

WASHINGTON STATE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CHESS TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS

DRAFT OFFICIAL RULES

Proposed September 30th, 2009

1. Authority. These rules apply to all events sanctioned by the Washington Middle School Chess Association (WMSCA). A Tournament Director (TD) is appointed by the Board of the Washington Middle School Chess Association (WMSCA) to run the event. The TD makes all decisions for the event unless overridden by the Appeals Committee (See Section 16) and the Certification Committee (See Section 5).

2. Type Event. This is a set-team Swiss event, conducted in five rounds. Pairing and placing are by total team points. The TD is authorized to pair by scoring groups rather than by specific totals if he feels it wise to avoid pairing equal scoring teams in early rounds, but pairings are usually "straight up." During the first two rounds, teams from the same league may not play each other; the TD should adjust Swiss rules in whatever way necessary in order to preserve this rule while pairing in the spirit of the Swiss system.

3. Team Composition. A team is composed of five players. Two alternates may be substituted. The team must be arranged in order of strength from top to bottom, with no greater than 150 WSRS established rating point difference for players out of rating order. (Coaches may be asked to justify another order if they feel ratings are inaccurate reflections of strength. In-school challenges are not an acceptable part of this justification.) A player with a provisional rating is not bound by the 150-point rule, but the coach must still place the team in order of strength.

Alternates may be used to fill in for missing players. Substitutions must be announced before the tournament unless due to an unforeseen illness or emergency. When alternates are substituted, they must be inserted from the bottom of the team after moving up remaining team members, unless cleared ahead of time with the TD. Penalties, including game and/or match forfeiture, will be determined by the TD for failure to follow consistent team composition: once the team ranking is declared at check-in, it may not be changed except as in use of alternates described above.

Teams must have five players. If an emergency happens (e.g.: a car breakdown on day 2), teams may not leave a board unfilled mid-team. If this is done and the missing player does not appear, that board and all boards below it will be forfeited. Teams may **NOT** change the order of players after their official registration has been submitted, except for the use of alternates as described above.

4. Player Eligibility. To be eligible a player must be registered in grades 5 through 9 for a majority of his/her school program in

the school for which he/she is playing.

5. Team Eligibility. Teams are comprised of students attending the same school. In the event of Home School students OR the lack of sufficient participants to comprise a team, Students of the same SCHOOL DISTRICT may form a team but only if there are insufficient members to comprise a team. Teams composed of students from multiple schools are subject to certification of the WMSCA Certification Committee. The Certification Committee is appointed by the WMSCA Board and is the sole and final authority to determine eligibility of a team.

6. Team Seed for First Round Pairings. The TD will seed the teams in assumed order of strength from top to bottom using average team ratings. For this purpose, no distinction is made between provisional and established ratings.

7. Emergency Team Replacement. If after check-in there are an odd number of teams, the TD will invite an "evenner" team to fill in. This procedure is to avoid unchallenged five point forfeits. The evenner team is admitted free to the event.

8. Penalty for Withdrawal Without Reason. Teams registered for the tournament and which do not appear, or which withdraw from the tournament, shall be barred from the following year's event in accordance with standard policy for invitational and/or qualified events. There may be additional penalties.

9. Laws of Chess. WMSCA Tournament rules, which are a shortened version of USCF rules, shall be used for this tournament.

10. Time Control. The time control in both sections is Game/45, sudden death. If players are using a digital clock with delay capability, they should be set at game/45 with 5-second delay. Analog clocks are not allowed.

Both players may suspend recording the game when either player is in "time trouble." Time trouble is when either clock has five minutes or less remaining for the game. The player with five minutes or less remaining may invite another person to record in his stead. (Score sheets written by persons other than the player involved are not an acceptable basis for claims.) During time trouble neither player may pick up the clock, both players must actuate the clock with the same hand with which they move the pieces and hands must not remain on the clock. Touch-move rules continue in time trouble.

11. Summoning a TD. All players have the right, with good cause, to summon a director. To do this, the player should inform opponent that he or she needs to summon a TD, stop both clocks, and quickly find a director and bring him to the table. This procedure is particularly important in time trouble portions of games, since a win on time alone will not be allowed in purely drawn (book draw) positions.

12. Consultation. Under no circumstances may a player consult with any other person, or use a book or computer, or comment about a game in progress.

A player may not consult a coach or captain regarding resignation, offering, or accepting the offer of, a draw. If a player needs to know the effect of a resignation or a draw on the eventual outcome of the match, he may leave his seat, go to where the team scoring sheet is being kept, and look at it. **Again, no player may consult with anyone for any reason during a game.**

13. Interference during Play. No person may make a comment about a game in progress, including about the fact of flag-fall. A flag, or a clock running for one player when it is opponent's move, may be called only by the player involved. If an improper warning is given, the TD may take whatever action he deems appropriate, including setting proportionate clock time to continue the game, reversing the result, penalizing an interferer's team, and/or ejecting the offender from the tournament.

14. Sportsmanship. All persons attending the event will observe good sportsmanship at all times. For instance, should a losing player refuse to continue a game and leave the table to anticipate his own flag-fall, the TD may cause the game to continue, or may force a directed resignation. This provision applies to all observers, parents, coaches as well as participants. The TD retains the right to eject those failing to observe good sportsmanship.

15. Reporting. Captains (or coaches) of each team are responsible for delivering the match results to the TD on the forms provided, and without delay at the conclusion of the match. If results are not posted, and cannot be quickly discovered, the TD may double-forfeit the game.

16. Appeals. Appeals and protests may be delivered to the TD only by a coach or team captain. In case of appeal or protest, the TD shall convene a three member appeals committee (not to include the TD) to hear and decide the appeal. In case of conflicts of interest, the Board may invite league directors or a disinterested, experienced coach to decide the appeal. The Coordinator, barring conflict of interest, will chair the committee, and its decision is final.

17. Tie-breaks. Ties will be broken by the following systems:
(1) If for the title itself, by full team speed (game/3 with 2 second delay) chess.
(2) Match results between two tied teams, but only if this breaks all ties in the same score group.
(3) A composite of opponents' scores. (team Solkoff)
(4) A partial composite of opponents' scores. (team Sonneborn-Berger)
(5) If still not broken, by any other recognized system the TD judges appropriate.

18. Contested Games. All games counting for points are to be "contested." That is, a played game must occur; a player may not start his clock and then leave to do other things. In such cases, the TD may forfeit that game and all boards below it, as in the case of unfilled boards.

19. Awards. The WMSCA will provide an appropriate list of trophies, medals, certificates, cash and other awards for team and individual winners.

20. League Champions in 1st round: As stated above, teams are seeded by average rating. During the first round, however, the league champions are "bumped up" and put into the top seed spots (in order by rating). After the league champions are completed, the rest of the teams are seeded below them, in order of ratings. Note that this implies that each of the top tables will have one league champion for the first round. This is a privilege granted the league champions, earning them a seed against a lower-half seeded team.

21. Amendment of the Rules. These rules are created by and follow established practice and custom at these tournaments. The WMSCA Board members themselves amend the rules according to such practice from time to time based on advice and consult of the coaches and parents of the association it serves.

22. Spirit and Intent. These rules are designed to recognize that the players involved are children and that our primary objective is to provide a fun and fair environment for them to play. Parents and Coaches are encouraged to place this spirit over a legalistic adherence to the letter of the rules in order to build a fun, friendly and supportive community.