

RULES COMMITTEE REPORT - May 2025

MYRON THOMAS, CHAIR

The Rules Committee considered and issued decisions on six appeals, and worked on three motions this term.

A summary of five of the appeals considered by the committee.

Appeal No. 1. Cell Phone Violation

The appellant in a scholastic tournament claimed, that he observed his opponent in the restroom with a cell phone and reported it to the Chief Tournament Director. The Chief TD stated that after investigating he found no one in the restroom and upon returning to the board, both players were playing and the opponent's cell phone was on the table complying with the rule announced prior to the tournament. Based on the facts presented in the appeal, the committee found no unbiased evidence that the opponent violated a US Chess rule.

Appeal No. 2. Resignation

The appellant claimed his opponent offered a handshake that he accepted and interpreted as a resignation; however, the opponent did not state that the handshake was a resignation and did not make a draw offer. After the claim of resignation, the TD ruled the game to continue. The players completed the game. The result of the game was a draw. Based on the facts presented in the appeal, the TD acted within the rules of US Chess and the ruling was proper and correct.

Appeal No. 3. Adjustment of pieces

The appellant claimed that on his time, his opponent repeatedly adjusted his pieces off center and appellant repeatedly placed the pieces on center. After the opponent makes a claim, the TD ruled that both players were becoming disruptive to the tournament. The TD further ruled that neither player should adjust pieces and that the game continue.

Appeal No. 4. Re-pairing a round

The appellant claimed that after 20 minutes into the round he was re-paired with another player. The appellant did not consent to the re-pairing and lost the game. The TD states that it is common practice for local area scholastic tournaments to re-pair players with missing opponents after 10 minutes to ensure that all players receive a chance to play a game. The TDs decision to re-pair the players was reasonable and within the US Rules of Chess.

Appeal No. 5. Tiebreak systems.

The appellant claimed that the tournament used pre-tournament ratings as the sole tiebreaker for awarding non-divisible prizes (trophies). This variation was not posted or announced before the first round, violating US Chess Rules 34B and 34E. Tie-break systems should be posted and announced before the first round.

The committee considered the following motions this term:

A motion to amend Variation 13D.

A motion to rewrite the US Chess Blitz rules.

A motion to replace US Chess Blitz rule 7, defining a win.

Thanks to committee members for volunteering their time: Enrique Huerta, Steve Immitt, Tim Just, Tom Langland, Al Losoff, Bob Messenger, Ken Sloan, Jeff Smith, and Bill Smythe.