

# Arbiting Matters Too



Newsletter of the Chess Arbiters Association

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## Changes to the Laws

Looking at the timetable for the Olympiad showed that the number of free days had been reduced to one. Normally during the free days arbiters can, and often do attend meetings. Further examination showed that the Rules Commission was scheduled to meet **during** play, thereby hugely reducing the number of arbiters able to attend and express opinions on the proposed changes. Unlike in many previous years when the Laws were discussed there was not a second session so many decisions were taken as the result of email communications. I have yet to see a confirmed final version as the General Assembly (GA) did not make a decision this time passing Commission reports over to the Presidential Board. As I write it seems likely that the 10 move rule has been passed—claims for an illegal move must be made within 10 moves or the right to do so is lost. Quickplay finishes also seem certain to be removed from the Appendices to the Laws and placed in Guidelines. I believe that the intention is that they will be removed entirely in the 2021 version by which time it is believed everyone should be using increments.

## Olympiad Security

There has been much talk about this in the chess press and various forums. The article on page 2 will give some idea of how unimpressed I was by what I saw with regard to security. It can be difficult to monitor such a large chess event effectively but I'm afraid that several blogs and other reports indicate huge gaps in the security systems employed. Having said that, getting the correct balance is very difficult as few of the players are professional and expecting the standards of a top event. I will say that security here was no worse, and probably better, than other Olympiads I have witnessed.

## **Changes to the Laws of Chess**

140 proposals for amendments to the Laws were received by the Rules Commission for the new Laws which will come into effect on 1st July 2017. There was also one proposal not to change anything. These proposals were considered by the Commissioners at a meeting in July. In September in Baku during the Olympiad further discussion took place and many revisions occurred. I believe that the version presented to the General Assembly was edition 13. Unusually the Commission Reports were not approved by the GA but were passed to the Presidential Board for acceptance. I understand that there should not be a problem with the proposed Laws but await confirmation of this.

A detailed list of the changes will appear here and on the CAA website when the Laws are confirmed.



## **Anti-Cheating Measures at the Olympiad**

The Anti-Cheating measures used during the Olympiad in Baku have certainly caused considerable discussion. The headline catching incident was the request for GM Nigel Short to undergo scanning during his game. More about this later.

Before the event the main comments were directed at the instruction that players were not to bring pens or watches as well as the more normal exclusion on phones and tablets. Many felt that this was a step too far.

Going into the event and security initially looked good. Volunteers checked accreditation badges outside the building, sending people to the appropriate doorway. Anyone wearing a player's badge also had to have a green card indicating that they

were actually playing and not the reserve for the day. However in reality things were not so good. At the various entrances everyone was asked to put phones, etc to the side and to go through scanners. Most were then given a second scan using a hand-held device. Any phones etc were then picked up by the owner and taken to a desk where a token was issued to be redeemed on leaving. Anyone who had anything to deposit was accompanied by a volunteer to the aforementioned desk. It is believed that whilst some handed over phones others may just have passed over their watch or other banned objects. I certainly saw some reclaiming their phones but not immediately leaving the building. It would have been possible for them to re-enter the tournament hall in possession of their phone.



As the tournament progressed arbiters at least were allowed to have their own watches. I have good reason to believe others had too. Certainly small cameras were allowed after an initial ban. What was allowed in became increasingly bewildering. On one day an arbiter was allowed to have his watch but was not allowed to have the power supply for his computer which had to be checked in. It should perhaps be emphasised that his computer was back at his hotel room.

During the first round I pulled up 4 people for using phones. I wasn't able to do much with three of them as they were walking past outside the ringed off area. The one I passed on to security was simply told to put it away. There are many complaints that phones belonging to 'official visitors' were constantly ringing during play.

As another measure players were instructed to inform arbiters when they were going to the toilet. Arbiters were not told what to do with this info. I kept a note of

the move number when the player left the room but it was probably more common for the match arbiter not to record anything. Many felt this was embarrassing where, in particular, you had a male arbiter and a female player.

In addition to these security measures there were also arbiters with small scanning devices. In the first rounds these were conspicuous by the beeping noise they made. These were to be used away from the board but during play. Therefore anyone going to the toilet or smoking area was a potential 'target' for the random scans. These scans were to be done primarily during the first two hours or at the end of a game. It is rumoured that an over zealous arbiter was trying to build up his body count of leading GMs.

The stories of Nigel Short's brush with a security arbiter have been much exaggerated. What is clear is that the request for him to be scanned occurred outwith the 2 hour period and was during his game. It is extremely unlikely that it occurred when he was in time trouble. What didn't help was that there was an alleged prior incident between Short and the Arbiter making the scanning request, Australian Jamie Kenmure. The exact nature of this is unclear but may be a result of the 2014 FIDE Presidential elections.

Chess24 reports Short as saying *"I can't describe it. At some moment I went to the toilet as, of course, I do several times during the game, and then when I was on my way back - incidentally in time pressure, I say incidentally, because I have, probably, I don't recall exactly, something like half an hour for the next 20 moves... if not time trouble, it's definitely time pressure - and this idiot of an arbiter, this red-headed arbiter, Jamie Kenmure from Australia, tried to stop me, and I just passed him. I was so annoyed at this stage. Actually, he was lucky. If he had tried to stop me, he may well have been physically assaulted. I was so angry that anyone would try and interfere with something which I consider to be a sacred rite, that is playing chess, a game I love and respect so much. You've got some jumped-up little p---- of an arbiter and nobody, especially not a worthless individual who is not fit to lick my boots, should try to interfere with my game, in a very important round, just because he has been given the power, because he is part of Kirsan Ilyumzhinov's team, and now he gets invited as an arbiter to all these events.*

*Yeah, I was very angry indeed. People have said to me that rules are rules. It's nonsense! When the laws make no sense they can go and f--- themselves! This is one example of regulations which make no sense. They are made by people who want to*

*give power to themselves. When you have a group of arbiters they will never say, "oh, we should give ourselves less power!" They only give themselves more power and this is not to the benefit of chess. It's hugely damaging for the sport. I've spent my entire life involved in something I really love doing and these idiots are attempting to destroy this. (huge laugh) That was my diplomatic answer! Do you want me to give my real answer?!"*

Despite Short's claims, many arbiters at the event were not happy about the during match inspections.

As the result of post game security checks the result of one game was overturned. The Japanese player Tang Tang had his win against GM Odeev overturned when it was discovered in the search that he had a phone in a trouser pocket. Apparently in his hurry to leave his hotel he had forgotten to remove it. He was allowed to continue in the event as he had not been found to have used a chess engine during his game. The win, though a surprise, was more a case of the GM losing than him winning. Without wishing to cast doubts on Tang's version of events, it is surprising that the initial security scan failed to detect it.



#### **FIDE Awards**

Stewart Reuben was honoured for his service to FIDE with Honorary Life Membership. This is rarely given and is therefore very prestigious.

David Welch was also presented with his FIDE arbiters' award at the FIDE General Assembly at the Olympiad in Baku. The picture shows David being presented with his award by the Arbiters' Commission Chairman Takis Nikolopoulos.

The CAA congratulates both of its members on these achievements.

## **Dealing with an Allegation of Cheating**

During the Czech Open it is known that a player and his mother accused an opponent of cheating in an unspecified way. The reason for the claim seems to have stemmed from a previous encounter i.e. there was some sort of 'history' between the players. Do not think that we are talking about a young, inexperienced player here. The person making the accusation was an eighteen year old IM.

The arbiters watched the game and saw no signs of cheating. Things came to a head when the accused player himself complained about the presence of the mother and her constant talking to the son. During his complaint it was revealed that he had been accused of cheating. Things quickly escalated from that point. The accused, upset by the allegations, demanded that action be taken against the IM. The arbiter did at this point ban the mother from the playing hall but would only issue the IM with a warning. According to the Arbiter's report the IM continued to believe that his opponent was cheating. The accused player refused to continue the game.

A letter from the organiser states: "We monitored the game very closely and we didn't find Mr. X's behavior suspicious at all. We told so to Mr. A and his mother and we also refused to fulfill Mrs. A requests such as to search his bag or clothes or forbid him to leave the playing hall since her claims were not based on any evidence. However we didn't ask her to stop observe the game yet, because we wanted her to see that her claims were ridiculous ...".

Hindsight is a wonderful thing so it is easy to say that things were not handled in the best way. Having had to deal with similar situations I have some sympathy with the organiser for trying to keep it low key. However, the FIDE Anti-Cheating arrangements, which you would expect to have been in place at such an event, require anyone making an accusation to complete a form. This form serves a variety of purposes. It can highlight a player that the arbiters will watch carefully but it also helps prevent malicious accusation or can provide evidence against those making such allegations.

Accusations of cheating are becoming more common so what should the arbiter/organiser do when one is received?

Firstly, accusations come in two forms the first being a definite accusation and the second being an expression of concern. In either case it is worth getting the person to write down their concerns. If they refuse that does not automatically mean the end of the matter. In the case of what is believed to be a malicious accusation FIDE should still be informed. If it is felt that the concerns were genuine then the accused should still be monitored. Arbiters should also remember the story of The Boy Who Cried “Wolf.” A parent with a history of complaining may actually be correct for once!

The Chess Scotland Standards’ Committee might also be invited to consider taking action against a cheat or against someone making false accusations. There does not appear to be a similar body in England though Wales does have a Vexatious Complaints and Harassment Policy which might be used where a malicious claim is made. Ireland has held an EGM to introduce a Code of Conduct.

### **Things to do**

- Document the complaint
- Investigate
- If the complaint comes from a third party ensure that person cannot interfere in the game.

Even if no formal complaint is received it is worth making a note of the accusation and the parties involved. This might be useful if a similar accusation is received later in the tournament.

Keep an eye on the player accused. In particular note the move number when the player leaves the board. Computer analysis can identify ‘suspect’ moves. If you are using a detector scanner such a player may be one of those randomly selected. It can also be worth asking previous opponents the general question about any concerns they may have had.

If a parent or coach has made a complaint it may be diplomatic to suggest that they stay well away from the board in question to allow you to watch it and not to ‘warn’ the possible miscreant.

In the case being considered the letter from the organiser states that it was the arbiter who informed Mr X about the allegation, the player himself says that it was his accusers in the discussions which followed. In either case it is doubtful if Mr X was in a fit mental state to continue the game after hearing the accusation. An arbiter

should not inform a player during a game that he is a suspect without having the proof to disqualify him. If the player is guilty he has been warned and will be more careful possibly avoiding detection because of this and if he is innocent he may be too annoyed to continue playing to the previous level.

The arbiter also has a responsibility to reassure the complainant that the accusation is being investigated. The arbiters should take whatever means they think appropriate to do this. It is unlikely that an arbiter would demand that a player subjected themselves to a search but it is possible that a player could be asked if they would be willing to undergo a search.

A refusal to undergo a search is not proof of guilt but is sufficient reason to exclude the player from the tournament under Article 11.3b if the arbiter decides that is appropriate.

### **Arbiting with DGT Boards**

Live sensory boards can prove to be a valuable ally to the arbiter. If a repetition claim has been made on a board which is broadcasting the games live to the Internet it is possible to check such a claim in a fraction of the time by using a computer and playing through the moves in front of the players. I prefer to check the position from the beginning of the game rather than playing backwards from the current position and counting the times that the position occurs. The second



method is almost certainly quicker but it does run the risk that there may have been an illegal move played earlier in the game which an arbiter using the old manual method would have detected. [After I wrote this, an English player at the European Youth in Prague correctly had a draw claim rejected but because the arbiter worked backwards

from the scoresheet an earlier illegal move was missed.] The same obviously applies for claims under the 50 move rule, though here an alert arbiter will have identified games where there is the potential for a claim and already checked when the 50 moves will have been reached.



The arbiter can also use the live game broadcast to establish which games are reaching a critical stage from the point of view of time management ie are nearing the time control. Two caveats here however. The time display on monitors broadcasting the live games is not always correct. There is a flaw in some software often used which means there can be a time difference between the clock and the display on the 'demo board' of up to 13 seconds. The second point to note is that players prefer to see an active arbiter watching their board than one sitting at the other end of the room staring at a computer screen, perhaps booking his next holiday for all the player knows.

At the Olympiad arbiters are instructed to take the players to an area where the game is played through even though all the games are broadcast live. In tournaments which have a rule preventing agreed draws before a fixed number of moves it is important that draws by repetition reached before this number are checked. Draws after the number will be assumed to be by agreement if both players incorrectly agree that the repetition rule has been satisfied. If the players incorrectly believe there is a draw by repetition in less than the prescribed number of moves (usually 30) then technically the score will be 0-0. There have been cases where one player has refused to play on and the result has been recorded as a win for the opponent.

At the Commonwealth Championships in Glasgow in 2014 there was a draw by repetition claim made. The arbiter played through the game with the players whilst I went to the live games operator and had him check. I was able to go to the board and confirm the arbiters decision was correct when he made it a few minutes later. However, if a player disputes the computer then I would still play through the game. This happened at the Hastings Masters where a player was convinced that he had made the time control. The monitor above his head clearly showed he was a move short but the player did not accept this. I therefore allowed him to play through the game on another board until he was convinced that he had lost.

As indicated above DGT boards will accept illegal moves. This is a mixed blessing. It would not be desirable for a game to just stop broadcasting when an illegal move was played leaving the Internet audience to puzzle over the result of a game which was still continuing in the playing hall but was no longer being transmitted.

I believe the Monroi system issued an alert to the operator when such a situation arose or when a draw by repetition could be claimed. Obviously it did not inform the player. (I use the past tense because I am uncertain if the Monroi system is still in operation. Areas of its website have not been updated for a considerable time and the 'Shop' says that no units are currently available for sale.)

### **Arbiting at the European Youth**

This year's event was held in Prague and had about 1300 entries spread over 12 sections. Because of the size it was spread over 3 halls. There was a Chief Arbiter and 2 Deputy Chiefs with a hall each. Each section had a Sector Arbiter in charge of it and one or two arbiters as well based on the size of the section. The top boards from each section were in the main hall and were broadcast live on DGT boards. The arbiting team were expected to enter the scores of the other games. Pairings were computer generated by two other arbiters who also co-ordinated the printouts and files to the Internet.

There was an elaborate set-up for doing this. Each arbiter was given their own log-in and Chessbase 13 was used as it connects to the cloud. (For the less computer literate this basically means that the games were stored somewhere in hyper-space and could be accessed by anyone on the team.) The arbiters with the younger sections tended to have many more problems as the children were a bit more emotional and the scoresheets less legible.

Results were entered onto the computer system as they happened. These results were then sent at regular times to the Chess-Results website and to the congress website where they could be seen by the world.

My section had a bad start when the round 1 pgn file (the place that you click on before entering the moves played) was not available. A test file appeared for the first 90 minutes and then for the next 30 minutes various files appeared showing apparently deleted games. Eventually after over two hours of waiting a suitable file appeared.

Inputing games continued well after the round had finished. Some of the scoresheets were fun to decipher, not helped by being in a variety of languages. One language had B for knight and N for bishop, particularly off putting for the British arbiters. It was also common in trying to work out what was played to jump from one player's scoresheet to the other where often the same letter was

used for different pieces and frustration when you discovered you had moved the incorrect piece as you had forgotten that you had changed back to the more legible attempt. Will the ECF introduce this idea into the British Championships?

Events such as this are a great way to meet arbiters from other countries and to discuss the way things work in their home country.

The players were allowed to enter the hall 20 minutes before the start of the round. Coaches and parents were allowed in for the first 10 minutes with heads of delegation allowed back in after 1 hour. Photographers were allowed constant access. One photographer seemed to constantly forget that flash was not allowed after the start of the game.

As well as the usual tears when a game was lost one player was quite agitated early in his game. When an interpreter was found it was discovered that the source of the 8 year old's anguish was nothing to do with his game but that his girlfriend in the other room had accidentally ripped her name badge from its lanyard. My suggestion that he should be thanked and informed that because of his information the girl would be expelled from the tournament was not followed through. Some people have no sense of fun!

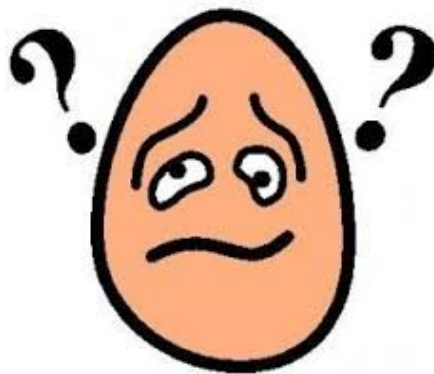
A first for me was to have players who would not press their clock on the Sabbath. It was known in advance that this would happen so assistants were organised to press the clock and record their moves as necessary. The two players in this case were from a strict Jewish environment where pressing the clock was seen as working on the Sabbath which is forbidden by their religion. Playing on a sensory board could have been seen in the same way and one of the players avoided this by only one board (though I'm sure it would have been re-arranged if necessary). Playing the game is seen as leisure and allowed. The players concerned started the game with a 10 minute reduction in their time and the visually handicapped rules were applied where appropriate. Both games ran smoothly though in one of them the player occasionally pressed his own clock through instinct. On the second Saturday (the final day) there was potentially a problem when the opponent's representative made it known that they wanted their player on the live boards. I'm not sure how this was resolved but the assistant could also have made the moves as announced to him.

The event also carried out security checks. This was first done before the start of round 3 and continued from then on when several pairs were chosen at random

and asked to show the contents of their bags and pockets to two arbiters. Surprisingly everyone was happy with the procedures, including all but one parent. An arbiter was also stationed at the door to ensure no player exited during the 'search'.

One player was caught with a phone in her possession and another admitted to having one. Both were defaulted but were allowed to continue in the tournament. In neither case was it likely that the phone was going to be used, it was just forgetfulness/stupidity.

In a first for me I was asked to translate what a player was saying to another arbiter. My translation was from English into ... English! The other arbiter could not understand the boy's not very strong Irish accent so I had to simply repeat what he had said. (Actually I answered his question and then told the arbiter what it was about.)



### **What would you do?**

The following incident occurred in the U10 section of the European Youth in Prague.

A player (A) left his board for a few minutes and returned to find the pieces and clock reset. The opponent (B) is claiming a win on time. The returning player contests this claim but admits leaving the board with about 5 minutes only on his clock. Could the player have been away for long enough for the flag to have fallen? The arbiter is summoned. What would you do in this situation?

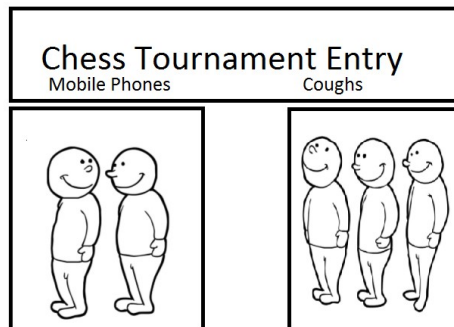
**Answer:** The arbiter concerned first established who had switched the clock off. By sign language B indicates that he had done so. It is therefore B who has destroyed the evidence of his claim so the game must continue. B is given the time he said he had and A, who had a winning position, is given a few minutes. B refused to continue the game stating his position was lost so the game was awarded to A. Had A said that he had switched off the clock the argument would have been reversed and A would have had to explain why he had destroyed the evidence that he still had time on his clock. If neither player had admitted turning off the clock then the resetting of the pieces by one player in the absence of the other would be unusual when claiming a win (not so if resigning).

Player B subsequently denied having turned off the clock, though there were witnesses to his previous admission of having done so.

This incident occurred in an early round but Player B had a few more incidents in later rounds which raised the suspicions that he had been trying to cheat.

### Incidents from the Olympiad

The Board 2 of a team came up to me to complain about the coughing of the opposition Board 1 particularly when it was the opponent's move. I agreed to monitor the situation. In the 40 minutes where I made notes he coughed mildly 4 times, twice on his own time and twice on the opponent's. The person who had made the complaint had coughed 5 times in the same period and much more loudly. His teammate on Board 4, well I gave up counting when his coughing reached double figures!! Now what was that phrase about kettles and pots?



In the Olympiad at the end of a match the two captains are expected to sign a sheet of paper confirming the result. If the Captain leaves before the end then the last player should sign and collect the green cards which each player must have to enter the tournament hall the following day. These are taken off of players at the end of their games and returned to the Captain at the end of a match to give to his players the following day.

I had one Captain who decided to leave after 5 hours. He did not tell his last player. The player concerned duly lost his game, signed both scoresheets and immediately attempted to leave. I had to chase after him to get him back to sign the protocol as it is called. The Security Guard at the exit to the section saw me pursuing the player and stopped him for me. He returned to my desk to sign. I then turned to the opposing Captain to get him to sign. Whilst doing this the player again walked smartly away. For a second time I had to give pursuit, this time to return the 4 green player cards. Again the Security Guard came to my rescue.

A well known arbiter/organiser/ECF Board member managed to cause the self ser-

vice checkout machine at his local supermarket to take a hissy-fit and have to be re-booted. He achieved this feat by feeding it with Azerbaijani coins brought back from the Olympiad instead of those of a British persuasion! He is not a driver so was probably unaware of the convention that such coins should be fed into parking meters.

The same person queued for about an hour to register for his room in Baku. He stepped into the lift and the plastic keycard slid out of its cardboard holder and fell down the gap between the lift and the floor. A further 40 minutes of queuing at reception and he had another keycard!

In the first round a player claimed his clock was not working. The arbiter lifted it up and pressed the button a few times to confirm that it was working. The players continued the game. At move 36 the clock mysteriously added on the additional time normally reserved for move 40. The players and arbiter were puzzled by this. It was only on the bus back to the hotel after the game that one of the players realised why the clocks had added on the time 'early'. The arbiter's actions had convinced the clock that 40 moves had been played.

### **British Blitz**

In the last issue the case of the Indian player who was declared lost by knocking over a piece in a blitz game after pressing the opponent's clock was discussed (AM17 page 2). Between writing that and publication similar incidents occurred at the Blitz event at the British Championships. It would appear that it was announced during the event that knocking over a piece and starting the opponent's clock would be treated as an illegal move and result in a loss. There were apparently a few instances of this taking place. There was also one instance where I have had two totally different versions of events so am unable to comment authoritatively. The game in question was between R Pert and Ghasi in the second last round. Pert had previously lost a game against Graham after making an illegal move and expected to be given the win here.

It is universally agreed that the start of the last round was considerably delayed whilst the situation was investigated. It is not clear what happened in the game in question. A piece was knocked over but the exact order of events is unclear. Was the clock pressed before the piece was replaced? Did the piece fall after the clock was pressed?

If players are to lose games because of pieces falling over then the organisers may have a duty to regard the equipment that is being used and upgrade it if necessary. With an unweighted plastic set there may be a significant number of pieces falling over. In the tension of a fast game hands get sweaty and pieces stick to them. A weighted and/or wooden piece is unlikely to adhere to a finger long enough for its centre of gravity to be moved far enough over for it to become unstable but a lighter piece could easily do so.

### **Arbiters' Training Project**

The FIDE Arbiters' Commission has set up a sub committee devoted to the development of the training and the continuing education for Arbiters. This is an attempt by FIDE to ensure that arbiters keep up to date with Law changes. It will also look at the possibility of providing basic training courses for arbiters from countries which do not have a formal qualification system. The proposal on which this sub-committee is based suggested that all arbiters should be assessed annually. My reading of the feeling at the meeting was that assessment every 4 years may be more appropriate. The initial proposal is for on-line courses at three levels, NA, FA and IA. Since the FA and IA titles are for life these cannot be removed from an arbiter who fails the assessment but perhaps the licence could be suspended. This can happen at present if the arbiter is inactive for two years. Britain is represented on this sub committee by Alex Holoczak and Alex McFarlane. People with other forenames are allowed!



It will be interesting to see the results. Hopefully it will lead to an increase in arbiting standards though there is a concern that the 'examination fees' may simply be seen as a way of raising funds for FIDE.

### Arbiters Abroad

David Sedgwick was officiating at the Sinquefield Cup in St Louis. Lara Barnes has been appointed as Deputy Chief Arbiter at the World Youth U18, U16 and U14 Championships in Khanty Mansiysk. Alex McFarlane has also been invited as an arbiter.

### Wanna Buy a Chess Site, Guv?

A website called siteprice.org gives a value for websites. The values it gives makes interesting reading.

Our CAA site is valued at \$300. The FIDE site is worth considerably more at \$229,102 (fide.com).

Other chess site values:

ECForum \$24,097

ECF \$5710

Chess Scotland \$7905

Welsh Chess Union \$1129

USChess.Org is worth \$89,003

The Scarborough congress is worth \$198

By comparison the BBC.co.uk website is valued at just under \$46 million.

I will leave it to others to speculate on why the Chess Scotland site is worth more than the ECF one.

### Pictures in this issue

The pictures from the Olympiad in Baku have been taken from the FIDE website. Thanks are given to the Official FIDE photographers for their use.

### FIDE Arbiters' Magazine

The third edition of this magazine is now available. Printed copies were distributed at the Olympiad. It should be available soon on the FIDE website.

<http://arbiters.fide.com/fide-arbiters-magazine.html>

### CAA Officials

Chairman - Lara Barnes

Secretary - Alan Ruffle

Treasurer - Tony Corfe

Chief Arbiter - Alex McFarlane

Information officer - Alex McFarlane

Committee - David Welch, Kevin Staveley and Neville Belinfante.

ECF delegate - Vacant.

Chess Scotland Delegate -

Alex McFarlane

Welsh Chess Union - Kevin Staveley

Independent Examiner - Richard Jones



**Items for inclusion in future issues should be sent to Alex McFarlane**

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