

1932 A New Treatise on Chess by George Walker

Laws of Chess (Adopted by London & Westminster Chess Clubs)

No. I.

The Board must be placed with a white corner on your right hand, at the lower part of the board. If the board be improperly placed, and the mistake remain undiscovered until four moves on each side have been played, the position of the board cannot be altered during the remainder of that game ; but if the error be discovered before four moves have been played, either player has a right to insist on recommencing the game.

No. II.

In beginning the game, should there be any of the pieces placed on wrong squares, or any pieces omitted to be placed on the board, the position may be rectified and such pieces added; provided, as before, there have not been four moves played on each side; in thatcase, the game must be played out as the pieces stand, and without such as are not on the board.

No. III.

If a player, in giving odds, omit taking off the piece or Pawn he has engaged to give, before four moves on each side have been played, he must play out the game with all his pieces as they stand; and, even though he should give Checkmate, the game is to be considered as drawn. If he discover his error before playing his fourth move, the game must be commenced " de novo."

No. IV.

When no odds are given, it is usual to draw lots for the first move of the first game; the parties afterwards take the move alternately.

When the game is drawn, the player who began that game, begins the next ;—for a drawn game is to be reckoned as no game, or as if that game had never been played.—The player giving odds, may use which men he pleases; but when no odds are given (supposing both to want the same coloured men), the question is decided by lot.

During the sitting, each player continues to use the same coloured men.

No. V.

A player giving odds, has always the first move, unless it be otherwise agreed. The player engaging to give the Rook or Knight, may give which R. or Kt. he likes; but in giving the Pawn, it is always understood, that the King's Bishop's Pawn is to be given.

In receiving the odds of the Pawn and the three first moves, or more, the player must not pass his own half of the hoard in taking these moves. (He might otherwise force Checkmate, by taking three moves as follows:—1. K. P. one square—2. K. B. to Q. Third square—3. Q. checks, &c.)

No. VI.

If a player touch one of his pieces or Pawns, it being his turn to play, he must move the piece so touched, unless at the first instant of touching it he say "j'adoube ;" (an obsolete expression signifying " I adjust," or " I replace.") If a piece be improperly placed, or should fall of the board, you must still say " j'adoube" in replacing it, should it be your turn to move, or you may otherwise be obliged to play the piece as above. (Of course, the saying " j'adoube" will not exonerate you from moving the piece touched, unless said while in the act of first touching it. A player might otherwise hold a piece in his fingers for five minutes, while hesitating on the move, and then saying "j'adoube," restore it to its place, and play another instead!)

No. VII.

If a player touch his King, it being his turn to play, and then find that he cannot move him without going into check, no penalty can be inflicted, on his replacing the King, and playing another piece instead. If, also, he should touch a piece, which cannot be played without leaving the King in check,

he must move his King; but should the King be unable to move, without going into check, no penalty can be inflicted.

No. VIII.

Should you, however inadvertently, touch one of your adversary's pieces (it being your turn to play), without saying "j'adoube" in the act of first touching it, you must take that piece, if it can be taken. Should you be unable to take it, you must move your King; but if the King cannot move without going into check, no penalty can be inflicted. In any case of being obliged to move your King, you cannot Castle on that move.

No. IX.

As long as you hold a piece on any particular square, you may withdraw it at any time, and play another move with the same piece; but after once quitting your hold, the move is committed, and cannot be retracted. (This law ought, certainly, to be revised, and the move to be considered as completed, on touching a square with the piece. It is extremely annoying, to see your adversary hovering about and resting on several squares with a piece, before fixing on its point of destination. In Italy, after touching any particular square with a piece, you may move that piece to any square that is more remote, always assuming that you have not quit your hold, but may not retrograde to any square nearer home. Placing the finger on the board, in planning a move, is also a bad habit, though strictly legal).

No. X.

Should you, by mistake, move one of your adversary's pieces instead of one of your own, you may be compelled, at the option of your opponent, either to take the piece, if it can be taken—to replace it where it stood, and move your King—or, to leave it on the square to which you have inadvertently played it. (In this, as in every other case, should the King be unable to move without going into check, that part of the penalty must be remitted).

No. XI.

If you should capture a piece, with one that cannot take it without making a false move, you must either take such piece, with one that can legally take it, or, move the piece touched. (To exemplify this law, let us suppose that you take a piece with a Rook, giving, by mistake, to such Rook the move of a Bishop; you may, in that case, be obliged either to play the Rook, or to take the piece, should it be "en prise" of any of your pieces.)

No. XII.

Should you unthinkingly capture one of your own pieces with another, you may be compelled to play either of the two, at the option of your adversary. (The case of your taking one of your adversary's pieces with another, is met by Law X).

No. XIII.

The player making a false move (moving a Rook, for instance, as if it were a Knight), may be compelled—either to leave the piece where he has played it—to move it to a square within its proper line of action—or, to replace it and move the King instead.

No. XIV.

If a player make two moves in succession, he must replace the second piece; or, by way of penalty, his adversary may insist on both moves remaining; and may go on with the game, as if only one move had been played.

No. XV.

When a Pawn advances two squares, your adversary has the option of taking it "en passant" with a Pawn, but not with a piece.

(Suppose, for example, your adversary's King's Rook's Pawn to be at your K. R. fourth square, and you push K. P. two squares; in this case, he is at liberty to capture your K. P. with his K. R. P.,

taking of your Pawn, and placing his own on your K.Kt. thlr square).

No. XVI.

You are not allowed to Castle under either of the following circumstances. Firstly, If your King has moved.—Secondly, if he is in check.— Thirdly, If either of the squares which the King must traverse or play to in Castling, is commanded by one of your adversary's pieces.—And, lastly, if the Rook with which you intend Castling, has been previously moved. Should you Castle in either of these cases, you may be compelled to recall the move, and your antagonist has the choice of obliging you to play either your King or Rook.

(You are not deprived of Castling from your King having been in check, nor from your Rook's being at the time under attack. You may also Castle with Q. R., if the Q. Kt. square be commanded by one of the hostile pieces, as the King has not to pass over, or on to that square. A player giving the odds of the Rook, may Castle on that side of the board, as if the Rook so given were in its proper place).

No. XVII.

When you Check the King. you must always apprise your adversary of it, by saying " Check," or he is not obliged to notice it; but may play some other move, as if no Check had been given. If, also, after neglecting to say Check, the King should remain in Check for one or more moves, and on your then perceiving it, you should attack one of his pieces, at the same time saying " Check." you can derive no advantage from this; for every move that may have been played since you first Checked his King must be recalled on both sides, and your original Check must then be provided for. (We do not say " Check," upon attacking the Queen).

No. XVIII.

Supposing you discover your King to be in Check, and to have remained so during two or more moves, without your being able to ascertain how it first occurred :—In this case, you are at liberty to retract your last move and provide for the Check.

No. XIX.

If your antagonist should say " Check," without at the same time really giving Check, and you should in consequence have moved your King, or interposed a piece—you may retract this move, provided you discover the error before your adversary plays again.

No. XX.

When you have advanced a Pawn to the extreme rank, or eighth square of the board, it immediately assumes the power of any piece you choose. (The constitution of the game would of course not allow of your demanding a second King, but you may have as many Queens, Knights, etc. on the board at once, as you can get. It is to be presumed from the wording of this law, that you might not call for a pawn, and replace it at its own square; but might certainly, for argument's sake, leave it on its eighth square, as a Pawn).

No. XXI.

Stalemate constitutes a DRAWN GAME.

No. XXII

If you remain with the Rook and Bishop against the Rook, or with both Bishops, or with the Knight and Bishop, against the King only, you are bound to Mate in fifty moves at most, or the game is drawn.

The moves must be reckoned from that point, at which your opponent gives you notice that he intends computing them. As in every other case, in which the number of moves is specified, these moves must be fifty on each side. Should you remain with greater force than the above, as, for instance, with Q. and K., against the K, the same law must be observed. Should you, however, have undertaken to Mate with any particular piece or Pawn—or on any specified square—or

to compel your antagonist to give you Checkmate or Stalemate—in all such cases, you are not to be restricted to any given number of moves.

No. XXIII.

If you undertake to win any particular position, and your adversary should draw such position, you lose the game. (Should you, for instance, undertake to win three games running, and your opponent draw one of them, you lose the match. At first view this may appear to clash with that law which declares a drawn game to be no game; but on a little reflection, the justice of the ease is evident.)

No. XXIV.

Whatsoever irregularity may have been committed, you cannot inflict any penalty, after moving or touching a piece.

No. XXV.

Should any dispute occur, as to points of the game for which the laws have not provided. the question ought to be referred to a third party: and the decision then given must be considered as final.