

06. FIDE Tournament Rules

FIDE Tournament Rules

Approved by the 1986 General Assembly, 2007 PB

Amended by the 1989, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1998, 2006, 2010 General Assemblies, and 2011 Executive Board.

Preface

All international chess competitions shall be played in accordance with the FIDE Laws of Chess. The FIDE Tournament Rules shall be used in conjunction with the Laws of Chess and shall apply to all official FIDE competitions. Said Rules shall also be applied to all FIDE-rated tournaments, amended where appropriate. The organisers, competitors and arbiters involved in any competition are expected to be acquainted with these Rules before the start of the competition. In these Rules the words 'he', 'him' and 'his' shall be considered to include 'she' and 'her'.

1. General Remark

Where an event has a problem not covered by internal rules, these Rules shall be considered to be definitive.

2. The Chief Organiser (CO)

The federation or administrative body responsible for the organisation of a competition may entrust the technical organisation to a Chief Organiser. He, together with the federation, in consultation with FIDE where appropriate, shall appoint an Organising Committee to be responsible for all financial, technical and organisational matters. Other regulations hereunder may apply also to the role of the CO. He and the Chief Arbiter (see 4) must work closely together in order to ensure the smooth running of an event.

3. Invitation, Registration and Functions

(a) Invitations to a FIDE competition shall be issued as soon as feasible.

(b) The CO shall send, through the respective national federations, invitations to all participants qualified for the competition. The invitation letter shall first be approved by the President of FIDE for World Championship competitions, and by the Continental President for Continental Championship competitions.

(c) The invitation should be as comprehensive as possible, stating clearly the expected conditions and giving all details which may be of use to the player. The following should be included in the invitation letter and/or brochure which should also be posted on the FIDE website:

- (1) The dates and site of the tournament.
- (2) The hotel(s) where the players are to stay (including e-mail, fax and telephone numbers)
- (3) The tournament schedule: dates, times of play and places of: arrival, the opening ceremony, drawing of lots, play, special events, the closing ceremony, departure.
- (4) The rate of play and the type of clocks to be used in the tournament.
- (5) The pairing system for the event and the tie-break system to be used.
- (6) The default-time (which for events organised by FIDE shall be the start of the round).
- (7) The specific rules for draw agreements if there is any restriction.
- (8) The financial arrangements: travel expenses; accommodation; duration for which board and lodging shall be provided, or the cost of such accommodation, including that for people accompanying the player; arrangements for meals; start money; pocket money; entry fee; full details of the prize fund, including special prizes; point money; the currency in which money shall be disbursed; tax liability; visas and how to obtain them.
- (9) The means for reaching the playing venue and arrangements for transportation.
- (10) The likely number of participants, the names of players invited and the name of the Chief Arbiter (CA).
- (11) The website of the event, contact details of the organisers including the name of the CO.
- (12) The players' responsibility towards the media, general public, sponsors, government representatives and other similar considerations.

(13) The date by which a player must give a definite reply to the invitation and where and when he shall report his arrival.

N.B. In his reply a player may, if he wishes, mention pre-existing medical conditions and special dietary and/or religious requirements.

(14) Security arrangements.

(15) Special medical considerations such as vaccinations recommended or required in advance.

(16) Arrangements for: tourism, special events, internet access, etc.

(d) Once an invitation has been issued to a player, it must not be withdrawn, provided the player accepts the invitation by the reply date. If an event is cancelled or postponed the organisers shall provide compensation.

(e) The CO shall guarantee medical treatment and medicines for all participants, official seconds, arbiters and officials of a FIDE competition and shall insure said people against accidents and the need for medical services, including medicine, surgical procedures, etc., but shall have no responsibility where there is a chronic condition. An official doctor shall be appointed for the duration of the competition.

4. The Chief Arbiter (CA)

(a) The CA of a World Championship competition shall be nominated by the President of FIDE, and the CA of a Continental Championship competition shall be nominated by the Continental President, each in consultation with the CO. The CA shall have the title of International Arbiter classified "A" or "B" and shall have adequate experience of FIDE competitions, FIDE official languages and relevant FIDE regulations. FIDE and/or the Organising Committee may nominate the arbiters and other staff.

(b) The duties of the CA are as specified by the Laws of Chess, the regulations of the competition and other FIDE regulations. During the event he also has to keep the record of each round, to oversee the proper course of the competition, to ensure order in the playing venue and players' comfort during play, and to supervise the work of the technical staff of the competition.

(c) Prior to the start of the competition:

(1) he may draw up additional regulations in consultation with the CO;

(2) he must check all the conditions for play, including the playing venue, playing hall, lighting, heating, air conditioning, ventilation, noise, etc.;

(3) he must secure through the CO all the necessary equipment, ensure a sufficient number of deputies and auxiliary technical staff are engaged and ensure that conditions for the arbiters are satisfactory. Whether all the playing conditions meet the requirements of these FIDE Rules is his final decision.

(d) At the conclusion of the event the CA shall report as appropriate.

5. Pairings

(a) The drawing of lots for the first round of a round-robin tournament shall be arranged by the CO, if possible, to be open to players, visitors and media. Responsibility for the actual pairings, including drawing of lots, rests with the CA.

(b) The drawing of lots shall take place at least 12 hours (including one night) before the start of the first round. All participants should attend the ceremony of drawing of lots. A player who has not arrived on time for the drawing of lots may be included at the discretion of the CA. The first-round pairings shall be announced as soon as possible thereafter.

(c) If a player withdraws, is excluded from a competition after the drawing of lots but before the beginning of the first round, or there are additional entries, the announced pairings shall remain unaltered. Additional pairings or changes may be made at the discretion of the CA in consultation with the players directly involved, but only if these minimise amendments to pairings that have already been announced.

(d) The pairings for a round robin shall be made in accordance with the Berger tables (Annex 1), adjusted where necessary for double-round events.

(e) If the pairings are to be restricted in any way - e.g. players from the same federation shall, if possible, not meet in the last three rounds - this shall be communicated to the players as soon as possible, but not later than the start of the first round.

(f) For round-robin tournaments this restricted drawing of lots may be done by using the Varma tables, reproduced in Annex 2, which can be used for tournaments of 9 to 24 players

(g) For the pairings of a Swiss-system tournament the pre-announced pairing system and program shall apply.

6. Preparation of the Playing Hall

- (a) Lighting of a standard similar to that used for examinations should be used. Lighting should not cast shadows or cause pinpoints of light to be reflected from the pieces. Beware of direct sunlight, especially if this varies during play.
- (b) If possible the hall should be carpeted. If this is impossible, it may be necessary to request players not to wear hard-soled shoes.
- (c) All areas to which players have access during play should be inspected carefully and repeatedly.
- (d) 4.5 square metres should be available for each player in a high-level event. For lower levels 2 square metres may be adequate. Games should not be placed too close to doors. There should be a minimum of 2.5 metres between rows of players. It is best not to have long, unbroken rows. Where possible, players should play on individual tables.
- (e) A chess table should have a minimum length of twice the length of the chessboard and a width of 15 cm to 20 cm more than the chessboard. The recommended area of the table is (100 cm to 120 cm) x (80 cm to 83 cm). The height of a table should be 74 cm. The chairs should be comfortable for the players. Special dispensation should be given for children's events. Any noise when moving the chairs must be avoided.
- (f) The conditions for both players in a game must be identical. If possible the conditions for all the players should be identical.

7. Chess Equipment

- (a) For World or Continental Championships, wooden boards shall be used where possible. For other FIDE-registered tournaments, boards made of wood, plastic or card are recommended. In all cases boards should be rigid. The board may also be of stone or marble with appropriate light and dark colours, provided the Chief Arbiter finds it acceptable. Natural wood with sufficient contrast, such as birch, maple or European ash against walnut, teak, beech, etc., may also be used for boards, which must have a dull or neutral finish, never shiny. Combination of colours such as brown, green, or very light tan and white, cream, off-white ivory, buff, etc. may be used for the chess squares in addition to natural colours. The side of a square should measure twice the diameter of a pawn's base. In particular, the side of a square should measure 5.5 cm. A comfortable table of suitable height may have a chessboard inlaid. If the table and the board are separate from one another, the latter must be fastened and thus prevented from moving during play.
- (b) If mechanical chess clocks are used, they should have a device (a "flag") signalling precisely when the hour hand indicates full hours. The flag must be arranged so that its fall can be clearly seen, helping the arbiters and players to check time. The clock should not be reflective, as that may make it difficult to see. It should run as silently as possible in order not to disturb the players during play.
- (c) If electronic chess clocks are used, they must function in full accordance with the FIDE Laws.
 - (1) The display should at all times show the time available to complete a player's next move.
 - (2) The displays must be legible from a distance of at least 3 metres.
 - (3) From at least a distance of 10 metres a player must have a clearly visible indication of which clock is running.
 - (4) In the case of a time control being passed, a sign on the display must signal clearly which player passed the time control first.
 - (5) For battery-powered clocks, a low-battery indication is required.
 - (6) In the case of a low-battery indication the clock must continue to function flawlessly for at least 10 hours.
 - (7) Special attention should be given to the correct announcement of time controls being passed.
 - (8) In the case of accumulative or delay timing systems, the clock should not add any additional time when a player has passed the last time control.
 - (9) In the case of time penalties it must be possible for time and move-counter corrections to be executed by an arbiter within 60 seconds.
 - (10) It must be impossible to erase or change the data in the display with a simple manipulation.
 - (11) Clocks must have a brief user manual for the clock. Electronic chess clocks used for FIDE events must be endorsed by the FIDE Technical Commission.
- (d) The same type of clocks should be used throughout the tournament.

8. Play

- (a) All games must be played in the playing area at the times specified in advance by the organisers, unless otherwise decided by the CA.
- (b) A separate area outside the playing area must be provided where smoking is permitted. This should be easily accessible from the playing hall. If local ordinances totally prohibit smoking on the premises, the players and officials must be given easy access to the outside.
- (c) If mechanical clocks are used, they shall be set so that each unit registers six o'clock at the first time control.
- (d) For FIDE events with more than 30 participants, a large digital countdown device must be installed in the playing hall. For FIDE events with fewer than 30 players an appropriate announcement must be made five minutes before the game is due to start and again one minute before the start of the game.
- (e) After the finish of the game the arbiter or the players shall place the kings in the middle of the board to indicate the result of the game and then set up the rest of the pieces. For a win by the player of the white pieces, the kings shall be placed on e4 and d5 (the white centre squares); for a win by the player of the black pieces, the kings shall be placed on d4 and e5 (the black centre squares); in the case of a draw the kings shall be placed on d4 and d5 or on e4 and e5.
- (f) Where it is clear games have been pre-arranged, the CA shall impose suitable penalties.
- (g) A glossary of common relevant terms in several languages should be available to the arbiter.

9. Unplayed Games

- (a) If a player has lost a game by default for insufficient reason, the player shall be expelled unless the Chief Arbiter decides otherwise.
- (b) When a player withdraws or is expelled from a round-robin tournament, the effect shall be as follows:
 - 1. If a player has completed less than 50 % of his games, his score shall remain in the tournament table (for rating and historical purposes), but the points scored by him or against him shall not be counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player are indicated by (-) in the tournament table, and those of his opponents by (+). If neither player is present this will be indicated by two (-).
 - 2. If a player has completed at least 50 % of his games, his score shall remain in the tournament table and shall be counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player are shown as indicated as above.
- (c) If a player withdraws from a Swiss-system tournament, the points scored by him and by his opponents shall remain in the cross-table for ranking purposes. Only games that are actually played shall be rated.
- (d) Clauses 9(b) and (c) also apply to team events. Both unplayed matches and unplayed games must be clearly indicated as such.

10. Penalties, Appeals

- (a) When there is a dispute, the CA or CO as appropriate should make every effort to resolve matters by reconciliation. It is possible that such means will fail and the dispute is such that penalties are appropriate but not specifically defined by the Laws or the tournament regulations. Then the CA or CO shall have discretionary power to impose penalties. He should seek to maintain discipline and offer other solutions which may placate the offended parties.
- (b) In all events there shall be an Appeals Committee. The CO shall ensure that the Appeals Committee is elected or appointed before the start of the first round, usually at the drawing of lots. It is recommended that the Appeals Committee (AC) consist of a Chairman, at least two members and two reserve members. The Chairman, the members and reserve members shall, if possible, be from different federations. No member of the AC involved in the dispute shall rule in that dispute. Such a committee should have an odd number of voting members. Members of the Appeals Committee should not be younger than 21 years old.
- (c). A player may appeal against any ruling made by the CA or CO or one of their assistants, provided the appeal is accompanied by a fee and submitted in written form not later than the deadline. Both fee and deadline shall be fixed in advance. The decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final. The fee is returnable if the appeal is successful. It may also be returned if the appeal is unsuccessful but considered reasonable in the view of the committee.

11. TV, Filming, Photography

- (a) Television cameras that are noiseless and unobtrusive are permitted in the playing venue and contiguous areas with the approval of the CO and CA. The CA shall ensure the players are not disturbed or distracted in any way by the

presence of TV, video cameras or other equipment.

(b) Only authorised photographers may take photographs in the playing venue. Permission to do so in the playing hall is restricted to the first ten minutes of the first round and the first five minutes of each subsequent round, unless the CA decides otherwise.

12. Conduct of the Players

(a) Once a player has formally accepted an invitation, he must play except in cases of force majeure, such as illness or incapacity. Acceptance of another invitation is not considered to be a valid reason for not participating or withdrawing.

(b) All the participants should be dressed in a suitable manner.

(c) A player who does not wish to continue a game and leaves without resigning or notifying the arbiter is discourteous. He may be penalised, at the discretion of the CA, for poor sportsmanship.

(d) A player may not speak about his game while it is in progress.

(e) All complaints concerning the behaviour of players or captains must be made to the arbiter. A player is not permitted to complain directly to his opponent.

13. Team Captain's Role in Team Tournaments

(a) The role of a team captain is basically an administrative one during play. Depending on the regulations of the specific competition, the captain shall be required to deliver at a specific time a written list naming the players in his team participating in each round, to communicate to his players their pairing, to sign the protocol indicating the results in the match at the end of the play, etc.

(b) Whenever the team captain speaks to one of his players, he should do so only through or in the presence of an arbiter, using a language the arbiter can understand.

(c) A captain is entitled to advise the players of his team to make or accept an offer of a draw or to resign a game, unless the regulations of the event stipulate otherwise. He must confine himself only to brief information, based solely on the circumstances pertaining to the match. He may say to a player, "offer a draw", "accept the draw", or "resign the game". For example, if asked by a player whether he should accept an offer of a draw, the captain should answer "yes", "no", or delegate the decision to the player himself. He shall give no information to a player concerning the position on the chess board and/or the clock times, nor consult any other person and/or computer as to the state of the game. The captain shall refrain from any intervention during play.

(d) Players are subject to the same prohibitions. Even though in a team competition there is a certain team loyalty, which goes beyond a player's individual game, a game of chess is basically a contest between two players. Therefore a player must have the final say over the conduct of his own game. Although the advice of the captain should weigh heavily with the player, the player is not absolutely compelled to accept that advice. Likewise, the captain cannot act on behalf of a player and his game without the knowledge and consent of the player.

(e) A team captain should encourage his team always to follow both the letter and the spirit of Article 12 of the FIDE Laws of Chess concerning the conduct of the players. Team championships, in particular, should be conducted in the spirit of the highest sportsmanship.

Annex 1: Berger Tables for Round-Robin Tournaments

Where there is an odd number of players, the highest number counts as a bye.

3 or 4 players:

Rd 1: 1-4, 2-3. Rd 2: 4-3, 1-2. Rd 3: 2-4, 3-1.

5 or 6 players:

Rd 1: 1-6, 2-5, 3-4. Rd 2: 6-4, 5-3, 1-2. Rd 3: 2-6, 3-1, 4-5. Rd 4: 6-5, 1-4, 2-3. Rd 5: 3-6, 4-2, 5-1.

7 or 8 players:

Rd 1: 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5. Rd 2: 8-5, 6-4, 7-3, 1-2. Rd 3: 2-8, 3-1, 4-7, 5-6. Rd 4: 8-6, 7-5, 1-4, 2-3.

Rd 5: 3-8, 4-2, 5-1, 6-7. Rd 6: 8-7, 1-6, 2-5, 3-4. Rd 7: 4-8, 5-3, 6-2, 7-1.

9 or 10 players:

Rd 1: 1-10, 2-9, 3-8, 4-7, 5-6. Rd 2: 10-6, 7-5, 8-4, 9-3, 1-2. Rd 3: 2-10, 3-1, 4-9, 5-8, 6-7.
Rd 4: 10-7, 8-6, 9-5, 1-4, 2-3. Rd 5: 3-10, 4-2, 5-1, 6-9, 7-8. Rd 6: 10-8, 9-7, 1-6, 2-5, 3-4.
Rd 7: 4-10, 5-3, 6-2, 7-1, 8-9. Rd 8: 10-9, 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5. Rd 9: 5-10, 6-4, 7-3, 8-2, 9-1.

11 or 12 players:

Rd 1: 1-12, 2-11, 3-10, 4-9, 5-8, 6-7. Rd 2: 12-7, 8-6, 9-5, 10-4, 11-3, 1-2. Rd 3: 2-12, 3-1, 4-11, 5-10, 6-9, 7-8.
Rd 4: 12-8, 9-7, 10-6, 11-5, 1-4, 2-3. Rd 5: 3-12, 4-2, 5-1, 6-11, 7-10, 8-9. Rd 6: 12-9, 10-8, 11-7, 1-6, 2-5, 3-4.
Rd 7: 4-12, 5-3, 6-2, 7-1, 8-11, 9-10. Rd 8: 12-10, 11-9, 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5. Rd 9: 5-12, 6-4, 7-3, 8-2, 9-1, 10-11.
Rd 10: 12-11, 1-10, 2-9, 3-8, 4-7, 5-6. Rd 11: 6-12, 7-5, 8-4, 9-3, 10-2, 11-1.

13 or 14 players:

Rd 1: 1-14, 2-13, 3-12, 4-11, 5-10, 6-9, 7-8. Rd 2: 14-8, 9-7, 10-6, 11-5, 12-4, 13-3, 1-2.
Rd 3: 2-14, 3-1, 4-13, 5-12, 6-11, 7-10, 8-9. Rd 4: 14-9, 10-8, 11-7, 12-6, 13-5, 1-4, 2-3.
Rd 5: 3-14, 4-2, 5-1, 6-13, 7-12, 8-11, 9-10. Rd 6: 14-10, 11-9, 12-8, 13-7, 1-6, 2-5, 3-4.
Rd 7: 4-14, 5-3, 6-2, 7-1, 8-13, 9-12, 10-11. Rd 8: 14-11, 12-10, 13-9, 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5.
Rd 9: 5-14, 6-4, 7-3, 8-2, 9-1, 10-13, 11-12. Rd 10: 14-12, 13-11, 1-10, 2-9, 3-8, 4-7, 5-6.
Rd 11: 6-14, 7-5, 8-4, 9-3, 10-2, 11-1, 12-13. Rd 12: 14-13, 1-12, 2-11, 3-10, 4-9, 5-8, 6-7.
Rd 13: 7-14, 8-6, 9-5, 10-4, 11-3, 12-2, 13-1.

15 or 16 players:

Rd 1: 1-16, 2-15, 3-14, 4-13, 5-12, 6-11, 7-10, 8-9. Rd 2: 16-9, 10-8, 11-7, 12-6, 13-5, 14-4, 15-3, 1-2.
Rd 3: 2-16, 3-1, 4-15, 5-14, 6-13, 7-12, 8-11, 9-10. Rd 4: 16-10, 11-9, 12-8, 13-7, 14-6, 15-5, 1-4, 2-3.
Rd 5: 3-16, 4-2, 5-1, 6-15, 7-14, 8-13, 9-12, 10-11. Rd 6: 16-11, 12-10, 13-8, 14-8, 15-7, 1-6, 2-5, 3-4.
Rd 7: 4-16, 5-3, 6-2, 7-1, 8-15, 9-14, 10-13, 11-12. Rd 8: 16-12, 13-11, 14-10, 15-9, 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5.
Rd 9: 5-16, 6-4, 7-3, 8-2, 9-1, 10-15, 11-14, 12-13. Rd 10: 16-13, 15-11, 14-12, 1-10, 2-9, 3-8, 4-7, 5-6.
Rd 11: 6-16, 7-5, 8-4, 9-3, 10-2, 11-1, 12-15, 13-14. Rd 12: 16-14, 15-13, 1-12, 2-11, 3-10, 4-9, 5-8, 6-7.
Rd 13: 7-16, 8-6, 9-5, 10-4, 11-3, 12-2, 13-1, 14-15. Rd 14: 16-15, 1-14, 2-13, 3-12, 4-11, 5-10, 6-9, 7-8.
Rd 15: 8-16, 9-7, 10-6, 11-5, 12-4, 13-3, 14-2, 15-1.

For a double-round tournament it is recommended to reverse the order of the last two rounds of the first cycle. This is to avoid three consecutive games with the same colour.

Annex 2: Varma Tables

Directions for "restricted" drawing of tournament numbers:

1. The arbiter should prepare, beforehand, unmarked envelopes each containing one of the sets of numbers A, B, C and D as indicated below in point 5. These envelopes are then respectively placed in larger envelopes, on each of which the quantity of player-numbers contained in the small envelopes is indicated.
2. The order in which players draw lots is determined beforehand as follows: The players from the federation with the greatest number of representatives shall draw first. Where two or more federations have the same number of representatives, precedence is determined by the alphabetical order of the FIDE country code. Among players of the same federation, precedence is determined by the alphabetical order of their names.
3. For example, the first player of the federation with the largest number of players shall choose one of the large envelopes containing at least enough numbers for his contingent, and then draw one of the numbers from this envelope. The other players from the same contingent shall also draw their numbers from the same envelope. The numbers that remain are available for use by other players.
4. The players of the next contingent then choose an envelope, and this procedure is repeated until all players have drawn their numbers.

5. The following Varma Table can be used for 9 to 24 players.

- 9/10 players: A: (3, 4, 8); B: (5, 7, 9); C: (1, 6); D: (2, 10)
 - 11/12 players: A: (4, 5, 9, 10); B: (1, 2, 7); C: (6, 8, 12); D: (3, 11)
 - 13/14 players: A: (4, 5, 6, 11, 12); B: (1, 2, 8, 9); C: (7, 10, 13); D: (3, 14)
 - 15/16 players: A: (5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14); B: (1, 2, 3, 9, 10); C: (8, 11, 15); D: (4, 16)
 - 17/18 players: A: (5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16); B: (1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12); C: (9, 13, 17); D: (4, 18)
 - 19/20 players: A: (6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18); B: (1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14); C: (5, 10, 19); D: (4, 20)
 - 21/22 players: A: (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20); B: (1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15); C: (11, 16, 21); D: (5, 22)
 - 23/24 players: A: (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20, 21, 22); B: (1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17); C: (12, 18, 23); D: (5, 24)
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Annex 3: Tie-Break Regulations

Choice of Tie-Break System

The choice of the tie-break system to be used in a tournament shall be decided in advance and shall be announced prior to the start of the tournament. If all tie-breaks fail, the tie shall be broken by drawing of lots. A play-off is the best system, but it is not always appropriate. For example, there may not be adequate time.

1. Play-Off

- a. Adequate time must be set aside for a conclusion to be reached.
- b. The pairing system and rate of play must be determined in advance of the start of the event.
- c. All eventualities must be covered in the regulations.
- d. It is recommended that play-offs only be arranged for disposition of the first place, a championship or qualifying places.
- e. Where subsidiary places are also being decided during the play-off, each position shall be determined in accordance with the play-off. For example, three players tie: number 1 wins the play-off, number 2 comes second and number 3 third. Number 2 shall receive the second prize.
- f. Where two players are tied after the first place has been decided, they shall split any prize money to which they are entitled. For example: four players tie, and a knockout is arranged. Players 3 and 4 knocked out in the semi-final shall share the 3rd and 4th prizes equally.
- g. Where time is limited before a closing ceremony, games between players potentially involved in such ties in the last round may be scheduled to commence earlier than other games in the tournament.
- h. If there is a play-off it shall commence after a break of at least 30 minutes after the conclusion of the last main game involving players in the play-off. Where there are further stages, there shall be a break of at least 10 minutes between each stage.
- i. Each game shall be supervised by an arbiter. If there is a dispute, the matter shall be referred to the Chief Arbiter. His decision shall be final.
- j. Initial colours shall be determined by lot in all cases below.
- k. The following is an example where time for play-off is somewhat limited.
 1.
 - a. If two players have to play a tie-break match, they play a two-game mini-match at the rate of all the moves in 3 minutes with 2 seconds added on for each move from move 1. If this match is tied:
 - b. A new drawing of lots for colours shall take place. The winner shall be the first winner of a game. After each odd-numbered game the colours shall be reversed.
 2. If three players have to take part in a play-off:
 - a. They play a one-game round robin at the rate as in 1 (a). If all three players again tie:
 - b. The next tie-break shall be used (see G.), and the lowest-placed player eliminated. The procedure is then as in (1) (a).
 3. If four players have to take part in a play-off they play a knockout. The pairings shall be determined by lot.

There shall be two-game elimination matches at the rate as in (1) (a).

4. If five or more players have to take part in a play-off, they are ranked by the next tie-break (see G.) and all but the top four are eliminated.
5. The right is reserved to make necessary changes.
6. Where only two players are involved in the play-off, they may play at a slower rate of play, if time permits, by agreement with the CA and CO.

2. Other Commonly Used Tie-Break Systems

In all systems the players shall be ranked in descending order of the respective system. The following list is simply

A. Explanations of Tie-Break Systems

(a) Average Rating of Opponents

The Average Rating of Opponents (ARO) is the sum of the ratings of the opponents of a player, divided by

(a1) The Average Rating of Opponents Cut (AROC) is the Average Rating of Opponents, excluding one or more of

(b) Buchholz System

The Buchholz System is the sum of the scores of each of the opponents of a player.

(b1) The Median Buchholz is the Buchholz reduced by the highest and the lowest scores of the opponents.

(b2) The Median Buchholz 2 is the Buchholz score reduced by the two highest and the two lowest scores of the

(b3) The Buchholz Cut 1 is the Buchholz score reduced by the lowest score of the opponents.

(b4) The Buchholz Cut 2 is the Buchholz score reduced by the two lowest scores of the opponents.

(c) Direct Encounter

If all the tied players have met each other, the sum of points from these encounters is used. The player with

(d) Koya System for Round-Robin Tournaments

This is the number of points achieved against all opponents who have achieved 50 % or more.

(d1) The Koya System Extended

The Koya system may be extended, step by step, to include score groups with less than 50 %, or reduced,

(e) Number of Games played with the Black Pieces

The greater number of games played with the black pieces (unplayed games shall be counted as played with

(f) Sonneborn-Berger System

(f1) Sonneborn-Berger for Individual Tournaments is the sum of the scores of the opponents a player has

defeated and half the scores of the players with whom he has drawn.

(f2) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments is the sum of the products of the scores made by each opposing team and the score made against that team.

(g) Team Competitions

(g1) Match points in team competitions that are decided by game points. For example:

2 points for a won match where a team has scored more points than the opposing team.

1 point for a drawn match.

0 points for a lost match.

(g2) Game points in team competitions that are decided by match points. The tie is broken by determining the total number of game points scored.

B. Tie-Break Systems using both the Player's and the Opponents' Results

(a) Sonneborn-Berger

(b) The Koya System for Round-Robin Tournaments

(b1) The Koya System Extended

(c) Number of games won

(d) Direct encounter

C. Tie-Break Systems using a Team's Own Results

(a) Match points in team competitions

(b) Game points in team competitions that are decided by match points

The tie is broken by determining the total number of game points scored.

(c) Direct encounter

D. Tie-Break Systems using the Opponent's Results

Note that these scores are determined in each case after the application of the rule concerning unplayed games.

(a) Buchholz System

(a1) Median Buchholz

(a2) Median Buchholz 2

(a3) Buchholz Cut 1

(a4) Buchholz Cut 2

(a5) Sum of Buchholz: the sum of the Buchholz scores of the opponents

(b) Sonneborn-Berger System

(b1) Sonneborn-Berger for Individual Tournaments

(b2) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments A: the sum of the products of the match points made by each

opposing team and the match points made against that team, or

- (b3) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments B: the sum of the products of the match points made by each opposing team and the game points made against that team, or
- (b4) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments C: the sum of the products of the game points made by each opposing team and the match points made against that team, or
- (b5) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments D: the sum of the products of the game points made by each opposing team and the game points made against that team
- (b6) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments Cut 1 A: the sum of the products of the match points made by each opposing team and the match points made against that team, excluding the opposing team who scored the lowest number of match points, or
- (b7) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments Cut 1 B: the sum of the products of the match points made by each opposing team and the game points made against that team, excluding the opposing team who scored the lowest number of match points, or
- (b8) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments Cut 1 C: the sum of the products of the game points made by each opposing team and the match points made against that team, excluding the opposing team who scored the lowest number of game points, or
- (b9) Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments Cut 1 D: the sum of the products of the game points made by each opposing team and the game points made against that team, excluding the opposing team who scored the lowest number of game points.

E. Tie-Break Systems using Ratings in Individual Tournaments (where all the players are rated)

When a player has elected not to play more than two games in a tournament, his ARO or AROC shall be considered to be lower than that of any player who has completed more of the schedule.

- (a) ARO {See 2.A.(a)}
- (b) AROC {See 2.A.(a1)}

F. Handling Unplayed Games for Calculation of Buchholz (Congress 2009)

- (a) For tie-break purposes, the result of an unplayed game shall be counted as a draw against the player himself.

(This system shall not apply from July 1, 2012.)

From July 1, 2012 the following system only applies:

- (b) For tie-break purposes all unplayed games in which players are indirectly involved (results by forfeit of opponents) are considered to have been drawn.

For tie-break purposes a player who has no opponent will be considered as having played against a virtual opponent who has the same number of points at the beginning of the round and who draws in all the following rounds. For the round itself the result by forfeit will be considered as a normal result.

This gives the formula:

$$S_{von} = SPR + (1 - SfPR) + 0.5 * (n - R)$$

where for player P who did not play in round R:

n = number of completed rounds

S_{von} = score of virtual opponent after round n

SPR = score of P before round R

SfPR = forfeit score of P in round R

Example 1: in Round 3 of a nine-round tournament Player P did not show up.
 Player P's score after 2 rounds is 1.5. The score of his virtual opponent is
 $S_{\text{von}} = 1.5 + (1 - 0) + 0.5 * (3 - 3) = 2.5$ after round 3
 $S_{\text{von}} = 1.5 + (1 - 0) + 0.5 * (9 - 3) = 5.5$ at the end of the tournament

Example 2: in Round 6 of a nine-round tournament player P's opponent does not show up.
 Player P's score after 5 rounds is 3.5. The score of his virtual opponent is:
 $S_{\text{von}} = 3.5 + (1 - 1) + 0.5 * (6 - 6) = 3.5$ after round 6
 $S_{\text{von}} = 3.5 + (1 - 1) + 0.5 * (9 - 6) = 5.0$ at the end of the tournament

G. Recommended Tie-Break Systems

For different types of tournaments the Tie-Break Rules are as listed below and are recommended to be applied in the listed order.

(a) Individual Round-Robin Tournaments:

Direct encounter
 The greater number of wins
 Sonneborn-Berger
 Koya System

(b) Team Round-Robin Tournaments:

Match points (if ranking is decided by game points), or
 Game points (if ranking is decided by match points)
 Direct encounter
 Sonneborn-Berger

(c) Individual Swiss Tournaments where not all the ratings are consistent:

Direct encounter
 The greater number of wins
 The greater number of games with Black (unplayed games shall be counted as played with White)
 Buchholz Cut 1
 Buchholz
 Sonneborn-Berger

(d) Individual Swiss Tournaments where all the ratings are consistent:

Direct encounter
 The greater number of wins
 The greater number of games with Black (unplayed games shall be counted as played with White)
 AROC
 Buchholz Cut 1
 Buchholz
 Sonneborn-Berger

(e) Team Swiss Tournaments:

Match points (if ranking is decided by game points), or
 Game points (if ranking is decided by match points)
 Direct encounter
 Buchholz Cut 1
 Buchholz
 Sonneborn-Berger