

# NC BLITZ RULES

1. **Time control-** The time control is Game 5 minutes. Use 2 second delay when possible.
2. **Initial position-** Before play begins both players should inspect the position of the pieces and the setting of the clock, since once each side has made a move all claims for correcting either are null and void. The only exception is if one or both players have more than five minutes on their clock, then the tournament director may reduce the time accordingly.
3. **Clock hand-** Each player must push the clock button with the same hand he uses to move his pieces. Exception: only during castling may a player use both hands. When capturing only one hand may be used. The first infraction will get a warning, the second a one minute penalty and the third will result in the loss of the game.
4. **Clock orientation-** The tournament director should state at the start of the event the direction the clocks are to face. The player with the Black pieces then decides which side he will play with that opponent.
5. **Touching a clock-** Except for pushing the clock button neither player should touch the clock except for the following:
  - I. To straighten it;
  - II. If either player knocks over the clock, his opponent gets one minute added to his clock;
  - III. If your opponent's clock does not begin you may push his side down and repunch your side; however, if this procedure is unsatisfactory, please call for a director;
  - IV. Each player must always be allowed to push the clock after their move is made. Neither player should keep his hand on or hover over the clock.
6. **Define a win-** A game is won by the player:
  - I. who has mated his opponent's king;
  - II. whose opponent resigns;
  - III. whose opponent's flag falls first, at any time before the game is otherwise ended, provided he points it out and neutralizes the clock while his own flag is still up and that he still has mating material;
  - IV. who, after their opponent makes an illegal move and presses their clock, claims "illegal move;
  - V. an illegal move doesn't negate a player's right to claim on time, provided he does so prior to his opponent's claim of an illegal move. If the claims are simultaneous the player who made an illegal move loses.
7. **Defining mating material-** Either two minor pieces (except K vs K+N+N), a pawn, a rook or a queen will be sufficient mating material. No trick mates are allowed, which means a lone knight or bishop is insufficient unless a forced win can be demonstrated.
8. **Defining a draw-** A game is a draw:
  - I. If one of the Kings is stalemated, even if a fallen flag is claimed simultaneously.
  - II. By agreement between the players during the game only.
  - III. 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 both flags down. Checkmate nullifies any later time claims.
  - IV. To claim a draw by perpetual check, a three-time repetition is necessary with the player counting 1, 2, 3 out loud so as to make it quite clear and easier for the tournament directors to assist. Claimant should stop the clock after the third repetition.
  - V. If both players each have just one identical piece either may claim a draw by stopping the clock unless the opponent can demonstrate a forced win.
  - VI. If one player has insufficient mating material when his opponent's flag falls or makes an illegal move.

VII. In K+B vs K+B and the bishops are of opposite colors, with only one pawn on the board, or 2 pawns vs 1 pawn in a clearly blockaded position, a draw can be claimed by stopping the clocks and summoning a tournament director, provided that no forced win can be proved.

VIII. K+rook pawn vs K can be claimed as a draw once the defender's King is on the rook file in front of the pawn. K+pawn vs K can be claimed as a draw once the defender is on the square directly in front of the pawn, as long as the pawn is not on the 7th rank.

IX. K+R+rook pawn vs K+R is a draw, if the pawn is blockaded by the King and there is no immediate win evident.

9. **Replacing Pieces-** If a player accidentally displaces one or more pieces, he shall replace them on his own time. If it is necessary, his opponent may start the opponent's clock without making a move in order to make sure that the culprit uses his own time while replacing the pieces. Finally, it is unsportsmanlike to knock over any pieces then punch the clock. For the first offense the player will get a warning (unless this causes his flag to fall, in which case the opponent will get one extra minute added to his clock). For a second offense a one minute add-on for the opponent will be imposed. For a third offense the offender shall forfeit the game. Thereafter, the tournament director may use other penalties or expel a player from the event for repeated offenses.
10. **Dispute between players-** 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 his decision. If a player wishes to appeal the decision of a tournament director, the player must first appeal to the section chief then, if necessary, the player may appeal to the Chief floor director, whose decision in all cases is final.
11. **TD touching the clock-** A tournament director shall not pick up a clock; except in the case of a dispute.
12. **Observer Conduct-** Spectators and players in another game are not to speak or otherwise interfere in a game. If a spectator interferes in any way, such as by calling attention to the 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 he may also expel the offending party from the playing room. The tournament director should also be silent about illegal moves, flag falls, etc. (unless there is an agreement with the players, before the game, to call them) as this is entirely the responsibility of the players.
13. **Asking a TD to declare a draw-** When a clearly drawn position is reached either player may stop the clocks and appeal to the tournament director for a draw.
  - I. If the tournament director rules a draw, as in Rule #8, the game is over.
  - II. If the appeal is rejected, a one minute penalty is imposed on the player who stopped the clock.
14. **Illegal moves-** Illegal moves, unnoticed by both players, cannot be corrected afterwards, nor can they become the basis for making a claim.
15. **Touch move-** A legal move is completed when a player's hand leaves the piece. Illegal moves can be corrected up until a player presses their clock.
16. **King next to King-** Moving the King next to another King is illegal and cause for forfeit of the offender.
17. **Replacing a promoted pawn-** If a player promotes a pawn and leaves the pawn on the board, the opponent only has the option of stopping the clocks while a replacement piece is found.
18. **Replacement clock-** Only a tournament director may determine if a clock is defective and change clocks.
19. **Initial setup error-** If the King and Queen are set up incorrectly when the game begins, then you may castle short on the queenside and castle long on the kingside. Once each side has made a move, incorrect setups must stay - unless a tournament director gives permission to restart the game.
20. **Player behavior-** Excessive banging of pieces or clock will not be tolerated and the offending player may be penalized with loss of time.
21. **Bring a clock-** Each player is responsible for coming to the game with a clock. If neither player has a clock, then both players will receive a forfeit loss for both games. All players are required to know how to operate their clock and how to make any changes to the clock that may be necessary during a game.
22. **Insufficient Losing Chances-** insufficient losing chances claims cannot be made in Blitz games.
23. **Rules Not Covered Above-** The Official Rules of Chess shall be used to resolve any situation not covered. Note some tournaments may modify the rules- ask if not posted.

# NC BUGHOUSE RULES

1. **Number of players-** There are only two people on a team, no substitutions are allowed.
2. **Number of games-** Each team will play only two games per round, one for each player, against another team. There are multiple rounds.
3. **Who plays-** The team decides which player is to play white and which player is to play the black.
4. **Time control-** The time control is Game 5 minutes. Use 2 second delay when possible.
5. **Bring a clock-** Each player is responsible for providing a clock. If neither player, in an individual game, has a clock both players receive a forfeit loss for that game.
6. **Touch move-** A move is completed when an opponent's hand has released the piece. This only applies to pieces on the board. Pieces off the board may be touched at any time but once the piece is placed on the board it must stay on the board.
7. **Match conclusion-** Each match is concluded as soon as one of the players on a team wins.
8. **Illegal moves lose**, if they are caught before the next move is made.
  - I. If an opponent makes a move and starts the opponent's clock, they have forfeited the right to claim that illegal move.
  - II. Before play begins both players should inspect the position of the pieces and the setting of the clock, since once each side has made a move all claims for correcting either are null and void. The only exception is if one or both players have more than five minutes on their clock, then the tournament director may reduce the time accordingly.
  - III. Illegal moves, unnoticed by both players, cannot be corrected afterwards, nor can they become the basis for later making an illegal move claim. If the King and Queen are set up incorrectly when the game begins, then you may castle short on the queen side and castle long on the kingside. Once each side has made a move, incorrect setups must stay.
9. **Passing pieces-** When a piece is captured, the captured piece is passed to the partner only after the move is completed (opponent's clock is started).
10. **Placing or moving pieces-** A player has the option of either moving one of their pieces on their board or placing a piece their teammate has captured and passed to them.
  - I. A captured piece may be placed on any unoccupied square on the board, with the exception that a pawn may not be placed on the first or last rank.
  - II. Pieces may be placed to create or interpose check or checkmate.
  - III. A promoted pawn, which has been captured, reverts to a pawn and not the promoted piece.
11. **Displaying captured pieces-** A player may not attempt to hide pieces captured by their partner from the opponent. The first attempt will be a warning and the second attempt will result in forfeiture of the game.
12. **Communicating allowed-** Partners may verbally communicate throughout a game. It is legal for one partner to make move suggestions to the other partner. It is illegal and grounds for forfeiting the match if one partner physically moves one of their partner's pieces.
13. **Clock Hand-** Each player must push the clock button with the same hand they use to move their pieces. Exception: only during castling may a player use both hands. When capturing only one hand may be used. The first infraction will get a warning, the second a one minute penalty and the third will result in the loss of the game.
14. **Touching a Clock-** Except for pushing the clock button neither player should touch the clock except:
  - I. To straighten it;
  - II. If either player knocks over the clock his opponent gets one minute added to their clock;
  - III. If your opponent's clock does not begin you may push their side down and repunch your side; however, if this procedure is unsatisfactory, please call for a director;
  - IV. Each player must always be allowed to push the clock after their move is made. Neither player should keep their hand on or hover over the clock.

**15. Define a win-** A game is won by the player:

- I. who has mated their opponent's king;
- II. If the checking piece is not a knight or is not in contact (on an adjacent square) with the defending king and the defending player does not have any material to block the check, the defending player may wait until his or her partner supplies a piece provided their time does not run out.
- III. whose opponent resigns;
- IV. whose opponent's flag falls first, at any time before the game is otherwise ended, provided he/she points it out and neutralizes the clock while their own flag is still up;
- V. who, after their opponent makes an illegal move and press their clock, claims "illegal move";
- VI. an illegal move doesn't negate a player's right to claim on time, provided he/she does so prior to their opponent's claim of an illegal move. If the claims are simultaneous, the player who made the illegal move loses.

**16. Defining a draw-** A game is a draw:

- I. By agreement between the teams during the game only.
- II. 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 both flags down. Announced checkmate nullifies any later time claims.

**17. Replacing pieces-** If a player accidentally displaces one or more pieces, he shall replace them on his own time. If it is necessary, his opponent may start the opponent's clock without making a move in order to make sure that the culprit uses his own time while replacing the pieces. Finally, it is unsportsmanlike to knock over any pieces then punch the clock. For the first offense the player will get a warning (unless this causes his flag to fall, in which case the opponent will get one extra minute added to his clock). For a second offense a one minute add-on for the opponent will be imposed. For a third offense the offender shall forfeit the game. Thereafter, the tournament director may use other penalties or expel a player from the event for repeated offenses.

**18. Dispute between players-** In case of a dispute either player may stop both clocks 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 his decision. If a player wishes to appeal the decision of a tournament director, the player must first appeal to the section chief then, if necessary, the player may appeal to the Chief floor director, whose decision in all cases is final.

**19. TD touching the clock-** The tournament director shall not pick up the clock; except in the case of a dispute.

**20. Observer conduct-** Spectators and players of another match are not to speak or otherwise interfere in a game. If a spectator interferes in any way, such as by calling attention to the 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 he may also expel the offending party from the playing room. The tournament director should also be silent about illegal moves, flag falls, etc. (unless there is an agreement with the players, before the game, to call them) as this is entirely the responsibility of the players.

**21. Replacing a promoted pawn-** If a player promotes a pawn they must leave the pawn on the board and clearly indicate to their opponent to what piece the pawn is being promoted too. The promoted pawn will be laid on it's side to indicate that it is a promoted pawn.

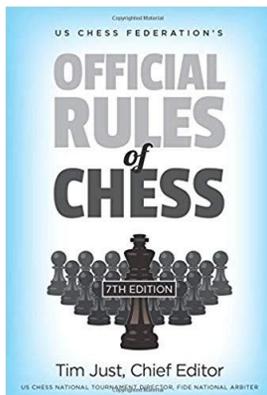
**22. Replacement clock-** Only a tournament director may determine if a clock is defective and change clocks.

**23. Player behavior-** Excessive banging of pieces or clock will not be tolerated and the offending player may be penalized with loss of time.

**24. Insufficient Losing Chances-** Insufficient losing chances claims cannot be made in Bughouse games.

**25. Rules Not Covered Above-** The Official Rules of Chess shall be used to resolve any situation not covered. Note some tournaments may modify the rules- ask if not posted.

# USCF Tournament Rules



At the NC K-12 and Collegiate Chess Championship tournaments and Chess Achieves tournaments, we follow the Official USCF rules of chess. Knowing and understanding the rules is critical for players, coaches, and parents also. If you would like your own copy of "The USCF's Official Rules of Chess, 7th edition" it is available for purchase online at Amazon.com.

To make it easier for the players, coaches, and parents to understand the rules, we have prepared our own shorter version of the most important rules for players to understand. A copy of our Tournament Rules is printed below. If you have additional questions, please ask one of the tournament directors at our tournaments.

NC Scholastic and Collegiate State Chess Championship tournaments shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of the United States Chess Federation. The following rules are included here to answer frequently asked questions and to remind players of useful information. They are not intended to supersede or modify anything in the USCF Rulebook. Penalties for rules violations are at the discretion of a TD and may vary from warnings and time penalties to forfeitures and expulsion from the tournament.

**1. Tournament Directors (TD)** – Tournament Directors will be on the tournament floor at all times to assist players in the event of any problem or question. To summon a director raise your hand, pause the chess clock and keep your hand in the air until a TD comes to assist you. Remember that a TD will generally not interfere with your game. It is up to you to make a claim. If you think that a TD has ruled incorrectly concerning your game, you should ask for another TD and make an appeal immediately.

**2. Clocks and Time Controls** – Analog clocks should be set to expire at 6:00. Example: setting both sides of the clock to 5:30 for rounds that are G30 or at 5:00 for rounds that are G60. The game must be either won or drawn before the flag falls at 6:00. If both flags have fallen the game is a draw, providing one of the players in the game claims the flag-fall before checkmate or stalemate is played and recognized. If a time delay clock is used, it must be set with the time delay in force from move one. When using the time delay feature, subtract 5 minutes from the time control, with a five second "delay", or "Bronstein." All players are encouraged to bring a clock to the tournament. The player with Black may choose which clock to use but preference is forced to a digital clock. A digital clock with time delay set is preferable to any other clock. If Black fails to bring a clock, Whites clock will be used. If neither player brings a clock, a TD may provide a clock during the game. Players may request exemption from clock use if they have a medically necessary reason. *Winning on time:* A player wins on time when his or her opponent flag falls, or if using a digital clock, when the clock reads zero or -1. However, the winning player must claim this victory before his own flag falls or he is checkmated. In the first case (both flags fell), the game is determined a draw. In the second case, checkmate overrules the fallen flag and the checkmate wins. Remember: A spectator or a T.D is not allowed to call the flag.

**3. Reporting Results** – Upon completion of the game, the players should raise their hands to summon a director. They should not disturb or change their board in any way before a TD has verified the result. After the result has been verified they should make their way to the scorer's table to mark their scores. It is the responsibility of both players, not just the winner, to mark the result of the game.

**4. Touch Move** – If you intentionally touch a piece when it is your turn to move, that piece must be moved if you can do so legally. If you intentionally touch an enemy piece when it is your turn to move, the enemy piece must be captured if you can do so legally. You must clearly say “adjust” before touching a piece if you want to adjust that piece on the board. You may do so only when it is your turn. You may not touch any pieces on the board when it is not your turn.

**5. Illegal Moves** – If it is discovered that one of either player’s last 10 moves was illegal, the position will be reinstated to what it was before the illegal move, and the game shall continue by applying the touch-move rule to the move replacing the illegal move. Clocks will not be reset. Two minutes will be added to the remaining time of the opponent of the player who made the illegal move. The player must call an illegal move. A TD will not do so, neither may parents, coaches, nor other spectators.

**6. Check** – Announcing check is not necessary. It is the responsibility of the opponent to notice the check. A player who does not notice the check may suffer serious consequences (see the touch move rule).

**7. Notation** - Recording of chess notation is required for all USCF sections K-5 and up. Although strongly encouraged, the recording of chess notation is not required in for other boards in K-3 and under. However, those not keeping score give up the right to claim draws requiring the corroboration of a score sheet. All players at any level may stop taking notation if either players time runs under 5 minutes.

#### **8. Handheld Chess Recording Device**

Player’s Responsibilities:

- I. Register the Device in the tournament room. (ChessNotate, Monrio, eNotate, DGT only)
- II. Set Device to the Record Mode and verify setting with a TD.
- III. Show it to an opponent, parent, and/or coach and explain its usage to that player each round.
- IV. Device will remain on the table during the entire game.
- V. Make the move on the board before recording the move on the Device.
- VI. When not recording moves the player should keep hands off the Device.
- VII. Opponent requests to correct score sheet, set the mode to algebraic and turn the device around.
- VIII. The player may request a TD to provide security for the Device when the player leaves the room.

**9. Time Forfeits** – Only a player may claim a time forfeit. If both players times have expired, the game will be declared a draw. No parent, coach, spectator, or TD may make such a claim or bring the fall of a flag to the attention of the players.

**10. Sections** - TD reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to combine sections if there are not sufficient number of participants on the day of the Tournament. However, trophies and medals shall be awarded to the participants as if they had played in the section that they originally signed up for.

**11. Late Arrivals** – A player who is more than 30 minutes late for any round loses the game by forfeit and will not be paired for the next round unless reinstated by the Chief TD. To have as many games played as possible, a TD will try to repair players on the floor in round one. White’s clock should be started as soon as a TD announces that the round has begun. Black’s clock may not be started before White has made a move. If a clock is not available at the start of a round, any elapsed time before one becomes available will be split between players. If both players are late for the start of a round, the first to arrive must split the elapsed time before starting the clock.

**12. Draws** – If you want to offer a draw to your opponent, you should do so after you make a move but before you start your opponent’s clock. Your opponent may decline the draw by saying so or by moving a piece. A draw offer is valid until it is turned down by the opponent. If both players agree to a draw, then the game is over regardless of previous checkmate, stalemate or illegal positions. A reasonably complete and accurate score sheet is required to claim a draw by triple occurrence of position or the 50-move rule. If such a claim is found to be incorrect, two minutes will be added to the opponent’s remaining time.

**13. Pairings** –Pairing software will be used for this tournament. Except for the first round, players will generally be paired with other players who have the same score each round. Players should not be assigned the same color three times in a row unless there is no other way to pair the score group or unless necessary to equalize colors. Every reasonable effort will be made to avoid pairing together players from the same school. One exception is the last round when all players in the top group are from the same school. In this case, they may be paired together. If you believe there is a pairing error, report it to a TD immediately! Once the round starts, it will probably be too late to

make any changes. Parents and coaches should check the correctness of the cross table posting (including the team cross table) every round.

**14. Conduct of Players** – Please try to keep as quiet as possible on the tournament floor so that you do not disturb other players. You may not speak to anyone while your game is in progress unless a TD has agreed to be present. If there is a problem of any kind during your game, do not discuss or argue with your opponent, call a TD immediately. If you wait until after your game is over the result probably cannot be changed even if your claim was correct. Be careful what you sign; once you have marked your score and agreed to the result on it, it cannot be adjudicated later on. You may not consult notes, chess books, computers, or other materials during the game. You may not bring soda or snacks into the tournament hall at any time. If you need to go to the bathroom while your game is in progress, you must use the bathrooms designated for tournament players. You do not need to ask permission from a TD for this. You may not leave the tournament room during your game. Exceptions can be made only if you have permission and are accompanied by a TD.

**15. Half-Point Byes** – Half-point byes will be available for the any round except the last round, if requested with an advance entry. 0-point byes shall be available for all rounds. The Chief TD shall have the ability to grant a half point bye for any round on unusual circumstances, except the last round.

**16. Playing Area** -- Only players with games in progress and designated tournament officials are allowed in the playing hall during games. Coaches, parents and other advisors may assist players, if necessary, in finding their boards, but they must leave the playing area when the games begin, or at the discretion of a TD. In some schools parents are allowed to watch games from a viewing area typically bleachers or chairs in the playing area.

**17. Interference** – No interference in any game by spectators, other players, coaches or parents will be tolerated. Penalties include expulsion from the tournament. Only the player involved should point out irregularities to a TD. This should be done by raising your hand to summon a TD.

**18. Team** – This is a team and individual event. A team may have as many players as desired, but only the top four scores count for team results and tie breaks. A team must have at least two players in a section to be eligible for team awards in that section. A team in general can only consist of members that attend that school as their primary school of attendance. Schools that meet for one day and are supplementary to their principal school of attendance can not constitute a team. Example the Raleigh Chess Academy could not form a team. There are two exceptions to the above guidelines: **1. A home schooled student may represent his or her local public school when access to extra-curricular activities is permitted and the student resides within the boundaries of the local public school. 1a. A home schooled student may join with other home schooled students, who reside within the same ZIP code or within the boundary of the local public school. (Note: a school is defined as an institution which has one name, is located in one building or connected adjacent buildings, and is under one administrator. A local public school is not a school district) 1b. All the students attend home school sites located within the boundary of the local public school.** 2) Schools that are feeder schools in to other schools can have students be members on the team in which they will someday attend. An example might be Wake Tech North and Wake Tech South but not a Middle School that would eventually be part of a High School. Parents and coaches should check for correctness of team membership based on the posted team results. Call if you need any clarity on this issue.

**19. Tiebreaks** – Individual ties for trophies will be broken by Modified Median, Solkoff, Cumulative, Cumulative of Opposition, and then a coin toss, in that order. Team ties will be broken by Game/Match Points, US Amateur Team System, and then a coin toss, in that order.

**20. Rules Not Covered Above-** The Official Rules of Chess, 5th edition, shall be used to resolve any situation not covered by these rules.

## Tie-Breaking in Tournaments

Tie-break systems are used in Swiss system chess tournaments to break ties between players who have the same total number of points after the last round. If the players are still tied after one tie-break system is used, another system is used, and so on, until the tie is broken. We use a computer software program to calculate the tie breaks in the USCF recommended tie break order.

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|--|--|---|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Swiss Individual tie-break system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Modified Median</li> <li>2. Solkoff</li> <li>3. Cumulative</li> <li>4. Cumulative Opposition</li> <li>5. Coin flip</li> </ol> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Swiss Team tie-break system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Game/Match Points</li> <li>2. US Amateur Team System</li> <li>3. Coin Flip</li> </ol> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Round Robin Tie Break</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sonneborn-Berger</li> <li>2. Coin Flip</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Playoffs if Posted</p> |
|--|--|---|

## USCF Recommended Tie-Break System Order

The U.S. Chess Federation (USCF) recommends these as the first four systems to be used: (Rule 34E) 1) Modified Median, 2) Solkoff, 3) Cumulative, 4) Cumulative of Opposition.

### Median \*

The Median system is also known as the Harkness System, after its inventor Kenneth Harkness. This system sums the number of points earned by the player's opponents, discarding the highest and lowest. If there are nine or more rounds, the top two and bottom two scores are discarded. Unplayed games by the opponents count ½ point.

\* The Median system is not used as one of the USCF recommended tie breaks, but an understanding of the median system is necessary to correctly understand the Modified Median, and Solkoff systems

### Modified Median

This system sums the number of points earned by the player's opponents. Unplayed games by the opponents count ½ point. Players with exactly 50 percent score (even score): discard the highest and lowest. If there are nine or more rounds, the top two and bottom two scores are discarded. Players with higher than 50 percent score (plus scores) have only their lowest-scoring opponent's score discarded. If there are nine or more rounds, the bottom two scores are discarded. Players with less than 50 percent score (minus scores) have only their highest-scoring opponent's score discarded. If there are nine or more rounds, the top two scores are discarded.

The first step is to determine the current round maximum score. Since 6 rounds have been completed, the current maximum score = 6.0 Next we find the "even" or 50% score. The even score is half of the max score.  $6.0/2 = 3.0$  The "even" score is 3.0 Any score above 3.0 is a "plus" score (more than a 50% score).

Any score below 3.0 is a "minus" score (less than a 50% score). From our example crosstable we see Player A and Player B both have a score of 6.0 which is a "plus" score. Now we need to add the scores of the player's opponents'. Looking at the cross table, we can see that "Player A" played against players 6, 3, 9, 5, 4, and 7. "Player B" played against players 15, 5, 4, 3, 10, and 9 The tables below show the results. Because both player A and B have "plus" scores, we discard the lowest scoring opponent. Player A wins the tie break.

No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk1
1	Player, A	6.0	W6	W3	W9	W5	W4	W7	
	<b>Opponents Scores</b>	3.0 *	4.0	2.5 **	3.5	3.5	3.0		<b>17.0</b>

\* Player 6 had not played a game which counts as 1/2 point for the Modified Median Calculation.

\*\* Player A has a "plus" score, the lowest scoring opponent (2.5) is discarded.

No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk1
2	Player, B	6.0	W15	W5	W4	W3	W10	W9	
	<b>Opponents Scores</b>	1.5 *	3.5	3.5	4.0	2.5	2.5		<b>16.0</b>

\* Player 15 had not played a game which counts as 1/2 point for the Modified Median Calculation.

\* Player A has a "plus" score, the lowest scoring opponent (1.5) is discarded.

## Solkoff

This system is the same as the Median system, except that no scores are discarded. Using Player A and B from our example cross table produces the result shown below.

No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk2
1	Player, A	6.0	W6	W3	W9	W5	W4	W7	
<b>Opponents Scores</b>		3.0 *	4.0	2.5	3.5	3.5	3.0	<b>19.5</b>	

\* Player 6 had not played a game which counts as 1/2 point for the Solkoff Calculation.

No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk2
2	Player, B	6.0	W15	W5	W4	W3	W10	W9	
<b>Opponents Scores</b>		1.5 *	3.5	3.5	4.0	2.5	2.5	<b>17.5</b>	

\* Player 15 had not played a game which counts as 1/2 point for the Solkoff Calculation.

## Cumulative

To calculate this, sum the running score for each round. For example, if a player has (in order) a win, loss, win, draw, and a loss; his round-by-round score will be 1, 1, 2, 2½, 2½. The sum of these numbers is 9. Using **Player C and D** from our example cross table produces the result shown below.

No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk3
4	Player, C	3.5	W14	W7	L2	W12	L1	D5	
<b>Running Total</b>		1.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	<b>14.5</b>	
No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk3
5	Player, D	3.5	W11	L2	W10	L1	W12	D4	
<b>Running Total</b>		1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.5	<b>12.5</b>	

## Cumulative opponent's score

This sums the cumulative scores of the player's opponents.

The cumulative scores of all opponents are added, producing a large number.

Using Player A and B from our example cross table produces the result shown below.

No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk4
1	Player, A	6.0	W6	W3	W9	W5	W4	W7	
<b>Opponents Running Total</b>		7.0	13.0	10.0	12.5	14.5	11.0	<b>68.0</b>	
No.	Name	Pts	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	TBrk4
2	Player, B	6.0	W15	W5	W4	W3	W10	W9	
<b>Opponents Running Total</b>		4.0	12.5	14.5	13.0	11.0	10.0	<b>65.0</b>	

## *Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About The USCF's New Clock Rules,*

### *But Were Afraid To Ask*

A chess clock is a device for measuring and allocating the time available to each player during a game of chess.

In official tournaments, each player has a limited amount of time to make his or her moves. An important component of a player's overall chess skill is in deciding how to allocate time during a game.

All players are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the available models of clocks and with the USCF's rules for using them.

Various types of chess clocks can be purchased from the USCF, other vendors, or through your local chess club.

### **Types of Chess Clocks**

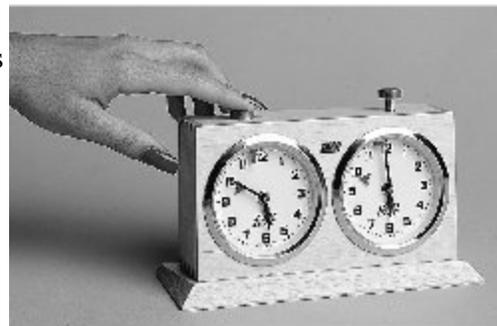
A digital clock (sometimes referred to as an allegro clock) is one that displays the exact number of minutes and seconds available for each player.

When a player runs out of time using a digital clock, the display will read 00:00.



A mechanical clock (sometimes referred to as an analog clock) is one with the traditional clock face and hands. A mechanical clock also has a device called a flag that signals when a player's time has expired.

When a player runs short of time using a mechanical clock, the hands of the clock will begin to raise the player's flag. When time expires, the player's flag falls.



### **Time Controls and Sudden Death**

The term "time control" refers to the amount of time each player has to make some or all moves during a game.

For example: a time control of 40/2 means that each player has two hours to make the first 40 moves. If a player fails to complete the 40th move before time expires, that player is said to lose on time. If both players make their 40th moves with time to spare, the game continues and the players get to keep any time remaining for use during the next time control.

A sudden death time control is one in which the players must make all of their moves before time expires.

For example: a time control of Game/30 means that each player must make all moves in 30 minutes or less. If a player uses more than 30 minutes before the game is decided, that player loses on time.

The different types of time controls can be combined to suit the needs of a particular tournament.

For example: a combined time control of 40/2, Game/30 means that each player has two hours to make the first 40 moves. If both players make their 40th moves with time to spare, they get to keep their remaining time plus they each receive an additional 30 minutes to make all of the rest of their moves.

### **The "Insufficient Losing Chances" Rule**

Tournaments with sudden death time controls have become increasingly popular. One reason for this is that these types of events allow several games to be played in one day.

However, one side effect of sudden death time controls is that a player with a winning position may find that he or she does not have sufficient time remaining to actually win the game. In some extreme cases, the player may lose on time in a grossly winning position.

This situation strikes many players as unfair, because the game ought to be decided by moves made on the board. In response to this situation, the USCF created the insufficient losing chances rule:

14 H1. In a sudden death time control, a player 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.

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 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.

Note that under the "insufficient losing chances" rule, the players' actual ratings are irrelevant, as is the amount of time remaining on the players' clocks. However, the player making the claim must have two minutes or less remaining — otherwise the game continues.

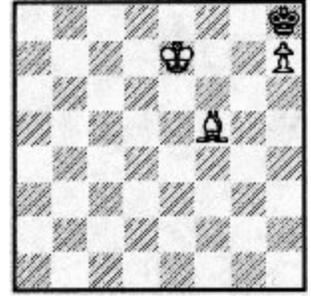
Also, there is a subtle but distinct difference between insufficient losing chances and actual winning chances. A player may be winning the game but still have significant chances of losing.

Directors have several choices under the insufficient losing chances rule. The director may decide:

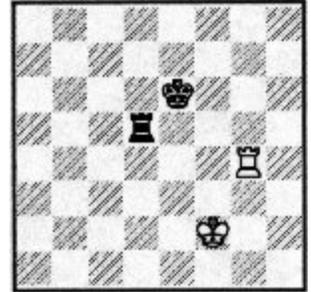
1. The claim is clearly correct, and award a draw.
2. The claim is clearly incorrect, and deny the claim and subtract one minute from the claimant's remaining time.
3. The claim is too close to call, and ask the players to resume the game. One, the director places a properly set delay clock on the game making sure the claimant's time is cut in half. The standard procedures for winning, losing or drawing now apply. Two, the director may watch the game with the intent of upholding the claim if the opponent is making no progress. A director who is watching a game after an insufficient losing chances claim may declare the game drawn even if the original claimant's flag falls.
4. The claim is too close to call, and instruct the claimant to make a later re-claim if the opponent is making no progress.

Some examples:

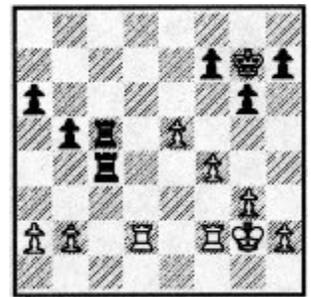
In this example, the weaker side (Black) claims a draw by insufficient losing chances. The claim is clearly correct, because a Class C player would draw a Master by keeping his King in the corner. A TD should award the draw.



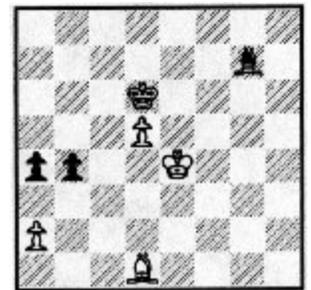
In this example, the material is even and greatly reduced. Either player may claim a draw by insufficient losing chances.



In this example, the stronger side (White) claims a draw because he is up a pawn. However, having an advantageous position is not the same as having insufficient losing chances. A Class C player might still lose to a Master, even in a winning ending, if several pieces are still on the board. A TD should deny the claim and subtract up to one minute from the player's time.



In this example, the situation is unclear. Endings with bishops of opposite colors are often drawn, but they also contain some subtle points. The best course here is for the director may place a properly set delay clock on the game with only half the remaining time of the claimant remaining or the director may watch for no progress or invite a later re-claim.



### The Time Delay Feature

Tournament experience with the insufficient losing chances rule has shown that, while somewhat effective, clearly it is not the best solution to situations where a player is low on time in a grossly winning or non-losing position.

An alternate solution is to use a clock with what is known as the time delay feature. The time delay feature allows each player a limited number of seconds on each move before subtracting time from the player's clock.

Some models of digital clocks add the time delay bonus at the end, after the player has completed his move. These clocks are also legal, but players are advised to familiarize themselves with the various types of clocks to avoid misunderstandings during play.

The time delay is not accumulated and does not increase the player's available time over the course of many moves. Instead, these extra seconds are to compensate for the small amount of time used in physically moving the pieces and punching the clock on each move.

If a player who is low on time really has insufficient losing chances, the player ought to be able to make his or her moves very quickly. The time delay feature will allow that player to complete the game without facing an inevitable time forfeit.

When using a clock that has the time delay feature, a player may no longer make claims under the insufficient losing chances rule. Instead, the game ends normally.

### **The Three Levels of Clocks**

The USCF's rules specify three levels of preference for chess clocks:

1. Clocks with time delay are the most preferred type of equipment.
2. Mechanical clocks are the next most preferred clock.
3. Digital clocks without the time delay feature are the least preferred type of equipment.

When players have questions about what type of clock to use for a game, they should resolve the situation by referring to the three levels of clock preferences.

For example: Two players arrive at the board at the same time.

Player A has a digital clock with time delay feature.

Player B has a mechanical clock. Because Player A's clock is more preferred, he gets to use his clock for the game.

The player of the black pieces has his choice of equally preferred equipment. If both players have a digital clock with time delay feature, Black's choice will prevail.

The one exception: A late player (one who arrives after the round has started and his clock is running) may not insist on a substitution, even if he has a more preferred clock, so long as the original equipment meets the minimum tournament standards.

### **The Default Time Delay Setting**

The default time delay for USCF-rated events with sudden death time controls is five seconds per move.

If the time delay feature is used with a combined time control (e.g., 40/2, Game/30), the time delay feature should be turned "ON" from the very first move of the game.

Time controls without sudden death do not require the time delay feature, although there is no harm in using it.

## **TD Announcements About Clock Rules**

In general, tournament organizers and directors are free to modify the standard USCF clock rules to meet the needs of their local events or clubs. However, such changes should be listed in any advance publicity for the tournament and must be announced prior to the start of the first round.

For example: The standard USCF time delay setting for a sudden death time control is five seconds per move. An organizer who wishes to use a different time delay (e.g., zero seconds) is free to do so, but he or she must make an announcement about the change before the first round.

Players may not be penalized for following the standard USCF rules, unless a clear effort has been made to inform everyone about the intended change.

### **Shortening the Basic Time Control**

Some tournaments are run on very tight schedules, and organizers have expressed a concern that the time delay feature may delay the start of subsequent rounds. To accommodate these organizers, USCF has authorized the following option:

5Fa. The tournament director has the right to shorten the basic time control, in minutes, by the time delay used, in seconds. Examples: clocks for Game/60 with 5-second time delay (t/d5) may be set at 55 minutes instead of 60; Game/30 t/d5 may be set at 25 minutes and still be rated as Game/30. Game/10 with a 3-second time delay (t/d3) may be set starting at 7 minutes through 9 minutes.

The USCF stresses that shortening the basic time control is an option and should be announced in advance. The default rule is not to shorten the basic time control.

### **Q&A About the USCF's Clock Rules**

Q: My opponent and I are using a mechanical clock. My opponent makes a claim of insufficient losing chances. What do I do?

A: A claim of insufficient losing chances is to be interpreted as a draw offer. If you agree with the claim, the game is drawn. If you disagree, a TD will decide whether the opponent has a valid claim.

In addition to the options described under the section "The 'Insufficient Losing Chances' Rule", the director may, at his discretion, replace the mechanical clock with a digital clock with time delay feature.

If a TD chooses this option, the claimant gets half of his remaining time, up to but not exceeding one minute. The opponent's time is not adjusted. The default time delay of five seconds is used, and the game proceeds to a finish under the time delay rules. Either player may win, lose, or draw the game, and the game is over by normal means.

Q: My opponent insists that we use his digital clock with time delay feature. The time control is 30/90, 30/30, with no sudden death. I have a mechanical clock. Who is right?

A: For sudden death time controls or combined time controls, the order of preference is:

1. Digital clocks with time delay feature.
2. Mechanical clocks.
3. Digital clocks without time delay feature.

For time controls without a sudden death component, types 1 and 2 are considered equally preferable. In your specific case, because the time control does not have a sudden death component, the player with the Black pieces decides.

Q: My game started with a mechanical clock, but around move 20 my opponent wanted to switch to a digital clock with a time delay feature. Can he force me to change clocks?

A: The short answer is NO. For a game with a combined time control, e.g., 50 moves in two hours followed by sudden death in 30 minutes, the preferred procedure is to use a digital clock with time delay set at five seconds from the beginning of the game.

However, if the game started with a mechanical clock, it should remain, except in the case of an insufficient losing chances claim where a TD wishes to make a substitution. Similarly, a player does not have the right to force a TD who is evaluating an insufficient losing chances claim to substitute a digital clock with time delay. The decision whether to substitute belongs to a TD, not the player.

Q: In a tournament game, I had K+R+P versus my opponent's K+N. As I was hurrying to make my moves, my flag fell. Do I lose the game? Should I have made an insufficient losing chances claim?

A: The same rule applies in all situations: if your flag falls and your opponent does not have mating material, the game is drawn.

In the situation you describe, you could have made a successful insufficient losing chances claim (if you were using a mechanical clock — remember, the insufficient losing chances option does not apply with digital clocks with time delay). However, because an insufficient losing chances claim is to be interpreted as a draw offer anyway, you did the right thing by playing on.

Q: My opponent's digital clock has a signaling device that shows the number of moves that have been made. Is this legal?

A: Clocks with signaling devices and move counters ARE legal. However, because of the possibility of error, players are advised not to place too high a reliance on them during play.

Players must still keep score if they wish to make claims about whether the time control has been reached. The information provided by the clock cannot be used as the only evidence in a time control claim.

Q: My opponent made an insufficient losing chances claim (we were using a mechanical clock). A TD said it was a close call, and watched the game for no progress. After a few moves, I made a silly blunder and lost my Queen. Before a TD could make his ruling, my opponent said he was withdrawing his claim. Is that legal?

A: An insufficient losing chances claim can be interpreted as an extended draw offer. A TD has two options if the situation is too close to call. He may watch for no progress or temporarily deny the claim and invite either player to make a re-claim if the situation changes. Or, a TD might place a properly set delay clock on the game; however, that was not the case here.

The usual interpretation is, if a TD invites a re-claim, the offer is off the table, so to speak. If a TD is watching for a lack of progress, the offer is live for however long it takes a TD to resolve the claim.

A TD can declare the game drawn at any time while he is watching for a lack of progress (even if the claimant's flag falls).

A TD should resolve the claim as soon as the situation changes sufficiently to clearly show either the player does or does not have insufficient losing chances.

When your opponent made his insufficient losing chances claim, he was announcing that he was willing to accept a draw (if he could get one). Once you dropped your Queen, it became clear that your opponent had no losing chances, and a TD should have declared the game a draw.

Note: If your opponent had dropped his Queen, a TD would then have been able to deny his claim.

**Remember: Be careful what you claim!**