

Chapter 7

Moving the opponent's men

[A curious twist is given to chess by allowing a player to move his opponent's men. There are three broad flavours: moving an opponent's man instead of one's own, choosing or altering the opponent's last move, and moving a man of each side.]

7.1 Moving an opponent's man instead of one's own

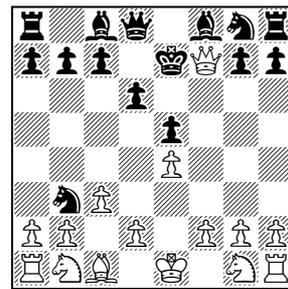
All-In Chess (Chris Tylor, 1976). The name is taken from all-in wrestling which the game distantly suggests. Each side, on its turn to move, may make a normal move with a man of either colour, the main restriction being that a player cannot move so as to repeat the position reached prior to the previous player's move (i.e., you can't take back a move just made by the opponent). Other limitations are common sense: a capture can only be made of

a man of the opposite colour; pawns must move in their natural directions; a player cannot put his own king in check. A pinned piece may be moved to expose the enemy king, and a player may sometimes profit from using an opponent's man to capture one of his own men. **Free-For-All Chess** (Jed Stone, 1982) is similar, except that piece moves may be retracted by the second player. (*Chessics* 1, Stone)

7.2 Rejecting, choosing, or altering the opponent's last move

Refusal Chess, also known as **Outlaw Chess** and **Rejection Chess** (Fred Galvin, 1958). A player can reject the opponent's move, but must then accept any alternative move by the same or a different piece. Promotion to different pieces count as different moves. Refusal Chess is the over-the-board version of Compromise Chess (see below) but there is a significant difference between the two games. In Refusal, the player who rejects a move gives the opponent a free hand, often at peril. For example, after 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5, Black might decide he does not wish to face the Ruy Lopez, so he rejects White's move only to be faced with Nxe5 - and White will reject the recapture.

In Compromise Chess, if a player can only make one legal move, the opponent must accept it. Not so in Refusal Chess, which makes possible games like this, quoted in the Romanian magazine *Cartea Jocurilor*:
1 'd4?' (no) e4 'e6?' (no) e5 2 'Bc4?' (yes) 'Bc5?' (no) Nc6 3 'Bxf7+?' (yes) 'Kxf7?' (no) Ke7 4 'Bxg8?' (no) Bb3 'Nf6?' (no) d6 5 'Qf3?' (yes) 'Nf6?' (no) Nd4 6 'Qf7#?' (no) c3 'Nxf3+?' (no) Nxb3 and if Black refuses 7 axb3 White will substitute Qf7 :



White will now refuse ...Kxf7 and Black has no other legal move, so it's mate. (*Nost-algia* 157 and later, also *Nostalgia* 96 'not seen')

Compromise Chess (Fred Galvin, 1958). A close relative of Refusal Chess, best suited to correspondence play. The turn player must offer the opponent a choice of two legal moves (even if in check or giving it), the opponent then deciding which move the player makes. If a player can make only one legal move, the opponent must accept. Promotions of the same pawn to different pieces are considered as different moves. The option to refuse a capture or recapture makes for interesting play. **Choice Chess** (Bruce Trone,

1986) is the same except that each player must propose five moves per turn. (*Nost-algia* 157 and later, also *Nost-algia* 96 ‘not seen’)

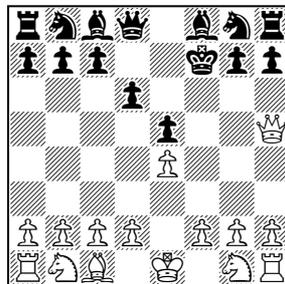
Substitution Chess (Fabrice Liardet, 2005, originally as **Ambiguous Chess**). As originally conceived, a player pointed to the destination square of his intended move, and if more than one man could be moved there the opponent chose which was played. As subsequently modified for clock play, a player makes a normal move and hits his clock, and if his opponent wishes to substitute a move by some other man to the same square he makes the substitution (in his own clock time) before playing his own move. This simplification has now been adopted even for play without clocks, and the game has been renamed accordingly. The win is by capturing the opponent’s king, and the special flavour of the game rests in the fact that a move which leaves the king open to capture can be substituted for one that doesn’t. An example

7.3 Making a move for each side

Michelson’s Game (1950s). White opens, Black replies and then makes a move for White; thereafter each player in turn makes first a black then a white move. Curious end-play according to Boyer (*Jeux d’Echecs Non-orthodoxes*). A similar game is referred to in the *Illustrated Dictionary of Chess* (Brace) as **Double-Move Chess [Black then White]**, the winner being the first player to mate either king.

March Hare Chess (V. R. Parton, 1961). At each turn, a player moves one of his own pieces, and then ‘meddles’ with his opponent’s men. If he has just moved a pawn, he can now move any hostile man including the king; if K, he can play any hostile piece apart from the king; if Q, R, B, or N, he can only move a hostile pawn. When a player’s king is in check, he must nullify the check with a normal move. In Parton’s later **Meddlers’ Chess** (1970) Q-side pieces and pawns are distinguished from those on the K-side, and a player moves one of his own K-side men and then one of his opponent’s Q-side men. This latter move may expose the enemy king to check, take one of the player’s own men, or

given by the inventor: 1 e4 (no substitution possible) e5 (ditto) 2 Bc4 (Black could substitute c2-c4, but this would allow White’s knight to play to c3 without allowing the substitution of c2-c3 whereas now Black can keep it at home) d6?? (but this is fatal) 3 Bxf7+! Kxf7 4 Qh5 and Black is helpless :



He cannot play say 4...Ke6 because White will substitute Be6, and he cannot play 4...g6 because White will substitute Kg6. (*Variant Chess* 49/52) [Text revised]

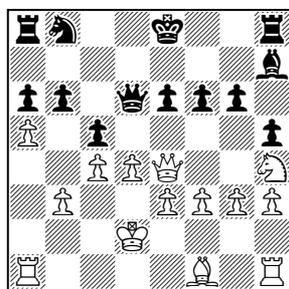
promote (but only to queen). A Q-side man cannot be used to assist in checkmate nor to escape check or checkmate. A king must get out of check on the first move of a turn. Another version of the game allows a player to meddle with the opponent’s pawns but not his pieces. If an enemy pawn move is not possible, the enemy king may be moved instead. (*Chess - Curiouser and Curiouser, Chessery for Duffer and Master*)

Avalanche Chess (Ralph Betza, 1977). So named because the pawns of both sides advance inexorably. A favourite with NOST; Avalanche was the chosen variant of the U.S. team in the 1st Heterochess Olympiad. One basic rule: after each normal move the turn player must pull an opponent’s pawn one square forward (i.e., towards the player). If the opponent has no pawns, or they are blocked, or can capture but cannot otherwise move, there is no action; but if a pawn move subsequently becomes available, it is again mandatory. A pawn is promoted to a piece of its owner’s choice. A player obliged to pull an opponent’s pawn so as to put his own king in check loses at once even if he mates in the

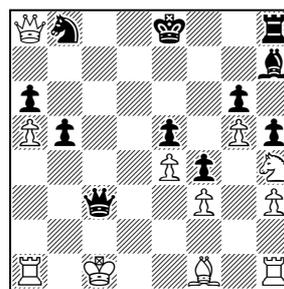
same turn. The effect of the rule is that whilst a blocked pawn protects a square, a mobile pawn does not: a piece on it can be taken and the pawn then moved on. Similarly, pawns in front of a king can be moved to expose it. A player in check is not obliged to get out of check until the end of his turn. Most dangerous in the later stages of a game is a single, unblocked pawn which is being moved by both players towards promotion. In the early stages of a game, avalanche pawn moves are used to weaken the opponent both positionally and tactically or to hamper his development. Fool's Mate is one move deep: 1 g4/e6 Qh5/f3.

OrthoChess theory falls down in the ending. K + defended P (except RP) always wins against K. Example: White Kb2, Pb3 (2), Black Kb4 (1). Black can only retreat on the file, say Kb5/b4, and White defends the pawn. When the pawn reaches b7 White plays to a6 or c6, and Black loses at once.

White's undoubted initial advantage in Avalanche is negated in **Balanced Avalanche Chess**, where White has no push on the first move. Here is a game won by Alessandro Castelli in 1991. 1 Nf3 (preventing 1...e5/f3 by Black) Nf6/ a3 (Black in turn prevents 2 e4/f6) 2 Nc3/c6 d5/h3 3 d4/a6 Ne4/a4 (threatening 4...Nxc3/b3 winning a piece) 4 Qd3/h6 Bf5/a5 5 Nh4/f6 Bh7/g3 6 Nxe4/g6 dxe4/c3 7 Qxe4/e6 Bb4/c4+ 8 Bd2/b6 Bxd2+/f3 9 Kxd2/h5 Qd6/ b3 10 e3/c5 :



10...cxd4/b4 (it would seem that Black is not sufficiently well developed for a sacrifice like this, but the Avalanche rule gives the attacker an extra edge) 11 Qxa8/d3 Qxb4+/g4 12 Kxd3/ f5 Qb5/c5+ 13 Kc2/e5 (a fatal blunder) Qxc5+/ e4 14 Kb2/f4 Qb4+/g5 15 Kc1/b5 Qc3+/- and White resigned (see diagram at top of next column) :

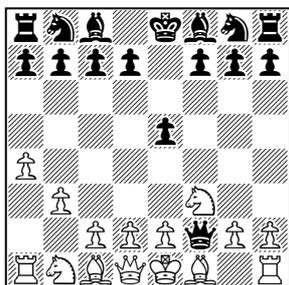


At ordinary chess, White would have little to fear, but at Avalanche every White king move pulls the Black b-pawn down a rank and this quickly proves fatal. (*Nostalgia* 214 and later, *Eteroscacco* 8 and later, *Variant Chess* 48)

007 Chess (Edward Jackman, 1995). Players make three moves a turn: own man, opponent's man, own man in that order. In **Balanced 007**, Black starts by moving a white man; White then moves a black man followed by a white man. Thereafter players make three moves a turn as above. Every move must be legal; e.g., a king cannot be exposed to check. If you check on the first move of a turn, you must get the opponent's king out of check on the second. Similarly a check on the second move must be countered on the third. The owner of a pawn decides its promotion status. In the **Detente** variation it is forbidden to capture on the third move of a man moved on the second, nor can the same man be moved twice in a turn. Passing is forbidden and it is stalemate if a player cannot legally complete his turn. The game was allegedly inspired by Meddler's Chess above.

In **Progressive 007**, White starts with a single white move; at turn 2, Black plays a single white move followed by a black move; at turn 3, White plays a black move, followed by a white move, followed by a black move; and so on. The men of each colour are moved alternately, and the number of moves increases by one at each turn. The game was reinvented by João Neto and Bill Taylor as **Progressive Orthodox Chess**, and an eight-man tournament conducted on the Internet during 1997 and 1998 was won jointly by Fred Galvin and Norbert Geissler (interestingly, neither of the reinventors reached the final pool). A trap along the following lines caught several. White played say a2-a4, Black

unwisely replied with e7-e5 for himself and say b3-b2 for White, and White played Qd8-h4 for Black, Ng1-f3 for himself, and Qh4xf2+ for Black :



Black, forced to start turn 4 with a white move, could only play Ke1xf2 taking his own queen, and he soon succumbed.

It was the considered opinion of Norbert Geissler after the tournament that the 'best play' result was a win for Black (which makes

a change), and Fred Galvin suggested that if another tournament were to be held Black should play first with a white move (probably f2-f3). It is not known whether this has been put to the test. (*Variant Chess* 19, *Nost-algia* 361, *Eteroscacco* 77, tournament reports on the Internet) [Text revised. It may seem odd to use the word 'orthodox' for a variant in which a player moves his opponent's men, but apparently the reason was that the resulting game score was that of a legal if not necessarily very sensible orthodox game.]

Reciprocal Chess (Philip Cohen, 1990s) Standard array. A turn consists of two parts; a normal move then a move or of the man of either colour (if any) on the reciprocal starting square. A move is illegal if the man on the recipocal square cannot move. Thus, after 1 e4/d6 Nd7/Nh3 any move of the white Q or B is illegal as the pieces on the reciprocal squares cannot move. (*Nost-algia* 371)