NSW JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE

SECONDARY SCHOOLS ONE-DAY TOURNAMENT

SUMMARY OF RULES OF COMPETITION

The following are some of the rules generally applied in chess competitions – it is not a complete set of the rules (and does not include the basic laws such as how the pieces move), but rather a summary of the rules that are most commonly misunderstood. Please make sure that you are familiar with these rules, particularly the Touch Move rule, as most opponents are quick to claim Touch Move and it can be disconcerting for a player who is unfamiliar with this practice.

1. Check. When a king is under attack (in "check") from an opponent's piece, it must escape the attack in the next move. If the king cannot escape the check, then it is checkmate and the game is over.

2. Illegal move. Any illegal move (a move not in accordance with the laws of chess, such as leaving the king in check) must be retracted and a legal move played instead (subject to the touch move rule, see below).

3. Castling. When castling the player must touch the king first, or king and rook together. (If the rook is touched first then the rook only should be moved.) Castling is illegal in the following circumstances: **(a)** if the king or rook have previously moved, **(b)** if the king is currently in check, **(c)** if the king would move to or pass across a square under attack from an opponent's piece.

4. En passant. If a player advances one of his pawns two squares on its initial move, and if his opponent has a pawn that could have captured it had it moved only one square, then on his next turn, but only his next turn, the opponent may capture the advanced pawn as if it had only advanced one square.

5. Promotion. A pawn may be promoted to any piece (apart from a king) upon reaching the other end of the board. The piece to which it is promoted does not have to have been previously taken. (In theory you may have 9 queens on the board!)

6. Touch Move, Touch Take. If a player at his turn intentionally touches one of his pieces, he MUST move it provided it has a legal move. If a player at his turn intentionally touches one of his opponent's pieces either with his own piece or with his hand, he must capture that piece if it is legal to do so. Once a player, having moved a piece, removes his hand from that piece, he cannot change his move, unless the move was illegal (in which case he can change the move but not the piece to be moved, unless that piece has no legal move).

7. Checkmate. Once a player agrees to a claim of checkmate (or stalemate), either verbally or by shaking hands, the result stands. No spectator may point out to the player that checkmate (or stalemate) has not been reached – it is up to the player to examine his own position. Both players should remain at the board until agreement is reached. Obviously, if a player cannot find a way out of a claimed checkmate, then he should concede the game. An arbiter should be called if there is any dispute.

8. Draw. There are several ways in which a game may be drawn:

(a) stalemate – when the player to move is unable to make a legal move with any of his pieces and his king is not in check then the game is drawn;

(b) insufficient material – it is not possible to checkmate with only two kings on the board, king and knight versus king, or king and bishop versus king – the result in these cases must be a draw;

(c) 50 move rule – when 50 consecutive moves each have been played without the capture of a piece or pawn or the movement of a pawn, then a draw may be claimed. (Where the moves of the game are not being written down a player hoping to invoke the 50 move rule should call an arbiter to arrange a witness as the 50 moves are counted);

(d) threefold repetition – if the same position occurs three times during a game, with the same player to move, then a draw may be claimed (the most common occurrence of this is perpetual check);

(e) by agreement – players are permitted to agree to a drawn game (it is up to the two players to agree to this without interference by spectators).

CHESS CLOCKS

For this tournament chess clocks will be used with a time limit of 15 minutes per player for each game.

Introduction to Chess Clocks

A chess clock is a device for timing each player's moves during a game. With clocks each player is usually limited to an allotted period of time for (depending on the tournament)

(a) all his moves, or

(b) a specified number of moves (after which he is given another period of time for more moves), or

(c) all his moves, with an additional period of time added for each move played.

A chess clock actually consists of two clocks (or time displays) connected with a see-saw mechanism (or buttons) by which a player stops his clock's time and starts his opponent's time. Each clock has a signal (called a "flag") which indicates when a player's time has expired (the flag "falls" at this point).

Rules for Chess Clocks for the NSWJCL Secondary Schools One-Day Tournament

(1) The time limit will be 15 minutes per player for each game. [Note: There are minor differences in some of the rules for other types of time limit.]

(2) A player presses his end of the see-saw mechanism to stop his clock and start his opponent's clock after he has completed his move. He must use the same hand to stop his clock as he used to move his piece (this is important as otherwise the opponent may claim that he stopped his time before completing the move on the board).

(3) Once a player's time has expired he loses the game, unless

(a) his opponent cannot checkmate him from the position reached with any possible sequence of legal moves (even with the most unskilled counterplay), in which case the game is drawn – inability to checkmate can occur because of insufficient material (such as only a king left, or a king and knight versus a king, or a king and bishop versus a king); or

(b) his opponent does not notice that the player's time has expired until after his own time has expired, in which case the game is drawn.

(4) Only the two players (and not any spectators) are allowed to draw attention to the state of the clocks; this includes

(a) pointing out that a player's time has expired,

(b) pointing out that a player is short of time, or

(c) pointing out that a player has forgotten to stop his clock after playing his move.

It is most important that spectators refrain from any action that might assist a player in this way.

(5) A player may stop both clocks in order to seek the arbiter's assistance.

(6) Players must handle the chess clock properly; it is forbidden to punch it forcibly, to pick it up or knock it down. Improper handling may be penalised.

(7) If a player has less than two minutes left he may claim a draw in certain circumstances. He should stop the clocks and call the arbiter. The arbiter may allow the draw claim if he believes that it is impossible for the opponent to win the game by normal means or that the opponent is making no attempt to win the game by normal means – i.e., other than on time – for example, where he is just playing "waiting" moves until he wins on time.

(8) If a player makes an illegal move (and completes the move by stopping his clock) the opponent is entitled to an extra minute. He should call an abiter to adjust the time. A game is lost by a player who makes three illegal moves.

CONDUCT RULES FOR COMPETITION

A high standard of conduct is expected in chess competitions. The laws of chess provide for penalties when the rules relating to the behaviour are breached – these penalties may include the loss of the game.

1. Players are forbidden to distract or annoy their opponent in any way.

2. During the game players must not be given advice from a third party, whether asked for or not.

3. Players and spectators must remain silent during play.

4. Spectators must not touch pieces, board or table where a game is being played.

5. Spectators must stand away from a game that is being played; players have the right to ask the arbiter or supervisor to remove spectators who are distracting them or standing too close.

6. Spectators should refrain from making comment on a game in progress or interfering in any way except when an illegal move has occurred (or where there is insufficient material for a checkmate, in which case the game is drawn).