**Scoresheet ‘Writes’ and Wrongs**

A common problem, but not usually serious, is the recording of moves. In almost all cases this is caused by ignorance rather than malice.

**Recording**

A player must write his moves in algebraic in either the language of the country in which the event is held or his native language if this is different. Descriptive notation has not been allowed for a considerable number of years. Recording in descriptive could prevent a player from claiming a draw by repetition.

A player must record his previous move before making his next move. This does NOT mean that the opponent’s previous move has to be written before moving. It is acceptable for a player to move and then record his opponent’s previous move and the one he has just played.

A player is not allowed to record his move before playing it.

If a player has a disability that prevents them from recording then they should not be punished. If the player cannot record for any other reason then they should have a time reduction. Some players will not record for religious reasons. Possibly an inexperienced player will not know how to record.

If the time control is one with an increment of 30 seconds or more a player must record every move. If the increment is less than 30 seconds (including zero) a player can stop recording when he has less than 5 minutes remaining. The opponent must continue to record until he too has less than 5 minutes. Some players wrongly believe that if their opponent has stopped recording then they can too.

A player who has legally stopped recording does not need to record again even if his time returns above 5 minutes until the time control is reached. If there is a time control such as 40 moves in 90 minutes, a player who has not been recording must complete his scoresheet on his own time when the time control is reached. An arbiter will insist on this only when the time is used up and not when the 40th move is believed to have been played.

**What is allowed on the scoresheet**

* Tournament details eg Anytown Open, round number, date
* Players’ names, ratings and clubs
* Indication of time control eg 40 in 90min+30 min, 30 sec inc. It would also be acceptable to circle or underline move 40.
* Moves after they are played and appropriate clock times.
* Draw offers (=)
* Indicating moves for draw claims e.g. starring the move of the last capture
* Ticks for moves if the player is allowed to stop recording

Also allowed on the scoresheet after the completion of the game is the result and signature of the players.

**What is not allowed on the scoresheet**

* Annotations (e. g. !, ?)
* Other messages/notes
* Moves before they are played, even if forced
* A result before the game has been completed

Some scoresheets have a line for the name of the opening. It is probably best to leave this blank until after the game as it could be seen as advice on the opening line to be played.

**Arbiter Actions**

If the opponent complains that a player is breaking the rules then the arbiter should monitor the situation and take appropriate action.

If a player is failing to record then a tap on the scoresheet before he makes his next move is often sufficient. If this fails then a verbal warning should be given. If the offence continues then a time penalty is given (normally extra time to the opponent but possibly reduction of the player’s time). Continually committing the same offence will lead to the loss of the game.

It is common for a player to fail to record during a series of captures and then to complete his scoresheet afterwards. In such circumstances an arbiter might note this and have a quiet word after the game.

If a player records one move before playing it the arbiter may wish to issue a warning after the game. If this happens several times then the arbiter must step in and issue a warning. The time taken between writing a move and playing it may affect how the arbiter reacts. If the move is written immediately before playing this might be treated as a relatively minor offence but if the gap between the two actions is considerable then there is much more chance of this being seen as making or referring to notes. If the written move is subsequently changed for another then this is quite serious and an arbiter may bypass the warning stage and go for a more severe penalty.

From time to time a player will claim that he is being distracted/disturbed by his opponent continually offering draws. The number of appearances of (=) on the scoresheet will help the arbiter decide what action to take. If a player has not recorded the draw offers he has greatly weakened his case.

**General points on scoresheets**

A player, who has legally stopped recording, claims a draw by repetition. He cannot prove it using his own scoresheet but the arbiter can use the opponent’s or one he has kept himself (including sensory boards) to check the claim.

If the player has stopped recording illegally then the arbiter may still investigate the claim but its success may be affected by other matters. For example, if the arbiter had already warned the player about this several times, even though his draw claim is valid the arbiter may forfeit him the game for consistently breaking the Laws.

In a game with 10 second increments a player with only a few minutes left on his clock passes his scoresheet to a team mate. Is the team mate allowed to continue to score on the player’s behalf? Provided the recording is done out of sight of the player this is acceptable. The player can still make draw claims but cannot look at the scoresheet before doing so unless the rules allow this. It can be used to check the accuracy of the claim.