

ICCF Appeals Committee

The most important event during the past two years was the server breakdown in the autumn of 2019, and the problems it created. Consequently, we received quite a few appeals, all related to the adding - or not adding - of an extra day to the reflection time. Subsequently, based on our experiences, Rules Commissioner Dennis Doren proposed some rewordings of the rule in question, which were approved at the 2020 ICCF Virtual Congress.

Well, of course the most important event has been the Covid-19 pandemic, which for the first time since 1990 prevented a live Congress to be held in 2020, and, regrettably, has prevented it also in 2021.

Fortunately, ICCF play itself is by nature "virtual" in the sense that no physical contact between the players is necessary, so compared to most other sports we have suffered very little.

Anyway, the ever-increasing automation of the ICCF server has significantly reduced our workload. Hence, many fewer appeals are received than in years past, and of those still received, most have been handled by myself or by my deputy Wes Underwood, without us having to convene the entire Committee. The reason is, most "appeals" submitted are not actually appeals at all, but inquiries based on misunderstandings of the Rules, or of the server workings. Quite a few are inquiries misdirected to the Appeals Committee when the correct recipient should be the TD. Becoming more common recently are messages sent to both the TD and the Appeals Committee, which creates confusion on who should appropriately respond. Maybe this is an attempt to put pressure on the TD, but it causes extra work for all of us.

We think many players, especially those newer to ICCF, but even some long time players, seem unfamiliar with some of the ICCF basics which causes many of the questions we see. For that reason, we would like to suggest creating a short introduction (a "server chess 101", if you so wish), a handy reference that hopefully reduces questions, misunderstandings, and misdirected appeals. Some of the key issues:

- 1) How reflection time works
- 2) How tablebase claims work
- 3) How withdrawals work
- 4) How adjudications work
- 5) How to claim DMD
- 6) Use of a chess engine to aid in analysis (allowed!)
- 7) When to go to the TD vs. when to go to the Appeals Committee

A very special thanks to my deputy chairman Wes Underwood, who not only compiled the above "server chess 101" list, but who also has been of tremendous help in many other ways during these troubling years.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere thanks to ALL members of our Committee for your important work - the past two years have been quite challenging, but you have persevered :-)

The current member list is given in the Appendix.

Amici sumus

Ragnar Wikman
Chairman of the ICCF
Appeals Committee

Appendix:

Current members of the Appeals Committee

Ragnar Wikman (FIN) – Chairman
Wes Underwood (USA) - Deputy Chairman

Ian Brooks (ENG)
Marco Caressa (ITA)
Leo Lahdenmäki (FIN)
Ralph Marconi (CAN)
Corky Schakel (USA)
Per Söderberg (SWE)