

**What was your role as one of the arbiters at the FIDE World Rapidplay and Blitz in Moscow?**

Pairing Officer; it was my role to set up the Swiss-Manager files in advance and keep an up-to-date list of entries on Chess-Results, and then at the tournament itself collect and process results, and do the pairings for the next round. I then had to calculate the prize lists at the end.

**How many IAs were present and how were the various roles defined?**

There were 30 arbiters; a Chief Arbiter, two Deputies, three Anti-Cheating Arbiters, four Pairing Officers (two per section) and the other 20 had general floor duties, including collecting results.

**There was an incident in Round 19 of the Blitz when Magnus Carlsen played Alireza Firouzja who lost on time despite Carlsen only having a Bishop against Firouzja's Bishop and three Pawns, so no mating material. This caused some confusion among followers so please explain the ruling.**

I wasn't directly involved in this, save for twiddling my thumbs waiting for the appeal to be heard! The first part was that Firouzja's flag fell, and with the material balance on the board, this was enough for Carlsen since he could win by any series of legal moves with his King and Bishop against Firouzja's King, Bishop and three Pawns. At first, it seemed Firouzja didn't realise this, but this was explained to him, and clearly he wasn't happy with that.

His appeal was on the grounds that he was distracted by Carlsen during the game due to his speaking Norwegian at some point, for which there was no supporting evidence from the arbiter, the video cameras focused on the game, or a complaint from Firouzja during the game. The Appeals Committee rejected this appeal.

**How was the organisation and management of the Moscow tournament? With so many Rounds each day (particularly the Blitz section) were the arbiters under extras pressure?**

Personally, I find Rapid and Blitz tournaments more interesting to run, because there is always something for an arbiter to do. So I actually see it as fun rather than extra pressure. However, the big difference with speed events is that something is much more likely to go wrong in the games themselves that causes a dispute – a piece being accidentally knocked over for example.

**You also had to use your arbitration skills in the FIDE [Chess.com](https://www.chess.com/news/view/2019-fide-chess-com-grand-swiss-round-8) Grand Swiss on the Isle of Man in October 2019 when you moved one of the boards in this unusual situation <https://www.chess.com/news/view/2019-fide-chess-com-grand-swiss-round-8>**

**In resolving this matter, how much was it about the Laws of Chess or player management?**

Player management? You sound like a cricket umpire! The link you provide covers the situation pretty clearly and this incident was almost entirely player management. In particular, I thought it was important to get across to the players that they were being moved for their benefit to prevent any future accusations that may arise, and that by moving them we were not accusing them of anything untoward.

**If ECF members are interested in becoming an arbiter, what particular personal**

### **skills are required for the role?**

In my opinion, the following are important.

Skills:

- Technical
- Well-organised
- Efficient
- Communication

Characteristics:

- Empathy
- Calm
- Assertive
- Aware

These skills and characteristics will improve with experience, and if I were scoring myself out of 10 on these, I am sure I would fall some way short of 100 percent!

Knowledge of the laws is a pre-requisite, and the ECF organises training courses for that, such as the one in Daventry in February.

### **You are also Tournament Director of the Delancey Chess Challenge, one of the UK's most successful competitions. What are the challenges in managing so many so many children and parents?**

My role does not really require too much management of that number of children and parents. My main role is to source a team of arbiters, set up the IT, come up with the floor plan at each event, and then help to ensure the event runs smoothly at the weekend. It is more technical than public facing.

### **What is the FIDE Qualification Commission's remit and what does your secretarial role include?**

The remit includes the FIDE rating system, title norms (e.g. Grandmaster), and transfers between Federations. The part that takes up most of my time is manually approving tournaments that have been submitted late for registration, and investigating the circumstances that led to it. Last year I organised the QC Councillors' meeting held in Solihull.

### **What are your main goals in your role of ECF Director of Junior Chess?**

The main part of the role is to co-ordinate the Selection Policy for international events. A lot of the other things that need be done including increasing numbers of children playing rely on local efforts rather than a national effort. I am actively involved in my area over the past few years to develop that, with some good success so far.