

Regulations for Running an Online Chess Championship

1. Scope

- 1.1. The [Name] Championship for [ChampYear] is to be organized for [Time Period].
- 1.2.1 The Head Tournament Director (TD) is [TD Name].
- 1.2.2. The Assistant Tournament Directors are [ATD Names].
- 1.2.3. Additional tournament staff assisting are [Staff Names].
- 1.3. The rules for the gameplay of said game can be found at [Game Rules].
- 1.4. The games will be played at [Site Name] – disputes about the application of the game rules and any issues with the implementation of the rules must be addressed by the site administrators and programmers. However, if it causes a significant issue during a game played in the Championship, the Head Tournament Director may offer whatever resolution they see fit.
- 1.5. Any unforeseen circumstances that may arise or situation not covered within the rules and regulations set out therein shall be referred to the Head Tournament Director for the final decision. Their decision is binding and final.

2. Format of the Championship

- 2.1. The format for [Name] Championship shall be a [format of tournament].
- 2.2. Withdrawals shall be handled in accordance with the [Withdrawals and Replacements Policy].
- 2.3. Disruptions to the tournament (due to disqualification or other factors) will be handled in accordance with the policy mentioned in 2.2. In the case that the scenario is not addressed by the policy as set forth, the Tournament Director shall make a decision regarding the event.

3. Eligibility of Entrants

- 3.1. The eligibility rules for the entrants must address the following items below:
 - 3.1.1. The player must understand that this event requires a time commitment from them. If they have no previous experience with events with set time formats and arranging matches, the player may be placed into a provisional or non-preferred list at the TD's discretion. A contact method with timestamping must be available for use for the TD and other players.
 - 3.1.2. If a minimum rating, number of games, or other numeric factor is required for player eligibility (eg: 2200 rating, 100 games, RD 80 or below) – those thresholds must be listed as part of the eligibility rules published.
 - 3.1.3. The player must be able to understand and communicate with others about the date and time of matches to be played.
 - 3.1.4. The time format for all communications is to be UTC (Coordinated Universal Time). The onus is on the players to understand how UTC corresponds to them.
 - 3.1.5. The player must officially register via the TD's [Methods to Register] in order to officially be placed upon the list of potential entrants.
 - 3.1.6. The deadline for entrants is also the deadline to withdraw without penalty.
 - 3.1.7. The TD may have a blacklist of ineligible players. If a player is found to have entered while being on said blacklist, they will be summarily removed. The TD is not required to announce why a player has been removed except to state that they are ineligible. If such a

blacklist exists, the existence of the list must be stated in public along with the general disqualifying reasons that causes a player to be listed on the blacklist, and the process for entrants must allow reasonable time for the TD to validate each entrant's eligibility.

3.1.8. Reasons for being listed on the blacklist varies by TD, but lifetime bans arising from events occurring during previous editions of the Tournament will be publicly listed separately from the blacklist in addition to being listed on the blacklist itself. Using computer assistance during games is a common reason for being listed on the blacklist. The entire blacklist will not be made available to the general public.

3.1.9. Any other rules regarding the eligibility of entrants must be listed in detail for each tournament such as criteria that allow an entrant to automatically become eligible.

3.1.10. It is expected that each person only attempts to enter the tournament once and by attempting to enter the tournament, they are certifying that they will adhere to all published rules and will also not cheat during their games.

4. Match Regulations (Gameplay / Matchplay)

4.1. The format of a match during the tournament is to be [Match Format].

4.2. The time control of a game in the match is [Time Control of a Game].

4.3. The games must be [rated/unrated]. If both players agree, it can be the other.

4.4. The match ends when [Match Win Conditions] are met.

4.4.1. If Tiebreakers are required, [Tiebreaker Conditions] are to be followed.

4.4.2. If an Armageddon Game is required, [Armageddon Rules] are to be followed.

4.5. Each player is allowed one break of up to 10 minutes in between games of the same match. If the player that called for the break does not return after 10 minutes, the next game is forfeited to the player that did not request the break. If the player that called for the break has not returned after 10 more minutes (20 minutes in total), the match is forfeited to the player that did not call for the break.

4.6. During the match, when a break is not requested, when the match has not ended yet according to the conditions in 4.4, the next game must begin within one minute of the previous game ending. Timestamped comments / messages shall be how one player claims the other was not following this rule. If a player is not starting the next game in a timely method, it is to be assumed that they are claiming their one break for the match and the rules of 4.5 are to be applied to this scenario. If a player has already claimed their break for the match and has not begun the next game within 5 minutes, the match is forfeited to the player that is waiting. In lieu of taking an official break – the player that needs to step away may accept the rematch, make their first move, and then step away for as long as their clock runs.

4.7. Players are not allowed to claim victory if the opponent has stepped away and there is still time on their clock. If a victory is claimed this way, the game is forfeited to the player that did not claim victory.

4.8. If an automated system process on [Site Name] as in 1.4 forfeits a player during a game for using external assistance of some kind, the match is suspended and it is to be assumed that the entire match is to be forfeited to the player not using assistance. Upon review, if this automated process has been determined to be incorrect, the match will resume when possible with an extension granted to arrange a new time to complete the match. If the review upholds the forfeiture, the offending player shall be added to the permanent blacklist for the Championship, with their name published as in 3.1.8.

4.9. You may not analyze your games using computer assistance (engine) during a match. You may however, analyze your games by hand without an engine during an official break in the match as called for in 4.5.

4.10. If a player has to leave in the middle of a match, the match is forfeited to the player remaining.

4.11. If a player has to withdraw from the tournament for any reason after the tournament has begun, their upcoming opponent is considered to be the victor of the match that would have been played and advances to the next round.

4.12. Upon conclusion of the match, at least one player must report the results in the prescribed method that the TD has outlined in the tournament format. Games must also be reported as prescribed.

4.13. Players may claim victory in a game on time.

4.14. If the opponent does not appear within 15 minutes of the agreed upon match time to begin the match, the match is forfeited to the player waiting for the match. This is determined by a pair of timestamped messages from the player claiming the match forfeit to the TD. The messages must be at least 15 minutes apart with no message from the opponent in between the messages (and no game played) for the match forfeit to be awarded.

5. Match Negotiations

5.1. Players may begin negotiating a match time as soon as their next pairing is known if the tournament format supports such conclusions.

5.2. Each player is responsible for proposing three separate times they are available for their match by Wednesday of the match week at the latest in an offer, unless a match time has been decided before that maximum number of offers has been reached.

5.3. The three separate offers must be no closer than 3 hours from each other and no more than two options on a single date.

5.4. If three offers are not proposed in time, the player at fault must accept one of the three offered times that their opponent proposed from the most recent offer made.

5.5. If both players fail to make an offer(s) by the deadline, then a match arbiter will assign a time for the match to be played.

5.6. A player should respond to a match offer by either accepting an option or by making a different offer, preferably within 24 hours.

5.7. If a player is excessively or repeatedly late for scheduled matches they may be forfeited from the Tournament as a whole.

5.8. If both players make 3 offers but no agreement is made before the weekend then a match arbiter will determine if fault lies with a particular player.

5.9. If a player is at fault then their opponent will decide the match time, if no player is at fault the match arbiter will assign a match time.

5.10. Once a match time is arranged, rule 4.14 will address no-shows.

6. Accusations of Cheating

6.1. Accusations of cheating must be made privately to the head TD via a private message of some form. This accusation will be passed on to the anti-cheat panel for evaluation. A player or spectator may make such accusations in private.

6.2. The accusation must reference a specific game and at least some rationale behind the accusation itself. An accusation such as “they were playing way above their rating” will not be considered for evaluation.

6.3. If an accusation is made in public by either a player or spectator and does not lead to confirmation of the accusation, the accusing player/spectator is placed upon the blacklist, forfeited from the Tournament if they are still participating in it, and have their names published as in 3.1.8.

6.4. The anti-cheat panel must all believe that a player is guilty for the accusation to be confirmed valid and that player forfeited if they are still participating in the tournament. 100% proof is not required, merely 100% agreement from the entire panel.

6.5. If a member of the anti-cheat panel is either the accused or accuser, their place on the panel will be taken by another.

6.6. If a player is forfeited from the Tournament via 6.4., the match they were found to have been cheating in is forfeited to the opponent and the opponent moves on in the tournament.

6.7. If the cheating is discovered after the fact, and the cheater has already played another match and lost, the player that defeated them will be allowed to remain and proceed in the tournament. If the cheater has won another match, the players that the cheater won against will then play each other in order from first to last, until one player remains, as prescribed by the TD in the tournament format.

7. Seeding and Alternative Rating Systems

7.1. Due to variations and the effects that certain chess variants can have on the various rating systems in place, sometimes an alternative method is needed to better predict/judge the performance of the players. The TD may communicate this alternative method of ranking/rating the players during the registration phase.

7.2. Any other variations to the standard defined tournaments must also be communicated before the tournament begins, preferably before registration opens.

7.3. If a prerequisite tournament or feeder tournament is to be used, ensure that they complete with plenty of time prior to registration opening. Any special benefits therein that are awarded to the winner of such tournaments must also be communicated beforehand.

7.4. If the tournament format is to be some sort of match play with the previous year’s winner, then this is known as a match format and as such, not addressed within tournament structures apart from the entire knockout tournament being a feeder tournament into determining the candidate. If this format is utilized, every possible scenario must be addressed, including the abdication or withdrawal of the previous champion. Those rules must be published in advance of any such tournament format.

7.5. Draw odds or rematch clauses for previous champions are not allowed. A final tiebreaker should be utilized in order to determine a winner, including a solution to terminate the Championship after an established point (such as after 2 additional tiebreaker matches, it remains tied, then there will be an armageddon game played).

8. Impartiality and Partiality

8.1. If possible, the Tournament Director shall not be a participant themselves in the same Championship they are organizing. If this matter cannot be resolved, prior to the start of a tournament, a neutral party arbiter must be defined by the Tournament Director to resolve matters directly involving the Tournament Director’s own games. This arbiter’s decisions

regarding the Tournament Director's games and/or incidents is to be considered final. The Tournament Director cannot override these decisions in matters that involve them.

8.2. The Tournament Staff must be impartial and fairly treat all matters and players alike.

8.3. In early rounds of the tournament, if both players are at fault for an incident or failure to play, in most cases, the higher ranked player by the tournament system being used will likely be the player advanced in case of a double forfeit. If the player receiving the benefit of this leeway then is also found at fault again and repeats this incident later in the tournament, their opponent will be granted this benefit instead if they have not already received such a benefit in the current tournament (example: two players do not show up for a match, both are at fault, the higher ranked player is advanced – then in the next round, the same person is involved in another no-show match, the other player (having completed a match) would then be advanced instead in this scenario. If both players have already received such a benefit, both players are then simply forfeited for the benefit of the tournament and their upcoming opponent simply advances to the next round of the tournament.

8.4. Previous World Champions (or winners of previous editions) may be granted benefits by the Tournament Director involving the format of the tournament used. One such example is described in 7.4. If it is not a match format play, but rather a dual-format tournament, they may be announced beforehand as being seeded into the second portion of the tournament already (bypassing the first portion completely). An example of this format would be, if the tournament format is a knockout tournament to a group of candidates that play a round robin in order to determine the two players that will play for the title, then a previous world champion may be announced as being advanced and placed into this round robin group before the tournament begins, to await the other candidates coming from the knockout.

8.5. A randomized or partially randomized tournament structure is acceptable as long as the highest quadrant of players are seeded and do not face each other for as long as possible in the early rounds.

8.6. A non-randomized tournament structure is acceptable as long as the ranking system used is published in public prior to the tournament registration phase opening. That system cannot be altered for that year's edition except in the case of typos, missing information, or egregious errors in formulae or data used.

8.7. Rankings that use historical data as part of their formulae must have such historical data be publicly available for examination.

9. Guidelines for Tournament Director Decisions

9.1. The Tournament Director will endeavor to follow the published rules and to resolve any and all issues in a timely matter for the good of the Tournament as a whole, and not to benefit any specific Player(s).

9.2. The Anti-Cheat Panel must be kept secret until the conclusion of the tournament. The Panel must consist of an odd number of members. Replacement members must also be recruited if any member sitting on the panel is also playing in the tournament so that 6.5. can be implemented without delay.

9.3. If possible, partnership with the site(s) the Tournament is being run on is ideal, especially if an administrator is able and willing to assist with certain aspects of the Tournament, including the qualifying and disqualifying of players both prior to and during the Tournament.