

Minutes of the 2010-11 IHSA Chess Advisory Committee Meeting
March 21, 2011

The IHSA Chess Advisory meeting was held at the IHSA Office in Bloomington, Illinois, on Monday, March 21, 2011, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Committee members present were: Chairman Chris Merli, Urbana (University); Fred Beilfuss, Wheaton (W. Warrenville South); Mark Grishaber, Chicago (Young); Sean Fisher-Rohde, Palatine (H.S.); Patrick Coulton, Charleston, and Neal Suwe, Chicago (Kelly). Mike McHale of Byron was absent. Scott Johnson, IHSA Assistant Executive Director, and Betsy Dynako, floor director of the stewarding crew, were also in attendance.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee recommended the following changes to the Terms and Conditions:

1. Section III-F.

Recommendation: Change the team tournament requirement to state that a team tournament used to satisfy this requirement is expected to use IHSA rules.

Rationale: Coaches have found that many team tournaments used to satisfy the team tournament requirement do not use IHSA rules. The original rationale for this provision was to allow coaches and players to become accustomed to playing in a tournament that is similar to the IHSA state tournament.

Approved by consent

2. Section VI-E.

Recommendation: Clarify that the time control of 60 minutes per player includes a 5-second delay.

Rationale: This is current practice with modern chess clocks. The change is made for clarification purposes.

Approved by consent

3. Section VIII-E.

Recommendation: Alter the tie-breaker formula
from $(\text{match points} + 10) \times (\text{opponent points} + 1)^2 / 100$
to $(\text{match points} + 10) \times (\text{opponent points}^2 + 1) / 100$

Rationale: Changing the formula places some slight additional emphasis on the quality of the opponent when breaking ties among teams with the same number of wins.

Approved by consent

4. **Section VIII-H-2 and 3.**

Recommendation: Specify that a communication card may be used only by the "official" representative (an adult specified on the List of Participants) rather than an "authorized" representative (which some schools have been interpreting to include a designated student).

Rationale: Communication cards are intended for use only between players and their coaches.

Approved by consent

5. **Delete Section VIII-H-3a.**

Recommendation: Remove the provision that allows a Communication Card to be used to inform the player of a meal or an emergency.

Rationale: The committee believed that information about meals can be communicated before the round and is not necessary during a match. In addition, allowing the coach to write any text about a meal presents an opportunity for abuse. Information about emergencies can always be handled by involving a steward.

Approved by consent

6. **Section VIII-H-3b.**

Recommendation: Loosen the restrictions on when a Communication Card may be used by eliminating the provision that it can only be used when the player's clock is under five minutes.

Rationale: The committee felt that the main restriction on Communication Cards (only when two games remain on the table) is enough to curtail abuse. The further limitation (only when the player's clock is under five minutes) often allows only one coach to communicate about a game, which is unfair.

Approved by consent

7. **Section IX-A.**

Recommendation: Remove the provision that restricts players from reentering the playing room after the first 60 minutes.

Rationale: This provision is no longer necessary and has not been enforced since moving to the Civic Center Ballroom, which is much quieter than the previous location.

Approved by consent

RULE CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee recommended the following changes to the Chess Rule Book

1. Add Rule 7-7 and Rule 7-8.

Recommendation:

7-7: A determined move is sufficient to satisfy conditions for rules 11-1, 12-1, 12-7.

7-8: A move is completed when a player, having released a piece, pushes the clock.

Rationale: Coaches and players were confused about the difference between a determined move and a completed move.

2. Rule 17-11.

Recommendation: Change to specify that a player who does not wish to continue a lost game without resigning may be penalized up to forfeiture from further play in the tournament.

Rationale: In a few cases, a player in a completely lost situation, instead of playing or resigning, will simply sit at the table and force his opponent to watch the clock run out. Rewording this section allows the steward to penalize the player as appropriate to the situation.

3. Add Rule 17-11-4.

Recommendation:

17-11-4: If a player is at the board and refuses to move, the steward may request that the player make a move within a reasonable time (as determined by the steward), or face penalties.

Rationale: Allows the steward to intervene in situations where a player in a completely lost situation refuses to play or resign.

4. Rule Clarifications (Rule 11)

Recommendation: Add the note that for a handshake to constitute an agreement, it must be in response to a verbal offer of a draw, a declaration of checkmate, or a resignation.

Rationale: A handshake alone does not constitute an agreement to end the match. The handshake must be in response to some verbal cue. Otherwise, the match is not officially over and may be immediately resumed if one of the players has a move.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee discussed the production of video rules presentations. A mandatory video for coaches was in place prior to this year's tournament and was well received. This summer the committee plans to add a rules video for players (developed by Sean Fisher-Rohde) and a rules video for stewards (developed by Betsy Dynako).

Betsy Dynako, the floor director for the stewards, presented the results of her survey of stewards and comments from Ken Lewandowski, former coach and current steward, were also reviewed. The committee decided that establishing a certification process for stewards (or tournament directors) is not necessary at this time. Instead, it decided that developing an instructional video and expecting stewards to watch it prior to the state tournament would increase knowledge of the rules and provide for more consistent rulings among stewards. Betsy also discussed the possibility of establishing different levels of stewards at the tournament and compensating them differently. (This year some stewards were informally designated as "mentor stewards" and served a sounding boards for other stewards when questions arose.) With regard to pay, it has been many years since steward compensation was increased, and Betsy asked the IHSA to look at the situation and compare it with other non-athletic activities.

The committee discussed spectator problems around the top Boards and believed this is best addressed by reconfiguring the area inside the ropes. Betsy will work to develop a new plan. It was also suggested that signs calling for "Complete Silence" be placed at strategic points around the roped-off area.

The committee asked that the Peoria Civic Center add more concession personnel during the rush hour at lunch.

The committee discussed conducting the Pairing Committee meeting via teleconference with simultaneous display on the Internet. It was decided to keep the existing format because it encourages in-person communication among the coaches and helps identify potential problems and solutions, especially important just prior to the state tournament. It was suggested, however, that committee members who might not otherwise be able to make the trip (usually those from downstate) be allowed to experiment with the remote process.

The committee discussed appropriate dress for the state tournament. The chess tournament traditionally has allowed wide latitude in individual expression, but one particular incident on the awards stand pushed the edge of the envelope a little too far. The committee decided that during play, the standard is that if a player or coach finds a player's attire to be distracting, a steward may be contacted to intervene. On the awards stand, the IHSA Administrator may react as appropriate.

The committee discussed ways to make the pairings for rounds 2 through 7 more easily accessible to players and coaches filing back into the ballroom. One method, already implemented for 2012, will allow anyone with a smartphone to view the pairings online immediately after they are approved by the pairings director. Additionally, the committee discussed the possibility of projecting the pairings on a wall somewhere inside or outside of the ballroom.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

The committee discussed the possibility of altering the way the pairings are made in the final round. The committee recognized that in the final round, fighting for tie-breaker points becomes irrelevant and a win is the only objective. With that in mind, a proposal asked that teams with the same number of wins be paired in traditional top vs. bottom pairings (as used in a typical sports bracket), based on original seed number or based on the 6th-round standings, instead of Swiss pairings that pair the top of the top half vs. the top of the bottom half, and so on. The committee felt this was an intriguing idea but it was difficult to say how this would affect play, since the pairings would almost certainly need to be done by hand. The idea was tabled for future discussion.

The meeting adjourned after setting the next meeting date for March 20, 2012.