

THE RULES

Part 1: General

1. Introduction

These rules apply to all competitive games of chess organised by the Association.

2. Fees

- 2.1 A chess season shall start on 1st September and end on 31st August in the following year.
- 2.2 At its Annual General Meeting prior to the commencement of a season the Association shall set:
 - 2.2.1 an annual subscription for a Member of the Association;
 - 2.2.2 an entry fee for a Member to an individual competition;
 - 2.2.3 an entry fee for each team representing a Club in a league competition or waive it;
 - 2.2.4 an entry fee for each team representing a Club in a cup competition or waive it; and
 - 2.2.5 the Treasurer shall notify the Webmaster, as soon as possible thereafter, of the annual subscription and entry fees so determined for publication on the Website.
- 2.3 Unless otherwise specified, all fees due to the Association shall be paid to the Treasurer or, if necessary to meet a time deadline, to any other Officer and shall only be treated as paid upon receipt.
- 2.4 A Member shall pay to his Club Treasurer, or the Treasurer if he is not a member of a Club:
 - 2.4.1 his annual subscription; and
 - 2.4.2 any fee that is required to obtain the grading of each of his games played in competitions organised by the Association.

- 2.5 A Member shall pay his entry fee for an individual competition to the Individual Competition Organiser.
- 2.6 The Individual Competition Organiser shall forward entry fees as soon as practicable after the closing date for entries PROVIDED THAT the Individual Competition Organiser may, in his absolute discretion, accept the late entry of a Member.
- 2.7 A Club Secretary shall notify the Match Organiser of each team being entered by his Club in the league and cup competitions for that season by the due date PROVIDED THAT the Match Organiser may, in his absolute discretion, accept the late entry of a team.
- 2.8 A Club Treasurer shall ensure that fees due to the Association received from members of his Club and entry fees for any teams representing his Club in league and cup competitions are paid to the Treasurer by the due dates.
- 2.9 The Association may hold money in its bank account to the credit of a Club:
 - 2.9.1 the Treasurer shall apply such funds as directed by a Club Treasurer in satisfaction of fees due from his Club or a Member from his Club; and
 - 2.9.2 payment by such means shall be treated as having been made when the direction has been given to the Treasurer or, if necessary to meet a time deadline, to any other Officer.
- 2.10 The Treasurer shall supply the Secretary, the Match Organiser, the Individual Competition Organiser and the Grader with Particulars of Members within 14 days of the due date stated in clause 3.1 and of each Member joining after that date within 7 days thereof.
- 2.11 No Club shall charge a fee for the admission to its venue of any visiting Member from another Club intending to play chess.

3. Due Dates

- 3.1 The annual subscription shall be paid by the 30th September in each year.
- 3.2 A player who has not paid his annual subscription by the due date is not a Member but shall be treated as a Member until the due date.
- 3.3 An entry fee for a Member to an individual competition shall be paid by 30th September in each year.
- 3.4 A Member is not entitled to participate in an individual competition until his entry fee has been paid.
- 3.5 The entry of a team in the league shall be notified to the Match Organiser by 19th September in each year.
- 3.6 The entry of a team in a cup competition shall be notified to the Match Organiser by 30th September in each year.
- 3.7 An entry fee for each team representing a Club in a league competition shall be paid by the 30th September in each year.
- 3.8 An entry fee for each team representing a Club in a cup competition shall be paid by the 30th September in each year.

4. Play

- 4.1 All games shall be played in accordance with the prevailing F.I.D.E. Laws of Chess unless they are inconsistent with the Rules and, in which event, the Rules shall prevail.
- 4.2 Any game played in competitions organised by the Association:
 - 4.2.1 between players who are not Members is void;
 - 4.2.2 between a player who is not a Member and a Member shall be treated as having been defaulted to the Member; and

- 4.2.3 by a Member who is not entitled to be graded for that game shall be treated as having been defaulted to his opponent Member.
- 4.3 No match shall be played before 1st October in each season and any match played by a team before payment of its registration fee shall be treated as having been defaulted on all boards to its opposing team.

Part 2: The League

5. Organisation

- 5.1 The league shall be called, “The Cleveland Chess League” and shall be divided into the A Division, the B Division and the C Division etc.
- 5.2 The A Division shall be comprised of eight teams entered by Clubs and each team shall play the other teams therein twice during a season, on a home and away basis.
- 5.3 Before the date specified in clause 3.1, the Match Organiser shall, in consultation with the Executive Committee, arrange the fixtures of the other Divisions to ensure a full and competitive season of play for the teams involved.
- 5.4 The method of scoring in the league shall be:
- 5.4.1 a team winning a match shall receive two match points;
- 5.4.2 both teams drawing a match shall receive one match point each; and
- 5.4.3 a team losing a match shall receive no match points.
- 5.5 The method of scoring within a match shall be:
- 5.5.1 a player winning a game shall receive one game point;
- 5.5.2 both players drawing a game shall receive half a game point each; and
- 5.5.3 a player losing a game shall receive no game points.

- 5.6 During a season the order of teams in a Division shall be determined by:
- 5.6.1 the team with most match points ranking highest; or
 - 5.6.2 in the event of a tie between teams on an equal number of match points, the team with the greater game points difference shall rank higher; or
 - 5.6.3 if teams remain tied at the end of a season for promotion or relegation, then a play-off match or matches shall be arranged as directed by the Match Organiser; and
 - 5.6.4 in the event of a play-off match being drawn then the principles to separate teams in Part 3 shall be used to separate them.
- 5.7.1 The A Division shall be the highest division and team winning it shall be declared the champions of the Cleveland Chess League.
- 5.7.2 The teams winning the B Division and the C Division etc. shall be declared the respective champions thereof.
- 5.8.1 The two highest placed teams in a Division at the end of a season shall be promoted to the Division above.
- 5.8.2 The two lowest placed teams in a Division at the end of a season shall be relegated to the Division below.
- 5.9.1 A team finishing top of its respective Division shall hold a designated champions' trophy for a year, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting following the end of that season.
- 5.9.2 A trophy awarded pursuant to clause 5.9.1 shall be inscribed with the name of the winning team at the cost of the Association.
- 5.9.3 Members having played for a championship team during the season may be presented with a personal trophy or, in the alternative, receive an award on behalf of their Club if so determined by the Association at its Annual General Meeting immediately before the commencement of that season.

- 5.10 If a Club declines to accept a promotion attained by its team as prescribed in clause 5.8.1, then that team shall be relegated to the lowest Division and shall not be eligible for promotion from it in the following season.
- 5.11 A Club shall not be entitled to enter a new team in the lowest Division if any of its teams declines promotion earned in the previous season from another Division.
- 5.12 A new team entering the league shall enter by the lowest Division.
- 5.13 A deficiency in the number of teams, as prescribed in clause 5.2, entered in the A Division at the start of a season shall be filled by other teams in the following order:
 - 5.13.1 by the second last relegated team from that Division at the end of the previous season;
 - 5.13.2 then by the lowest relegated team from that Division at the end of the previous season; and
 - 5.13.3 then by the next placed teams in succession to the teams promoted from the Division below at the end of the previous season.
- 5.14 The Match Organiser shall prepare a fixture list for each of the Divisions by 26th September in each year and send a copy to each Club Secretary and to the Webmaster for publication on the Website.
- 5.15 Throughout a season the Match Organiser shall:
 - 5.15.1 monitor the compliance of Members and teams with the Rules;
 - 5.15.2 investigate relevant matters and make determinations;
 - 5.15.3 give notice in writing to Club Secretaries and Team Captains of his decisions with reasons within 7 days thereof; and
 - 5.15.4 notify the Webmaster of match results and his decisions for publication on the Website.

6. Matches

- 6.1 A match shall be played on the date specified in the fixture list issued by the Match Organiser UNLESS:
 - 6.1.1 a Team Captain contacts his opposing Team Captain at least 7 days before the match date to require a postponement, which shall then be without penalty; but
 - 6.1.2 if a Team Captain contacts his opposing Team Captain less than 7 days before the match date and requests a postponement, it may only be granted with the agreement of both Team Captains PROVIDED THAT, in default of such agreement, a Team Captain may require the Match Organiser to postpone the match and accept a one match point penalty for his team.
- 6.2 In exceptional circumstances, a match may either be postponed at short notice or re-played, in whole or in part, without penalty upon an application by a Team Captain to the Match Organiser who shall determine any such request on its merits.
- 6.3 A postponed match shall be played no later than six weeks after the original fixture date.
- 6.4 Both Team Captains are required, as soon as possible, to confirm the postponement of a match and the setting of another date to the Match Organiser.
- 6.5 If a Team Captain considers that his opposing Team Captain is not co-operating in setting or proposing a suitable date for a postponed match THEN he may request that the Match Organiser set the date which shall then be final and binding on both teams PROVIDED THAT:
 - 6.5.1 before setting a final match date the Match Organiser shall invite the opposing Team Captain to explain his position; and
 - 6.5.2 the Match Organiser may, if he considers it appropriate, set a date outside the six-week period stipulated in clause 6.3.

- 6.6 A team not fulfilling a fixture that has not been postponed in accordance with clause 6 shall be treated as having defaulted that match to its opposing team AND further, that team shall be deducted two league points.
- 6.7 If no match has been held as required by clause 6.3 and no request made to the Match Organiser to set a date under clause 6.5 THEN both teams shall be deemed to be in default and no match or game points shall be awarded to either team AND further, each team shall be deducted two match points.

7. Teams

- 7.1.1 The number of players in a team competing in the A Division shall be five.
- 7.1.2 The number of players in a team competing in the B Division shall be five.
- 7.1.3 The number of players in a team competing in the C Division shall be five.
- 7.2 A Member may only play in a team representing a Club of which he is a member but may be a member of more than one Club.
- 7.3 A Member may only play in a team or teams representing one Club in the league at any one time but may elect to play for a second Club once during any season SUBJECT TO:
- 7.3.1 notice of his election being given by him to the Match Organiser before he plays for his second Club;
- 7.3.2 the Club Secretary of his newly elected Club confirming his membership in writing to the Match Organiser before he plays for that Club; and
- 7.3.3 the Member not playing for a team representing his second Club if it is competing in the same Division as the team he played for earlier in that season.

- 7.4.1 The Club Secretary of a Club entering more than one team in the league shall supply a list of the members of that Club nominated for each team in a higher Division than any other of its teams to the Match Organiser and the Webmaster by 30th September in each year.
- 7.4.2 A Club is required to nominate only those of its members that it wishes to be eligible to play for any team entered by it in the Cleveland Chess League or in the Cup competitions during a season.
- 7.4.3 The list of nominated players for a team shall be one less than the number of players set out in clause 7.1 PROVIDED that a Club entering more than one team in a Division may nominate five players for a team, the total of nominated players for such a Club in that Division remaining the number of its teams multiplied by four.
- 7.4.4 A Club must nominate its strongest players according to their latest official grades published by the ECF (or any other grading body acknowledged by the Association) to play for its highest placed teams.
- 7.4.5 If a player no longer holds an official grade then his last published grade, if it can be ascertained, shall be deemed to be his official grade for the purpose of clause 7.4.4 and he shall be nominated.
- 7.4.6 A player without an official grade or a grade deemed to be his official grade pursuant to clause 7.4.5 shall not be nominated.
- 7.4.7 A nominated player may not play for a team entered by his Club in a lower Division.
- 7.4.8 Whether nominated or not, a player may play for a team entered by his Club in a higher Division.
- 7.4.9 Subject to clauses 7.4.7 and 7.4.10 there shall be no restriction on the number of games played by a Member for his Club during a season.
- 7.4.10 A player shall not play for more than one team in the same Division during a season.
- 7.4.11 If a Club enters more than one team in the same Division, it shall be at liberty to allocate its strongest

players to fill the nominated positions in those teams as it considers appropriate AND any player so nominated shall not be eligible to play for any other team entered by his Club in that Division.

- 7.4.12 If a Member joins a Club after the start of the season and is a stronger player than one already nominated for one of its teams, then he shall be included on a revised list of nominated players to be submitted by his Club Secretary to the Match Organiser before he shall be eligible to play.
- 7.4.13 If a nominated player shall not have played at least one game for his team by 1st January:
- i) he shall be replaced with the next highest graded player, whether previously nominated or not, who has played for his Club during that season (excepting for a team in the same Division); and
 - ii) he shall not be eligible to play for the remainder of that season in any team entered by his Club in a lower Division.
- 7.4.14 Any game played by an ineligible player shall be deemed defaulted to his opponent UNLESS that opponent is also ineligible, in which event the game will be void.
- 7.5 On each occasion an ineligible player plays in a match, his team shall be deducted one match point.

8. Time and play

- 8.1 A Club shall ensure that its venue is open for the admittance of players competing in a match from 7p.m.
- 8.2 Prior to the start of a match both Team Captains shall exchange in writing the names of the players in their respective teams in order of play.
- 8.3 If a regular Team Captain is not in attendance, a player for his team shall deputise and assume his responsibilities.
- 8.4 Team Captains may agree which boards (if any) are to be defaulted before the start of a match BUT, in the absence

of such agreement, the defaulting team shall be defaulted on its lowest board(s).

- 8.5 A team shall play in grading order or within a margin of no more than ten grading points.
- 8.6 The team visiting a Club shall play with the white pieces on odd boards.
- 8.7 The start time for matches shall be the time agreed by the Team Captains or in default of such agreement at 7.00 p.m. ('the Match Time') PROVIDED THAT:
 - 8.7.1 if his clock and board are set up for play, a player is at liberty to start his opponent's clock upon arrival on or after the Match Time but, as white, he shall not be obliged to play his first move until his opponent is present at the board PROVIDED that, if a digital clock is being used, any necessary adjustment is made to ensure it records the prescribed number of moves made by each player to the time control;
 - 8.7.2 if his clock and board are not set up at the Match Time, a home team player is at liberty to start his game as soon as they are set up;
 - 8.7.3 if his clock and board are not set up at the Match Time and he is then present, a visiting team player may require his opponent's clock to be advanced by the time taken to set up them up for play; and
 - 8.7.4 if his clock and board are not set up when a visiting team player arrives after the Match Time, he may require his opponent's clock to be advanced by the time taken from his arrival to set them up for play.
- 8.8 A Team Captain may start an absent player's clock.
- 8.9 The time limit for games shall be at a rate per player of one hour and thirty minutes for 36 moves with a further fifteen minutes' Quickplay to finish UNLESS a Club is required by the opening times of its venue to play games at a shorter rate AND the Match Organiser has been so notified before the commencement of a season WHEN:

- 8.9.1 a rate per player of one hour and fifteen minutes for 30 moves with a further fifteen minutes' Quickplay to finish shall apply; and
- 8.9.2 all home league games played by that Club during the season shall be played at this shorter rate.
- 8.10 If a player is not present within 30 minutes of the start time, his game shall be defaulted to the player present.
- 8.11 If both players are not present within 30 minutes of the start time, the game shall be void.
- 8.12 Within 30 minutes of the start time of a match, a Team Captain may select a substitute player for an absent player if:
 - 8.12.1 the grading of the substitute player shall not breach the playing order prescribed by clause 9.4; and
 - 8.12.2 the substitute player shall accept the time available on the absent player's clock for his game
PROVIDED THAT a player and his Team Captain may accept, in their absolute discretion, a substitute opponent at variance to the requirements of clauses 8.11.1 or 8.11.2.
- 8.12 A printed result sheet stipulating the names of all players claiming game points in a match, their respective grades and game results shall be completed and signed by both Team Captains and results forwarded in writing to the Match Organiser by the home Team Captain within 7 days of the match date.

9. Appeals

- 9.1 If a player, a Team Captain or a Club disputes a decision of the Match Organiser THEN notice of appeal setting out the grounds of objection shall be given by the affected party to the Chairman within 14 days of receipt of the Match Organiser's decision and reasons.
- 9.2 The Chairman shall appoint forthwith an appeal committee of three Members who he considers independent and fitting to determine the appeal fairly.

- 9.3 Each Club may nominate in writing to the Secretary any of its members willing to sit on an appeal committee.
- 9.4 The appeal committee shall:
 - 9.4.1 consider the Match Organiser's decision and reasons;
 - 9.4.2 consider the grounds of appeal;
 - 9.4.3 make any further enquiry into the facts as it may consider necessary;
 - 9.4.4 apply the Rules; and
 - 9.4.5 deliver its decision with reasons (on a majority vote, if necessary) to the Chairman within 28 days.
- 9.5 The Chairman shall give notice in writing of the determination of the appeal committee with its reasons within 7 days of its receipt to the Match Organiser, the appellants and the Webmaster for publication on the Website.
- 9.6 The appeal committee's decision shall be final.