

Disputes and Code of Conduct

Introduction

At most junior chess events (and no doubt other sporting events) there are disputes and disagreements. Some of these are caused by a misunderstanding of the rules and some by a lack of maturity of not being able to handle defeat or setbacks.

The arbiters and control team are doing their absolute best to ensure fair play and that the Laws of Chess being upheld. But they cannot watch every move of every game and many disputes need to be handled on a 'reasonable endeavours basis. I.e. the arbiter/controller will listen to both parties and if there is no consensus then they will make a judgement call.

As we cannot cater for every possibility we insist, as terms of entry, that players and parents adhere to the following Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct

For players

1. Follow and play by the rules of the game
2. Play for the fun of it – not to please your parents or coach
3. Remember that a positive outcome is to enjoy the game and improve your skills.
Winning is nice but not the most important thing
4. Never argue with the arbiter's final decision
5. Respect your opponent regardless of gender, ability or ethnicity. Shake hands before and after the game

For parents

1. Remember that children play the game for their enjoyment – not yours
2. Be positive on the child's efforts rather than winning or losing
3. Encourage your child to play according to the rules and to adhere to the Code of Conduct. Encourage them to learn from the experience rather than argue with the arbiter
4. Always respect the arbiter's decision and never question the integrity of the arbiter.
Encourage children to do the same
5. Be a great role model for your child in how to try their best and how to handle setbacks

Dispute process

During the game – for players

If during the game you feel like your opponent has done something wrong (whether deliberately or accidentally) you should stop the clocks and raise your hand to get the attention of the arbiter or section controller. Do not engage in an argument with your opponent because this will make it harder for the arbiter or section controller to resolve the dispute properly. Explain to the section controller what has happened and allow your opponent to put across his or her point of view.

Never lie. Losing hurts but we must learn to deal with this in good grace. If you give false information to the arbiter eventually you will be found out and disqualified.

If your opponent is saying something to the arbiter which you know to be false – stay calm and repeat your point of view to the arbiter. It can be upsetting if you know that someone is lying but losing your temper and getting upset will not help the arbiter. Ultimately, they need to make a decision based on what they have heard and observed from the game. Occasionally this decision may go against you but you must learn to accept this as the arbiter is doing the best they can. If your opponent has cheated remember that in the long run they are only cheating themselves and you can be proud that you did your best and played an honest game.

Think about the mistakes that referees and umpires make in football, cricket or tennis. And that is when they are watching all the players. Criticising the officials is frowned on in those sports at the highest levels and we do not tolerate it either in the UK Chess Challenge.

After the game - for parents

In very rare circumstances you may need to raise an issue with the Chief Arbiter. This can be done in the arbiter's office. Please note that the only circumstances you should escalate an issue to the Chief Arbiter is for one of the following circumstances

- A result has been recorded incorrectly
- A section controller has mishandled a rule of the game

Please note that the following circumstances won't be overturned and you should not raise a dispute if:

- Two children have claimed a version of the truth and an arbiter/section controller has applied a judgement call that went against your child
- Your child claimed an opponent did something wrong but did not raise their hand to attract the section controller's attention

Version: 6th June 2018