



General Rules and Tournament Overview

- Welcome to our **12th** Annual Chess and Community Conference for **2025** -

The tournament will follow a *Swiss-system* tournament format with competitors being split into two pools, either *Scholastic* or *non-Scholastic*. Separating those who are in school from those who are adults, though desired a scholastic aged person may play in the non-scholastic tournament but they must first have a rating above Class D and if this requirement is met cannot participate in both.

The following information will deal with the former first and gives the details for the latter thereafter. So, for the **2025** Scholastic tournament competitors will be in *teams of three*. This is a *non-elimination* tournament format so regardless of how a team performs all competitors must play in all rounds.

1. The playing field will be divided into *three divisions*:

- A. Level 1 - Elementary School (grades K-5)
- B. Level 2 - Middle School (grades 6-8)
- C. Level 3 - High School (grades 9-12)

2. The competition will be timed and divided into *four rounds*:

- D. There will be four rounds of competition with each round lasting **20 minutes**. The arbiter will say when game time starts and when game time ends. At **10 minutes** and every **5 minutes** thereafter the arbiter will announce the time remaining in the round.
 - Elementary, Middle and High School Levels will each play **four rounds**.
 - Elementary and Middle School will play **simultaneously or after**.
 - Middle and High School Levels will play **simultaneously or after**.
 - The determining factor depends on how many teams are present.
- Team members will not, should and cannot play against each other.
- Schools can have multiple teams but team members cannot swap.

3. The Non-Scholastic competition rules are *structured plays*:

- E. Report - This means the same rules apply but ELO scoring is noted.



Tournament Rules: Manners and Etiquette

- CLAUSE II -

The following information details the expected mannerism of all players overall, scholastic or non-scholastic. Regardless of how far a team or player is in points, disqualification can happen if these rules are not adhered to during the time of the competition.

- Familiarize yourself with tournament rules and regulations, let it be known that choosing not to makes you ignorant of the rules and function of the tournament, however ignorance of the rules does not exempt any one of them.

1. These are a few rules concerning *overall player behavior*:

- Opponents are to shake hands before and after each game.
- Eating is not allowed during games.
- Respect for self and others at all times, No rushing a competitor to move faster, no trash talking or criticism. Vulgar language, vulgar gestures, intimidation tactics, etc.
- No talking across the table apart from introductions or declaring check.
- Any observed negative behavior by volunteers, judges or arbiters result in disqualification, either for the round or the whole game according to severity.

2. These are a few rules concerning *player participation behavior*:

- Players do not have to declare checkmate.
 - Raise hand for judge for invalid moves made after checkmate
 - When you are called take note of your playing table number and board side.
 - From the start of the event, ensure you are listening for your first and last name.
 - For tables with clocks, do not remind the opponent to hit it on their end turn.
 - Avoid loud outbursts, sighing and huffing; these are considered manipulative.
 - No food or other drinks besides water will be allowed at the chess tables.
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- Clock does not stop for any reason besides judge questions or end of game. To drink water, have a bottle or raise your hand for an attendant to bring water to you; however keep in mind that the clock does not stop for this. You may pause the clock and raise your hand for a judge/arbitrator to deal with a problem, discrepancy or question - no one else can intervene.



Tournament Rules: Point System

- CLAUSE III -

The next set of information and details will give players, player's coaches, parents and/or guardians the way in which the games will be scored according to our point system in order to declare a winner at the end of the four rounds. We fairly pair each player/team according to the following rules

- Competitors will earn points for wins and draws each round:
 - ☐ A win is worth 1 match point
 - ☐ A draw is worth ½ match point
 - ☐ A loss is worth 0 match points
- The first round will be random in player's strength. In subsequent rounds, competitors with similar scores will play against each other but competitors will not face each other more than once. All pairings will be computer generated
- Win, lose, or draw every player [on a team or not] proceeds to the next round.
- Each player will play an approximately equal number of games as white and black, alternating colors each round when possible, and not playing the same color three times in a row. The pairing system computer generated will create the pairings so it is important that teams follow the given pairings.
- If there is an odd number of players, the unpaired team receives a **1 point bye**; they do not play that round. The team will play subsequent rounds and not receive another bye.
- The first place winner is the team with the highest aggregate points earned in all rounds. In the event of a tie, standard tiebreak rules will apply.
- Competitors will earn points for wins and draws each round:
 - ☐ Game ends when one side has checkmate.
 - ☐ Game ends when player runs out of time.
 - ☐ Game ends when both sides declare a draw.

Tournament Rules: Game Results

- CLAUSE IV -

All games played in the tournament will be twenty minutes long, which means that each player will have a total of ten minutes to play per game with either a **2 sec/5 sec** delay or bonus increment. Players will use the time given on the clock to make all of their moves and close with a checkmate, a draw or resignation.

The Arbiter will state when game time starts and when game time ends.

- A win is worth **1 match point**
 - A game may end in a win by checkmate.
 - If time expires and there is no checkmate:
 - A game may end in a win by piece count for the competitor with more points. Queen = 9 points, Rook = 5 points, Bishop and Knight = 3 points, Pawn = 1 point.
 - A three minute game between players if points are the same.
 - A game may end in a win under the investigation of the main coordinator and arbiter especially if a player can point out an imminent checkmate.
- A draw is worth **½ match point**
 - A game may end in a draw by *stalemate*.
 - A game may end in a draw by *threefold repetition*.
 - A game may end in a draw by *impossibility of checkmate*. The following ending positions are draws due to impossibility of checkmate:
 - King versus king.
 - King versus king and bishop.
 - King versus king and knight.
- All calls by the arbiter are final and are not up for discussion or argument, from the player, from coaches, parents and/or friends of the participating team.

By following these guidelines, you can navigate through a chess tournament with confidence, sportsmanship, and strategic prowess. Remember, success in chess requires not only skill and knowledge but also discipline, patience, and a positive attitude. Good luck, and if you can, become a **FIDE/USCF** member or ask us how to enter into more tournaments and club activities!

