normal color priorities. Color allocation, transposition, avoiding players meeting twice, byes, late entries, and withdrawals are applied exactly the same way as in a Swiss event.

## Chapter 2: USCF Tournament Section

**Eliminate 28T: FIDE title and rating tournament.**

**Renumber “28U.** Players may request a non-pairing against each other...” as “28T. Players may request a non-pairing against each other...”

**31A.1 (variation) The Rollins (Military) Scoring system for combined events.** *This system offers a means to determine team and individual champions from a single event (usually a Swiss), where the number of teams is small, and the total number of participants is large. The individual champion is determined using the normal rules and announced tie-breaks for the event. The number of eligible team members (ex, 4, 5 or 6) is determined as announced in the event promotion. Eligible teams are then selected by identifying the respective highest scoring players for each team. Based on the total number of players, each player receives a score that is the inverse of his overall placing. Ex. The top player in a 100 player event receives 99 points, second place receives 98 points, etc. Individual scores for eligible team members are then combined to derive the team score. The highest team score is declared the Team Champion.*

**TD TIP: This method is especially useful for Swiss tournaments** where the number of teams is small, and the total number of participants is large. See rule 28N, and the Scholastic regulations, for the typical scoring method used at individual/team tournaments.

**A WORKING MODEL** *The following scoring happens in a fictional tournament that is a 6 round Swiss event consisting of 100 players and four teams. In this example, the Top Individual player (determined from the 6 round Swiss tournament) was from the Army and the Army won the Team Championship as well (determined from the standings from the individual tournament).*

	<b>Army Team</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Navy Team</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Air Force Team</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Marine Team</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Player 1</b>	1st	99	3rd	97	2nd	98	4th	96
<b>Player 2</b>	5th	95	7th	93	8th	92	10th	90
<b>Player 3</b>	6th	94	9th	91	11th	89	12th	88
<b>Player 4</b>	13th	87	14th	86	16th	84	15th	85
<b>Player 5</b>	17th	83	18th	82	22nd	78	23rd	77
<b>Player 6</b>	19th	81	20th	80	21st	79	24th	76
<b>Place/Total</b>		<b>539</b>		<b>529</b>		<b>520</b>		<b>512</b>

**Table 31A.1 Rollins System for Combined Events**

\* This is the official scoring system of the US Armed Forces Open Chess Tournament.

**31B: Add the following: TD TIP:** The lowest board number is 1 (first position where the highest rated player is seated). This can be confusing since the top players play on this board.

**31B1: Add the following TD Tip:** TD TIP: If a player plays in positions 1 and 4, the player’s combined points would be credited toward the board prize for position 4.

**32C4. Based-on prizes.** In tournaments in which prizes are based on entries, if the actual turnout is smaller than the based on turnout, the following rules apply:

**32C4a. Proportional payout.** Each prize must be paid at least in proportion to the turnout.

**32C4b. 50% minimum.** If the total advertised prize fund is greater than \$500 (all sections combined), at least 50% of each advertised prize must be paid.

**32C4c. Multiple-section tournaments.** If separate based-on goals are announced for different sections, then the proportion paid in each section (32C4a) is treated separately. If a common based-on goal is announced for multiple sections, then the proportion paid in these sections is considered together. In either case, 32C4b also applies.

**32C6. Limited Prizes:** In general, when a player is allowed to enter a given event or section, that player is eligible for the prizes in that section. However, when a player (e.g. an unrated in a lower section) receives a limited prize, the distribution of the remaining prize is to follow the following priority list.

The total dollar amount of all cash prizes announced or computed by “based on” shall be paid:

1. Within the event.
2. Within the section in which the limit was awarded.
3. Within the prize group (e.g. place, class or under) in which the limit was awarded.
4. Within the point group in which the limit was awarded.

See also 33F Unrateds.

Replacement 32D:

**32D.** Minimum penalty for violation of 32C4 shall be disqualification from advertising in Chess Life for one year. Additional penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the Executive Director. If a tournament is affected with extreme adverse events, then the organizer may appeal to the USCF. See also 21L, Appeal to USCF.

Organizers are expected to base their prize funds on estimates of player attendance that can be reasonably achieved. An organizer who repeatedly overestimates tournament attendance may be subject to penalties, at the discretion of the USCF.

**Effective as of 1-1-2010: add the following TD TIP to Rule 34-E, Calculating Swiss Tie-Breaks:**

***TD TIP.** The TD should realize that in the unique case of multiple players all finishing the tournament with perfect scores (winning the maximum number of games possible in a tournament), the standard tiebreaking systems would not have the same relevance as they would in outcomes where the players finished with less-than perfect scores, and could have otherwise done better. It is impossible to improve on a perfect score. Therefore, in the special case of more than one player finishing with a perfect score, the TD should make every effort possible to have a playoff among all players with perfect scores, to determine the winner of the event. The playoff does not have to be rated, and the time control can be faster than the time control used for the tournament (but should allow at least five minutes per player). A special playoff to break perfect-score ties does not need to be announced in the tournament publicity, but should be announced to the players at the beginning of the tournament.*

**35F5. Special clock.** A chess clock made especially for the visually impaired or disabled player shall be admissible for use in that player's game. Rule 16B2a does not apply to such a clock.

## Chapter 4: Equipment Standards

**42D. Delay clock preferable in sudden death.**

A properly set clock with time delay or increment capability is preferable to any other clock in a game with any sudden death time control. Therefore, if White has such a clock available and Black does not, White's clock should be used. If either player arrives late for the start of the game, and a clock without time delay or increment has already been started, the player has the right to furnish and substitute a properly set time-delay or increment clock, prior to the determination of Black's first move. The player substituting the time-delay or increment clock must also transfer the elapsed times shown on the non-delay clock to the delay or increment clock, without any additional adjustments (except to correct any errors in the display of the elapsed time). The player substituting the delay or increment clock must have arrived at the board before the grace period for forfeit loss of the game by non-appearance (13-D) has expired. Notwithstanding the above, the only occasions where Black retains the right to use

his/her non-time-delay clock are in games with no sudden death time control, in cases where both players have the same type of non-time-delay clock, or if the delay mode were not being used in a sudden death time control game, and if, in all these cases, Black has arrived in time for the start of the game (or if White is late, before White has arrived). In any particular game, if the delay clock cannot be properly set, then the opponent of the player providing the delay or increment clock may choose which legal clock is to be used (5F).

**TD TIP:** Please note that this revised rule has the same classification as the old rule; however, there is added wording regarding the replacement of non-standard or analog clocks with more standard delay or increment clocks when one of the players is late. TDs and organizers that prefer the old rule 42D (no replacement of non-standard or analog clocks if one of the players is late, as per the 5th edition of the rules) should announce that procedure in their pre-tournament publicity.

**42E. Increment clock preferable in increment time controls.** A properly set clock with time increment capability is preferable to any other clock in a game stipulating increment time controls. Therefore, if White has such a clock available and black does not, white's clock should be used. The only occasion where black retains the right to use the clock of their choice, is if both players have an increment clock or if white is late for the game and the game is started, and black has already set up the equipment. In any particular game, if the digital clock cannot be properly set, then the opponent of the player providing the clock may choose which legal clock is to be used. Order of standard clock preference is given in 5F1.

**42E1 Recommended function of an increment clock.**

- a. The display at all times should show the time available to complete a player's next move. (I.e. time added at the completion of a move.
- b. In case of passing a time control, a sign on the display must give clear signal time has expired.
- c. In case of accumulative or delay timing systems, the clock should not add any additional time if a player passed the last time control.

***TD TIP:** Some clocks add time at the beginning of the move, hence when a player is not on the move, the total time for the next move is the time displayed plus the increment. Technically this is no different than adding time at the beginning of a move, except that the total time for the next move is that which is displayed plus the increment. Either function is considered standard, and are, in fact equivalent. If unsure, ask your opponent when the time is added, and observe that function early in the game when the clock is in use. Time expires when the clock reaches 0:00.*

*Most clocks freeze time (do not add the increment) of a player who has expired (always reads 0:00, but continue to run for the player who does not.) This is considered standard. In this case, it is not possible for a player to "unflag", but it is possible for both players to run out of time. See also 16T. Both players exceed time control.*

*Clocks that do not freeze time (run negative time or pause at zero), continue to run and adds back the increment at the completion of a move are still considered preferable to a clock that does not have increment capability. This function should be explained to an opponent prior to the game, and claims of expired time should be*

*made in accordance with 13C. In this case, a claim may still be made after the player whose time has expired has completed a move (time added) if the displayed time is equal to or less than the increment. Such a claim (in accordance with 13C5) must be made before the claimant has completed the next move. It is possible, with the next or subsequent moves that the displayed time is greater than the increment without a claim being made. In this case there is no evidence that time has expired, and therefore a player may have “unflagged”. With this type of clock function, you lose your right to claim the win on time if you complete your next move and your opponent’s clock now show positive time with his own clock running.*

**43: Scoresheets:** A scoresheet is any piece of paper, electronic, or mechanical recording device that allows a player to comply with rule 15A. Electronic scoresheets are subject to certification guidelines as published by the USCF. An electronic scoresheet not so certified is not considered standard and may only be used at the discretion of the tournament director.

Often a pre-printed scoresheet has spaces that indicate the players’ names, event, other game related information, spaces for the recording of the moves, result and the signatures of the players.

If a scoresheet is provided by the event, then that scoresheet is the standard used for that event.

If a scoresheet is not provided by the event, then any method of keeping score is allowed provided it meets the rules established in 15A.

If an event, even when it provides scoresheets, does not require that a copy of the score be submitted, then the TD may allow the use of any method of keeping score.

If an event requires that a copy of the score to be submitted, the TD may require the use of the scoresheet provided, or alternately may accept any method of providing that score.

A TD may require the use of the provided scoresheet, or may allow non-standard scoresheets to be used even if one is provided.

**TD TIP:** *Tournament directors are advised to be flexible on the above. Many players have their own scoresheet in the form of notebooks or recording devices, and prefer to keep their games in an orderly fashion within that book. If a player can provide a copy of the score from their notebook, or a printout or downloaded from the electronic scoresheet, this is acceptable. You have the score and the result of the game. Contact the USCF office regarding the policies and guidelines for electronic scorekeeping devices.*

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## Chapter 7: Tournament Director Certification. (replacements and additions)

### General Qualifications

#### 2. Established Rating.

Except for the club level, all TDs taking a test for certification must have an established USCF rating as an over-the-board player. TDs are encouraged to remain active as players to maintain proper perspective when directing.

***TD TIP:** Currently the Ratings Committee has set the number of games that must be played to obtain an established rating at 26; however, that number is subject to change.*

### TD Testing Procedures

#### 9. Documents and Tests.

All documents, including completed tests, shall be submitted to the U.S. Chess Federation via e-mail (<http://main.uschess.org>).

### Tournament Categories

**14. Category I.** A Tournament held in the United States that will be submitted to both FIDE and the USCF for rating.

**a.** FIDE events that award title norms for GMs, IMs, WGMs and WIMs and will be submitted to FIDE for rating must be directed by an onsite International Arbiter (IA) or FIDE Arbiter (FA).

**b.** U.S. events that are also FIDE rated should be directed by an onsite USCF Senior TD or higher, or IA/FA that meets USCF requirements for Senior TD and for the expected size of the event.

#### 15. Category N.

A tournament that awards a national title. *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.*

**Subcategory N1:** Any national tournament that averages over 150 players in a five-year period plus the U. S. Championship, U. S. Women's Championship, and U. S. Junior Championship.

**Subcategory N2:** Any national tournament that averages 150, or less, players in a five-year period, excluding the U. S. Championship, U. S. Women's Championship, and U. S. Junior Championship.

## 16. Category A.

**Subcategory A1:** A Category A tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category A requirements, where the TD is limited to solving problems and making rulings on the floor only (floor TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category A requirements.

**Subcategory A2:** A Category A tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category A requirements, where the TD is limited to the duties of pairings in a backroom capacity using a pairing program (backroom TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category A requirements.

**TD TIP:** *A, A1 or A2 TD experience credit can be claimed for an entire tournament meeting the requirements of a Category A tournament or for any tournament section (of any category tournament) that by itself, as a stand alone section, would qualify as a Category A tournament.*

## 17. Category B.

**Subcategory B1:** A Category B tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category B requirements, where the TD is limited to solving problems and making rulings on the floor only (floor TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category B requirements. .

**Subcategory B2:** A Category B tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category B requirements, where the TD is limited to the duties of pairings in a backroom capacity using a pairing program (backroom TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category B requirements.

**TD TIP:** *B, B1 or B2 TD experience credit can be claimed for an entire tournament meeting the requirements of a Category B tournament or for any tournament section (of any category tournament) that by itself, as a stand alone section, would qualify as a Category B tournament.*

## 18. Category C.

**Subcategory C1:** A Category C tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category C requirements, where the TD is limited to solving problems and making rulings on

the floor only (floor TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category C requirements.

**Subcategory C2:** A Category C tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category C requirements, where the TD is limited to the duties of pairings in a backroom capacity using a pairing program (backroom TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category C requirements.

**TD TIP:** *C, C1 or C2 TD experience credit can be claimed for an entire tournament meeting the requirements of a Category C tournament or for any tournament section (of any category tournament) that by itself, as a stand alone section, would qualify as a Category C tournament.*

## 19. Category D.

**Subcategory D1:** A Category D tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category D requirements, where the TD is limited to solving problems and making rulings on the floor only (floor TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category D requirements.

**Subcategory D2:** A Category D tournament, or any one section considered as a stand alone event, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category D requirements, where the TD is limited to the duties of pairings in a backroom capacity using a pairing program (backroom TD) for the entire tournament or any one section, of any tournament, that by itself meets the Category D requirements.

**TD TIP:** *D, D1 or D2 TD experience credit can be claimed for an entire tournament meeting the requirements of a Category D tournament or for any tournament section (of any category tournament) that by itself, as a stand alone section, would qualify as a Category D tournament.*

## 20. Category R.

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

## 21. Category T.

A USCF-rated team-vs.-team, or scholastic individual/team, Swiss system tournament involving at least twelve teams of four or more 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.*

## The Club Director

### 23. Testing Requirement.

None for the first three year term. Each three-year term thereafter an objective test of moderate difficulty that must be passed at the 70% level.

### 25. Expiration.

Three-year renewable term. Every three years, the club TD may apply to extend the Club TD Certification for an additional three years. This three-year renewal requires that the applicant pass an objective test of moderate difficulty designed to measure the applicant's knowledge of basic rules at the 70% level. Except for the first exam, which may not be waived, the testing requirement for re-certification is waived for a Club TD with satisfactory performance as the chief or assistant TD of three tournaments or a minimum of a single section at three different tournaments during the three-year term. Club TDs meeting the rating and directing experience requirements are encouraged to take the Local TD exam. Club TDs passing the Club TD exam at the 80% level that also meet the experience and rating requirements for Local TD certification may have their Club TD certification automatically upgraded to a Local TD certification.

## The Local Director

### 26. Experience Requirements.

- a. A total of three Category D tournament experience credits are required, as listed below in a1 –a3, with the total number of players for all three tournaments summed together being 50 or greater:
  - a1. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD of one Category D tournament, no substitutions are allowed for this TD credit.
  - a2. Satisfactory performance as a Chief TD or assistant TD of second additional Category D tournament of at least three rounds, no substitutions are allowed for this TD credit.
  - a3. Satisfactory performance as a Chief TD or assistant TD of a third additional Category D tournament of at least three rounds. A one-time substitution for this single TD experience credit is allowed as outlined in b1 – b4 below.
- b. Any of the following may be substituted for the tournaments in requirement a3 as per the limitations imposed by sections b1 – b3:
  - b1. Satisfactory performance as a TD at either a Category D1 or D2 tournament can be used as a single one-time substitute for a requirement (a3) category D tournament.

b2. Satisfactory performance as a TD at any combination of two (2) Quick/Blitz Chess Category D, D1, or D2 tournaments can be used as a single one-time substitute for a requirement (a3) category D tournament.

b3. Attendance at any TDCC, or USCF approved, problem solving and discussion workshop (not a TDCC business meeting workshop) typically, but not exclusively, offered at a U.S. Open Championship. This TD credit can be used as a single one-time substitute for a requirement (a3) category D tournament.

b4. For any applicant who takes and passes the local TD test (closed book) under supervision at a Category N tournament, the sole experience requirement is satisfactory performance as a Chief TD at one Category D tournament, requirement (a1), of at least three rounds. No substitutions may be made for the Category D tournament. Applicants must contact the USCF two weeks in advance of the tournament to request this option.

- c. Only one experience credit as a section chief or assistant section chief is allowed in multiple sectioned tournaments. Multiple tournaments held at the same site on the same dates may be defined as sections of the same tournament. Dual rated tournaments count as Regular rated, not Quick/Blitz rated, for TD experience credit.

## 27. Testing Requirement.

Objective test of moderate difficulty designed to measure the applicant's knowledge of basic rules with a passing score of 80% or higher. Or, if the Local TD experience requirements (a-c) are met by a Club TD, scoring 80% or higher on a Club TD test.

**28. Limitations.** A local TD may not be the Chief TD for Category N or Category I tournaments and should not be the Chief TD of Category A or B tournaments, which includes any tournament, or section of a tournament, expected to draw more than 100 players. Computer assisted local TDs can be the Chief TD of any tournament, or section of a tournament, expected to draw up to 120 players with the aid of one assistant TD.

**TD TIP:** *FA (not IA) norm experience credit may be available at Category I tournaments to Local TDs that act as assistant TDs under the direct supervision of a chief TD who is either an IA or FA and is on site throughout the event. Contact the USCF for details.*

## The Senior Director

## 30. Experience Requirements.

- a. A total of ten Category C tournament experience credits, as listed below in a1 – a3, are required with the total number of players for all ten tournaments summed together being 400 or greater:

- 
- a1. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD of five Category C tournaments of at least four rounds, no substitutions are allowed for these five TD credits.
- a2. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD or assistant TD of one Category C tournament of at least four rounds, no substitutions are allowed for this TD credit.
- a3. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD or assistant TD at four Category C tournaments of at least four rounds, substitutions for each of the four TD experience credits is allowed as outlined in (b) below.
- b. Any of the following may be substituted for the tournaments in requirement a3 as per the limitations imposed by sections b1 – b8:
- b1. Attendance at any TDCC, or USCF approved, problem solving and discussion workshop (not a TDCC business meeting workshop) typically, but not exclusively, offered at a U.S. Open Championship. This TD credit can be used as a single one-time substitute replacing only one of the four requirement a3 category C tournaments.
- b2. Satisfactory performance as an assistant TD to a national TD or associate national TD at one Category A, A1, A2, B, B1, or B2 tournament of at least four rounds. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only twice replacing only two of the four requirement a3 category C tournaments.
- b3. Satisfactory performance as an assistant TD to a national TD or associate national TD at any combination of two Quick Chess Category A, A1, A2, B, B1, or B2 tournaments of at least four rounds. The two Quick/Blitz chess events count as only a single TD credit. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only twice replacing only two of the four requirement a3 category C tournaments.
- b4. Satisfactory performance as a Chief TD or assistant TD at any combination of two Category C1 or C2 tournaments of at least four rounds. The two Category C1 or C2 tournaments together count as only one single TD credit. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only twice replacing only two of the four requirement a3 category C tournaments.
- b5. Satisfactory performance as a Chief TD or assistant TD at any combination of four Quick Chess Category C, C1 or C2 tournaments of at least four rounds. The four Quick/Blitz Chess Category C, C1 or C2 tournaments combined count as only one single TD credit. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only twice replacing only two of the four requirement a3 category C tournaments.
- b6. Satisfactory performance as a Chief TD or assistant TD at any combination of regular rated or Quick Chess Category D, D1 or D2 tournaments of at least four rounds. The total number of players combined for the entire Regular rated and/or the entire Quick/Blitz Chess Category D, D1, D2 tournaments must be at least 100 players. The entire number of Regular rated or Quick/Blitz Chess Category D, D1 or D2 tournaments combined count as only one single requirement a3 Category C

tournament TD credit. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only once as a replacement for a single requirement a3 category C tournament.

b7. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD of one Category R tournament, this type of TD credit cannot be used if a b8 TD Credit has already been used. This TD credit can be used as a substitute only once as a replacement for a single requirement a3 category C tournament.

b8. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD of two Quick/Blitz Chess Category R tournaments, this TD credit cannot be used if a b7 TD Credit has already been used. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only once as a replacement for a single requirement a3 category C tournament.

b9. For any applicant who takes and passes the Senior TD test (closed book) under supervision at a category N tournament, experience requirements are reduced to satisfactory performance as a Chief TD at three category C tournaments of at least four rounds (either a Category C1 or C2 tournament may be substituted for one of the three Category C tournaments or two Quick/Blitz Chess Category C, C1 or C2 tournaments may be substituted for one of the three Category C tournaments) and three additional Swiss system tournaments of at least four rounds (two Quick/Blitz Chess Swiss system tournaments may be substituted for one of the three additional Swiss system tournaments) with at least 2 tournaments, of any size, having been successfully submitted for a rating on-line. Applicants must contact the USCF two weeks in advance of the tournament to request this option.

- c. Only one experience credit as a section chief is allowed in multiple sectioned tournaments. Multiple tournaments held at the same site on the same dates may be defined as sections of the same tournament. Dual rated tournaments count as Regular rated, not Quick/Blitz rated, for TD experience credit.
- d. At least 3 tournaments, of any size (including substitutions), having been successfully submitted for a rating on-line.
- e. A current International arbiter (IA) or FIDE arbiter (FA) meets Senior TD experience requirements if:
  - 1. The IA or FA status is verified by FIDE.
  - 2. The IA or FA states they are relocating to the United States from a foreign country.
  - 3. The IA or FA is an USCF member.
  - 4. The IA or FA is at least certified as a USCF Senior TD.

5. The IA or FA has satisfactorily assisted at a minimum of three USCF Category C tournaments under the supervision of a Senior TD totaling at least 200 players.
6. The IA or FA has been the chief of at least one Category D tournament and satisfactorily submitted the rating report on-line.
7. The IA or FA has an established USCF rating.

### **33. Expiration.**

Five-year renewable term: The testing requirement for re-certification is waived for a Senior TD with satisfactory performance as the chief or assistant TD of five tournaments or a minimum of a single section at five different tournaments during the five-year term.

### **The Associate National Director (ANTD)**

### **34. Experience Requirements.**

- a. FIRST, a total of ten Category B tournament experience credits, as listed below in a1 – a4, are required:
  - a1. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at four Category B tournaments, no substitutions are allowed.
  - a2. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at one Category B tournament which awarded \$1000+ in cash prizes, no substitutions are allowed.
  - a3. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant TD at two additional Category B tournaments which each awarded \$1000+ in cash prizes, substitutions are allowed.
  - a4. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at three Category B tournaments, substitutions are allowed.
- b. Any of the following may be substituted for the tournaments in requirements a3-a4 as per the limitations imposed by sections b1 – b2 :
  - b1. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at one Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournament (or any combination of two Quick/Blitz chess Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournaments, that can be combined to count as only one TD credit) which each awarded \$1000 in cash prizes. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only twice replacing at most two of the requirement a3 category B tournaments.
  - b2. One TD experience credit can be earned with the satisfactory performance as Chief TD at any combination of three Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournaments (or any combination of six Quick chess Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournaments, that can be combined to count as only one TD credit). This single type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only three times replacing at most three of the requirement a4 category B tournaments.

- c. SECOND, satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant to a national TD at a Category N, N1, N2, N3, N4, A, A1, or A2 tournament or any combination of two Quick/Blitz Chess Category N, N1, N2, N3, N4, A, A1, or A2 tournaments.
- d. THIRD, satisfactory performance as Chief TD of a Category R tournament or two Quick/Blitz Chess Category R tournaments.
- e. At least 4 tournaments, of any size (including substitutions), must have been successfully submitted for a rating on-line.
- f. Only one experience credit as a section chief or assistant section chief is allowed in multiple sectioned tournaments. Multiple tournaments held at the same site on the same dates may be defined as sections of the same tournament. Dual rated tournaments count as Regular rated, not Quick/Blitz rated, for TD experience credit.

### **37. Expiration.**

Six-year renewable terms: The testing requirement for re-certification is waived for an ANTD with satisfactory performance as the chief or assistant TD of six tournaments or a minimum of a single section at six different tournaments during the six-year term.

### **The National Director (NTD)**

### **38. Experience Requirements.**

- a. FIRST, a total of fifteen Category B tournament experience credits, as listed below in a1 – a4, are required
  - a1. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at eight Category B tournaments, no substitutions are allowed.
  - a2. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at one Category B tournament which awarded \$1000+ in cash prizes, no substitutions are allowed.
  - a3. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant TD at two additional Category B tournaments each which awarded \$1000+ in cash prizes, substitutions are allowed.
  - a4. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at four Category B tournaments, substitutions are allowed.
- b. Any of the following may be substituted for the tournaments in requirements a3-a4 as per the limitations imposed by sections b1 – b2 :
  - b1. Satisfactory performance as Chief TD at one Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournament (or any combination of two Quick/Blitz chess Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournaments, that can be combined to count as only one TD credit) which each awarded \$1000 in cash prizes. This type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only twice replacing at most two of the requirement a3 category B tournaments.
  - b2. One TD experience credit can be earned with the satisfactory performance as Chief TD at any combination of three Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournaments (or any combination of six Quick/Blitz chess Category C, C1, C2, B1 or B2 tournaments, that

can be combined to count as only one TD credit). This single type of TD credit can be used as a substitute only four times replacing at most four of the requirement a4 category B tournaments.

- c. SECOND, Satisfactory performance as Chief Assistant to a national TD at a Category N1 tournament (the following may be substituted for one Category N1 tournament: a combination of one Category N3 tournament plus one Category N4 tournament).
- d. THIRD, Satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant to a national TD at an additional Category N1, N2, N3, N4, A, A1, or A2 or satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant to a national TD at any combination of two additional Quick/Blitz Chess Category N1, N2, N3, N4, A, A1, or A2 tournaments.
- e. FOURTH, Satisfactory performance as Chief TD of a Category R tournament or satisfactory performance as Chief TD at two Quick/Blitz Chess Category R tournaments.
- f. FIFTH, Satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant to a national or associate national TD at a Category T tournament of at least four rounds or satisfactory performance as Chief TD or Chief Assistant to a national or associate national TD at two Quick/Blitz Chess Category T tournaments of at least four rounds.
- g. Only one experience credit as a section chief or assistant section chief is allowed in multiple sectioned tournaments. Multiple tournaments held at the same site on the same dates may be defined as sections of the same tournament. Dual rated tournaments count as Regular rated, not Quick/Blitz rated, for TD experience credit.
- h. At least 5 tournaments, of any size (including substitutions), must have been successfully submitted for a rating on-line.

### **The International Arbiter (IA) And FIDE Arbiter (FA)**

**42. Title.** The titles of international arbiter and FIDE arbiter are awarded by the World Chess Federation (FIDE).

### **43. Qualifications.**

The USCF will submit a title application for the International arbiter and FIDE arbiter titles for current USCF members who are certified at the Senior, ANTD, or NTD level and meet all the following requirements. FIDE requires that an IA applicant must already hold the title of FA. Applicants will pay all fees regarding this process:

- a. Thorough knowledge of the *Laws of Chess* and the FIDE Regulations for chess competitions;
- b. Absolute objectivity, demonstrated at all times during his or her activity as an arbiter;
- c. Sufficient knowledge of at least one official FIDE language for FA and obligatory knowledge of the English language, minimum at conversation level, and of chess terms in other official FIDE languages, for IA.
- d. Experience: USCF Senior TD and chief or deputy arbiter in at least four category I events documented by the appropriate title norm certificate signed by a current IA or FA and governed by the FIDE Laws of Chess and Rules of Play such as the following:

- d1. The final of the National Adult Championship (not more than two);
- d2. All official FIDE tournaments and matches;
- d3. International title tournaments and matches;
- d4. International chess festivals with at least 100 contestants.

**44. Testing Requirement.**

Contact USCF.

**45. Limitations.** International Arbiters may direct all Category I tournaments. In order to submit the tournament as a USCF rated tournament, the IA must also have a level of USCF TD certification appropriate to the USCF Category into which the tournament fits.

**TD TIP:** *Contact the USCF office BEFORE any FIDE tournament is run to make sure all USCF/FIDE current requirements for both the tournament and TD qualifications (experience requirements, fees,...) are met.*

## Chapter 8: The USCF Rating System

### 5. Rating floor. ...

Replace the second and third paragraph with:

A person's rating floor can also change if he or she wins a large class prize. The dollar limit is set by the Executive Board and may change due to economic conditions or periodic updates. The current floor will be listed on the US Chess Federation official web site. The minimum post-tournament rating of players winning such a prize shall be the lowest rating which would not be eligible for the section or class prize the player won.

A player with a substantial history of not being competitive in a floored class may request that the USCF office consider lowering this floor.

## Chapter 8: The USCF Rating System

### 4. Matches. New Rules for USCF Rated Matches (2012):

A match is inherently different than other types of chess events, because it is an arranged contest between two players, generally involving multiple games. This affects the statistical assumptions upon which the USCF rating system is based, namely that ratings are based upon a large number of games against a diverse group of opponents. There are also numerous opportunities for manipulation of ratings via matches. As a result, the USCF treats matches differently than other ways to pair players, such as the Swiss System, Round Robin, randomly paired or ladder events, both in terms of who may play in a match and what ratings changes may result from that match.

For USCF purposes, a match is defined as any event in which all or substantially all of the games are between two individuals who choose to play each other or are chosen to play each other multiple times, such as a multi-game team-on-team match. That definition would exclude any games from events that arise as a result of specific pairing situations during a tournament, such as extra games involving a house player, poor turnout in a section, etc. Since the players

didn't enter the event with the intention of playing one person multiple times, the rules regarding participation in a match should not apply. The limitations on ratings changes from match play given below may still apply. Playoffs to decide place prizes in a tournament may be treated as matches. In validating events, sections in which all the players have just one opponent and at least one of those pairs of players play each other more than once will be considered matches. An event which would otherwise be considered a match between two players but with an extra round in which one or both of the players in the match play another person will also be considered a match

- a. Matches can be as short as one game or as long as 32 games. They can be rated under the regular USCF rating system, quick rated, or rated under both systems, depending upon the time control.
- b. Both players in a match must have established and published ratings, and those ratings must be no more than 400 points apart as of the most recent published ratings for those players when the match is held. Under the USCF ratings system, matches are not eligible for bonus points. A player may gain or lose no more than 50 rating points in a match. Also, a player may only have a cumulative gain or cumulative loss of up to 100 rating points through match play during any 180 day period, and may only have a cumulative gain or cumulative loss of up to 200 rating points through match play during any three year period.
- c. Matches must be coded properly when they are submitted to the USCF for rating, either by noting it as a match on the rating report form and crosstable when sending the rating report to the USCF via the mail, or by coding the event as a match when submitting the event online using the USCF's TD/Affiliate Support Area.
- d. If a certified TD is not submitting the match results, both players must sign a notarized statement that the match conformed to USCF match rules and other conditions for USCF rated play.
- e. During validation of an event, any section involving just two players that is two or more games long will be considered an error if it is not coded as a match, as will other sections that appear to be a match. TDs are asked to identify as matches any one-game sections they submit that were intended as matches between those two players (i.e., the two players chose to play each other.)
- f. In the event that some sections in a tournament appear to be matches based on the above definition but are not, the TD will have to contact the USCF to explain the circumstances before the USCF will rate the event. The USCF office will decide if the circumstances warrant an exception to the rules regarding the ratings of the players separately from whether the restrictions on ratings changes should apply to that event.
- g. The USCF may, at its discretion, apply the match rules to any section in which two players face each other more than twice, either before rating the event or after it has

been rated. TDs may be asked to identify any such sections in advance and explain why they should not be treated as matches. The USCF may also choose to combine multiple sections or multiple events and treat them as a match.

- h. Match results may not count towards qualification for invitational events.
- i. Matches are not eligible for Grand Prix or Junior Grand Prix points.
- j. Finally, any player whose plays in a match and who is either at his or her floor or reaches his or her floor as a result of that match will be considered to have submitted a request to have that floor lowered by 100 points. The USCF ratings department will review the player's tournament history to decide if the floor should be lowered.

Events which in the USCF's judgment are intended to flaunt or circumvent these match rules may be classified as a match, and may also result in sanctions against the submitting TD, the sponsoring affiliate or the players involved. Approved by the USCF Executive Board on Feb 18, 2012.

## **Chapter 10: Internet Chess**

The Laws of chess do not restrict the game to face to face over-the-board play. Under the Laws games by means of the Internet, telephone, radio and other forms of communication are allowed provided that the a certified tournament director verify the results and attest to the fact that the Laws of Chess were enforced and followed. The amount of care taken may depend on the level of the event or the amount of prize money involved.

### **Guidelines for Internet tournaments and matches**

#### **Chief and assistant tournament directors**

The Chief TD who submits the report certifies that the games were played according to USCF standards for rated play.

A certified assistant TD is available and is able to witness (computer screens visible, and actions of the players monitored) each player and game while games are in progress. This means that at each site that is connected for play an assistant is appointed to aid the chief TD in ensuring that the Laws of Chess are followed.

Though not required, it is advisable that the same software (or display interface) be used on both sides of the games. This will give no advantage to one player over the other due to the software used.

All chess playing software and engines be disabled or turned off during play. This is to be verified by the on site TD.

**Time keeping**

Official time for each game is kept at each player's home site either through an on screen display or through a chess clock.

Many Internet sites have coordinated time keeping and adjustment software that adjusts games for transmission delays. In those cases, the flag fall on the screen (transmitted by the host site) may be considered official.

In cases where the time is not coordinated, the assistant TD has the responsibility for calling the flag fall. Either player may request at any time for the time remaining on their opponent's flag.

In the case where the move is physically transferred from the printout or display to a physical board, the assistant TD will make the move on the board, then press the clock. That clock is then official. The TD will call the flag fall.

In either case, the amount of time delay allowed should be considered when organizing the event. Make sure that a sufficient time delay for each move is allowed to help in avoiding unnecessary controversy.

**Touch and completed move**

Software chess interfaces vary widely on touch move. In most cases, a move is not transmitted until a legal move is released on the board. The time of transmittal is considered the "touch".

Mouse slips. Occasionally, the move transmitted is not the move intended. The on-site TD may verify unintentional mouse slips for retraction of a transmitted move. Examples of such moves may be the "drop" of a piece too soon (on the way to an intended square), the accidental selection of a piece (and subsequent drop) on the way to picking up of the intended piece, etc. It does not include the picking up of a piece and "waving it around the board" looking for a square, and its subsequent drop, etc.

Alternate rule for mouse slips: No appeal is allowed, if mouse slips occur refer to paragraph one of this section.

If the fact that a piece was "picked up" is made visible to the opponent, all normal touch move/illegal move rules should be enforced.

**Scorekeeping**

Most software automatically keeps score for the players. Additional notation is not required.

**Illegal moves.**

Most software interfaces do not allow illegal moves. This is allowable if both players have access to the same information and assistance.

**Identities of the players**

The Chief TD is responsible for verifying the identities of the players. In general, a simple user id/password system is NOT sufficient to establish identity. Assistant TDs can check IDs just as they do at ordinary events. When there are no assistant TDs, the Chief TD must take care.

**Playing from home**

Be careful, very, VERY, careful.

In any events where play is allowed that does not have a non-playing certified TD present at all locations (e.g. from home), then the event coordinator and chief TD are ultimately responsible for assuring the adherence to the Laws of Chess. At a minimum, there should be a pre-determined set of playing conditions transmitted to each player and a signed statement attesting to compliance to those playing conditions. This is similar to the submission of a report of a match between two individual players.

**Starting and resumption of a game**

After the pairings have been determined, the players are sent an instruction to match their respective opponent. Players should match their opponent or accept their pending challenge in a timely manner. The tournament director will use discretion in judging delays and the enforcement of penalties.

When a player gets disconnected during the tournament, that player should try to return as soon as possible. If a player gets disconnected during a game, the game is considered to be adjourned. The opponent of the disconnected player is to resume an adjourned game when the disconnected player returns. The tournament director will use discretion in judging delays, frequent disconnects and the enforcement of penalties.

## Chapter 11: Blitz Chess

Blitz Chess (also known as Speed Chess, 5-minute Chess, Lightning Chess (2-minute), and Bullet Chess (1-minute)) is a variant defined as a single, sudden death time control from 1 to 10 minutes. Blitz games typically are set at five minutes and do not use time delay or increment. G/3, inc/2 is popular in on-line play, and is now standard in international (FIDE) blitz events. Since each game takes only about 10 minutes, it has long been popular for fun games where time is limited, such as lunch breaks or between rounds of other tournaments. Some clubs will host Blitz events that may have as many as 20 rounds in a single evening.

**Blitz rating system:**

Blitz has its own rating system. To be rated, the time controls require from 5 to 10 minutes total playing time. See also 5C. *Ratable time controls*, and have a minimum primary time control of 3 minutes. All rounds must use the same time control. Hence G/3 inc/2 is rated under the Blitz system. Currently Lightning and Bullet are not included in any rating system.

### USCF Blitz Rules

- 1) Each player must make all his moves in the time specified for the game.
  - 1a) Standard time control (TC) or blitz is G/5 with no delay.
  - 1b) Time controls, including the use of delay or increment, are to be stated in any advance publicity and must also be announced or posted at the site.

**TD TIP:** *Non standard time controls should be set keeping in mind the spirit and intent of Blitz Chess (Rapid play, quick, fun chess). Total game time should not exceed 10 minutes per player per game.*

**2.)** All the clocks must have a special device, usually called a “flag”, either a regular flag or some device on a digital clock that indicates a flag fall.

**Standard timer for Blitz chess:**

**2a)** Whatever timer is used (analog or digital), a standard timer must continue to run for both sides even if one side’s time has expired. (See 8c).

**2b)** A digital timer (given it meets the requirements of 2a) is preferred over an analog timer due to the precision of setting and the accuracy of timing. If no digital timer is available, then an analog timer may be considered standard.

**2c)** The player with the black pieces chooses the standard timer.

**3.)** Before play begins, both players should inspect the position of the pieces and the setting of the clock, since once each side has completed a move the position on the board and the time on the clock remain as set.

**3a)** If the king and queen are set up incorrectly, it is legal to castle short on the queenside and long on the kingside.

**3b)** If an illegal position is created or an illegal move made without the opponent making a claim, the position stands and a claim not allowed when the opponent has determined a next move.

**4.)** Each player must press the clock with the same hand that moves the pieces, using one hand to both move the pieces and to press the clock.

**TD TIP:** *This rule, the use of one hand in all blitz moves, also applies to castling and capture.*

**5.)** The tournament director may state at the start of the event the direction the clocks are to face, and the player with the Black pieces then chooses the side of the table on which to sit.

**6.)** Except for pressing the clock, neither player should touch the clock except:

**6a.)** To straighten it.

**6b.)** If a player knocks over the clock a penalty may be assessed.

**6c.)** If your opponent’s clock does not tick you may press his side down and re-press your side; however, if this procedure is unsatisfactory, please call for a director.

**6d.)** Each player must always be allowed to press the clock after their move is made.

**6e.)** A player should not keep a hand on or hover over the clock.

**7.)** Defining a win:

**A game is won by the player:**

**7a.)** Who has legally mated his opponent's king.

**7b.)** Whose opponent resigns.

**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 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.

**7d.)** Who after an illegal move is completed by the opponent, then takes the king (if the king is in check) or claims the win and stops the clock, before the player determines a move and provided the player has sufficient mating material as defined in rule 7c.

**7e.)** An illegal move doesn't negate a player's right to claim on time, provided it is done prior to the opponent's claim of an illegal move. If the claims are simultaneous, the player who made the illegal move loses.

**8.)** Defining a draw

**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.*

9.) If a player accidentally displaces one or more pieces, they shall be replaced the player's own time. If it is necessary, the opponent may press the clock without making a move. If the player presses the clock after displacing pieces, then a penalty may be assessed.

10.) If a player touches one piece, then moves another; and presses the clock, the opponent may press the player's clock to force the player to move the piece touched, or may stop the clock to claim a violation. A penalty may be assessed.

11.) In case of a dispute either player may stop the clock while the tournament director is being summoned. In any unclear situation the tournament director will consider the testimony of both players and any reliable witnesses before rendering a decision.

12.) The tournament director shall not pick up the clock except in the case of a dispute when it is necessary to do so in order to assess penalties or adjust time.

13.) Spectators and players in another game are not to speak or otherwise interfere. If a spectator interferes in any way that may affect the result of the game (e.g. calling attention to a flag fall or an illegal move), the tournament director may cancel the game and rule that a new game be played in its stead and expel the offending party from the playing room. If the offending party is participating in the event, penalties at the discretion of the tournament director may be assessed up to expulsion from the event.

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.

15.) A legal move is completed when the hand leaves the piece.

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.

17.) 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.

**18.)** 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.*

**19.)** The decision of the tournament director is final.

### **Chapter 15: FIDE Laws of Chess:**

Chapter 15 of the rulebook will be deleted and be replaced with the FIDE laws of chess.

### **Chess 960**

The USCF adopts appendix F of the FIDE Laws of Chess (<http://www.fide.com/fide/handbook.html?id=125&view=article>) for Chess 960 (Fischer 960).

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Revised December 2012

David Kuhns: Chair, Rules Committee

Tim Just: Editor, 5<sup>th</sup> edition USCF Rulebook