

# LION TIPS FOR TOURNAMENT PLAY

## A. YOU PLAY BY THE “TOUCH RULE” MOVE AT ALL TIMES

1. You touch it, you have to move it; 2. if you let go, it stays where it is; 3. if you touch your opponent's piece, you have to take it! 4. Say “ I adjust” if you don't plan to move piece

- A. Be careful; **THINK BEFORE YOU TOUCH A PIECE**. You can play a great game, but lose because of one careless mistake (especially painful if you play against an easy opponent)
- B. Always look at your opponent's last move before you think about making your move. what is he trying to do.  
Susan Polgar's advice: AFTER EVERY MOVE YOU HAVE A NEW SITUATION!
- C. If you see a good move, wait 20 seconds to make sure there is not a better one

## B. TOURNAMENT PSYCHOLOGY

- 1. Concentrate on every move, even against poor players – just one stupid mistake can cost you the game!
- 2. Don't move fast just because your opponent does. Fast play → MISTAKE!
- 3. Pace yourself – you will be playing continuously for up to two hours
- 4. DON'T BE DISCOURAGED IF YOU LOSE - there is always another game. And even if you have lost several games you might still get a second or third place trophy. **And even if have no chance to win, you owe it to the other players to DO YOUR BEST AT ALL TIMES!**
- 5. Be courteous! Remember **Susan Polgar's motto: WIN WITH GRACE, LOSE WITH DIGNITY!**

And remember: **A MISTAKE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN**, if you play it cool and don't get upset

To review some of the things you should have learned in the workshops:

### A. Opening – three principles

- a. Remember the opening principles: **control center, develop, and castle!**
- b. When the Queen comes out, (to f3, or h5) watch out for the Scholar's mate!
- c. Don't move a piece (Knight or Bishop) more than once in the opening

IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO PLAY THE SAME OPENING MOST OF THE TIME SO THAT YOU LEARN SOME OF THE OPPORTUNITIES AND TRAPS

### B. Middle game

- a. Use the trick moves (fork, pin, discovered check, skewer) whenever you can  
If your opponent has an unprotected piece, you might have an opportunity
- b. Have a plan (strategy). For example
  - 1. Castle on the opposite side from your opponent, and attack with pawns & rooks
  - 2. Decide which side to attack on, then concentrate your pieces before starting attack
  - 3. Play passive: position your pieces so when your opponent makes a mistake, you strike!
  - 4. If you are ahead, trade down (Bishop for a Knight, Rook for a Rook), and simplify!
  - 5. If you are behind, DO NOT TRADE. Try to complicate the game for better chance of mistake

### C. End game

- a. Make sure you know how to checkmate with a King and Rook against King – you have to checkmate in less than 50 moves, otherwise it is a draw
- b. If you have a Queen and a Rook, don't get more Queens; if you have too many pieces against his king it is easy to STALEMATE – which means a draw!
- c. Know how to draw when you only have a King, and your opponent has a King and a pawn (establish opposition!)

**PLAY HARD – HAVE FUN!**