

LEAGUE COMPETITION RULES: 2019/2020 season

2019/2020 changes shown in red

Version date: 25 September 2019

1. DIVISIONS

League competitions shall be held in one or more divisions as decided at the AGM. Teams shall consist of four players.

2. MEMBERSHIP

This rule is withdrawn (2017 AGM).

3. TEAM POSITIONS

A won match shall count one point to the winning team and a drawn match half a point to each team. Within a division, teams will be placed in order: match points, highest first, then game points, highest first. For any remaining ties the results of the matches between the tied teams will be used in the same way to determine placings.

4. ELIGIBILITY

(a) No player shall play for more than one club in any division. The first club represented in a division in the season is assumed to be the player's declared club.

(b) No player shall play for more than one team in the same division. The first team played for in the season shall be assumed to be the player's team.

(c) A breach of either of these rules shall involve loss of the particular game(s) involved for the offending player for the purpose of calculating points (with opponent scoring a win). For grading purposes the game will be scored according to the result of the game.

(d) For non-members of the English Chess Federation (ECF): once a player has played three games in the main divisions – or seven games in the Rapidplay division – he/she won't be permitted to play again until an ECF member. **It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure their players don't breach this rule.** A club must reimburse the League for any ECF charges incurred as a consequence of a breach of this rule.

5. TEAM GRADING RESTRICTIONS

The following shall apply:

Division 1: open

Division 2: restricted to a total of **650** ECF for the team, with one player only above **190**.

Division 3: restricted to a total of **500** ECF for the team, with one player only above 150.

Division 4: restricted to a total of **400** ECF for the team, with one player only above 120.

Rapidplay Division: restricted to a total of 650 ECF for the whole team (see section 18 for rules specific to the Rapidplay Division).

For each grading-restriction breach the offending team will have its game points tally reduced by half a game point. The League Controller may also impose a further penalty at his/her discretion taking into account the circumstances of the infringement (any such ruling being subject to an appeal within 7 days).

Grades: Players with an 'F' category grade shall be considered ungraded.

Ungraded players should be assigned an estimated grade by the League Controller following advice from the Secretary of the player's club. Such advice should be provided before a player makes his or her first appearance for a club. In exceptional circumstances, a player may play without an estimated grade. Here, the ungraded player shall be given a nominal grade of 100 for the purposes of calculating team grades.

Grade estimates may be revised throughout the season.

Grades for graded players shall be taken from the official ECF grading list released prior to the start of the season. Players who begin the season ungraded, but who are awarded an A-E grade in the ECF January grading list, should use the January grade for the rest of the season.

Defaults: if a player who is named on the team list defaults for any reason, his/her grade will count towards the grade of the team. Where an unnamed player defaults, the total grade will be calculated using the mean grade of the named players to calculate the grade of the defaulted player.

6. PRE-MATCH ARRANGEMENTS

At least five minutes before the time arranged for the start of the match, the captains of each team shall exchange team lists. The players must be arranged in descending order of playing strength starting on Board 1. While captains have some discretion in determining playing strength, a player whose grade exceeds that of another by more than 10 points (or 20 points where the lower-graded player is a junior) should be treated as the stronger.

6a. PLAYING SESSION

CCF home matches will have a three-hour playing session. In other matches, if both teams agree in advance, a three-hour playing session will also apply. All other matches will have a playing session of at least two hours and forty minutes. In three-hour playing sessions, clocks will be started promptly at 7:30PM with any delay to the start borne on the clock of the home player.

7. COLOURS

Match captains shall toss for colours immediately after the exchange of team lists, the winner taking white on the odd numbered boards.

8. DEFAULTS

After 30 minutes [40 minutes in the case of a three-hour playing session] from the time agreed for the start of a match a team shall score a win for each player whose proper opponent is still absent, unless another player has previously been substituted.

9. GAME FINISHES.

All games must be played to a finish or for at least 2 hours 40 minutes. Clocks must be used. The available finishes are:

- (a) *Adjudication:* Where an unfinished game is to be adjudicated at the end of the first session: 35 moves in the first 1¼ hours, followed by 7 moves in each subsequent ¼ hour;
- (b) *Adjournment:* Where an unfinished game is to be adjourned to a second session: 35 moves in the first 1¼ hours, followed by 28 moves in the next hour, then 7 moves in each subsequent ¼ hour.

RULE ON SEALED MOVES IN ADJOURNED GAMES

In games to be adjourned – if unfinished when time is called – the player having the move shall seal his/her move and hand it to his opponent to hold until the resumption. Except in the case of a blind or disabled player whose opponent has not offered adjudication, the visiting player has choice of venue.

The second session of an adjourned game shall, unless otherwise agreed with the League Controller, be played within 28 days. Any player who fails to arrive at the venue of the second session within 30 minutes of the time agreed for play to commence shall lose the game. The second session must be played to a finish or for at least two and a half hours. After the second session, unfinished games shall be adjudicated.

(c) *Quick play*: Where a quick play finish is adopted: 30 moves in the first hour, then all the remaining moves in 20 minutes [30 minutes in the case of a three-hour playing session]. Alternatively, where digital clocks are being used, players may, by mutual agreement, use a Fischer time control:

- 1¼ hours start time with a 10-second increment before each move; or,
- For matches with a three-hour playing session: one hour start time with a 30-second increment before each move.

Divisions 1 and 2: Selecting game finishes

- The visiting player shall offer, before his first move, at least two alternatives of game finish method from adjudication, adjournment or quickplay. The home player shall before his next move select from those offered.
- A visiting player failing to make an appropriate offer before the first move shall be deemed to have offered all three methods. Should the home player fail to select a game finish method by the first move, the visiting player may do so. If neither player specifies a game finish method by the first move, the game shall be subject to adjudication. If a player's opponent is not present at the relevant time, the offer or selection may be made in writing.
- Players shall inform their respective match captains of the game finish method during the playing session.
- Games played after 1 May in a season shall be quickplay finish only in all divisions. For other games, clocks shall be set for the time limit applicable to adjudication, unless and until an alternative finish is adopted.

Divisions 3 and 4:

All games must use quickplay finishes.

10. RESULTS

Both clubs concerned must forward the result of the match giving names and individual results to the League Controller copied to the Grading/Results officer within 8 days of the match taking place.

11. ADJUDICATIONS

Each position for adjudication clearly diagrammed and stating whose move it is and the result claimed, must be sent by both clubs to the League Controller copied to the Grading/Results Officer within 8 days of the match. Diagrams may be sent either by post or, preferably, by email (Note: Emailing a chessbase/pgn file is acceptable as is copying a picture from a chess program and pasting it into an email).

12. ADJUDICATION APPEALS

Clubs may appeal in writing (or email) to the League Controller against the result of any adjudication within 15 days of the club receiving it. Clubs must set out the lines of play upon which the appeal is based and send the appropriate fee. In the event of an appeal being upheld that fee will be returned.

13. DISPUTES ARISING OUTSIDE OF PLAY

Details of any disputes or protests by a club shall be sent in writing (email or post) within 7 days of the incident to the League Controller who will make a ruling on the matter. A ruling made by the League Controller may be appealed to a panel which will normally consist of other members of the League Committee together with any additional individuals the Committee may wish to co-opt to hear the appeal.

14. GENERAL

Any proposed alteration or addition to these rules shall be sent to the League Secretary at least 14 days before a General Meeting and shall require a simple majority to be passed at this General Meeting.

If any team defaults more than half its matches during a season, all that team's matches shall be cancelled from that competition.

The League Committee shall have the power to decide upon any issue, which may not be covered by the above rules.

15. PLAYING RULES

All games will be played using the Laws of Chess as recognised by the ECF except where modified in the rules.

(a) Mobile phones

Mobile phones may be brought into the playing area but must be switched off or in silent mode in the playing area. Any such device may be used or answered only outside the playing area. If any such device is used or produces any sound in the playing area during play then the player with the phone should, in the first instance, be warned. A second offence will result in the loss of the game. These rules may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances where there is prior agreement between match captains.

(b) Disputes arising during play

In the event of a dispute where no ECF arbiter is present, match captains may stop their clocks and try to resolve the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved, it should be referred to the League Controller for a ruling. The League Controller's decision can be appealed and heard by the League Committee. Note: It is expected that up to date copies of these rules and the Laws of Chess will be available at the venue of the home team.

The FIDE Laws of Chess

An annotated version of the Laws is available [here](#). Please note the following in particular.

Writing down moves:

A player must write down all moves until he/she has 5 minutes remaining on his/her own clock. (i.e. A player may not stop writing down his moves until his/her own clock has less than five minutes left.) If a player fails to write down his/her moves after repeated warnings he/she will forfeit the game.

Penalties for illegal moves:

For the first instance of an illegal move, two minutes shall be added to the clock of the opponent and the illegal move shall be replaced with a legal move. If a player makes a second illegal move in a game they shall be deemed to have lost the game unless the opponent is unable to checkmate by a legal series of moves, in which case the result is a draw. See article 7.5 of the FIDE Laws of Chess for further information.

Claiming draws:

A player with less than two minutes remaining on his or her clock may make a draw claim if he or she believes their opponent either cannot win by normal means or has been making no effort to win by normal means. See Guideline III.6 (formerly G.6) of the FIDE Laws of Chess for full details. If agreement is not reached between the two match captains the matter should be referred to the League Controller as in 15 (b).

16. BIELSKI CUP RULES

The rules below are for guidance only and may be changed by the organiser of the event in collaboration with the League Controller.

- Teams will comprise four players.
- ECF January rapidplay grades A-D will be used where available, otherwise January standard play grades otherwise July grades (rapidplay before standardplay) otherwise estimated grades.
- A total grading limit of less than 650 will apply for each team.
- The rate of play will be between five and ten minutes per player, as determined by the organiser.
- Touch piece move is applied.
- Illegal moves may result in an opponent claiming a win.
- The FIDE Rules of Chess on blitz chess, as recognised by the ECF and except where modified by these rules, will apply.
- Places will be determined: game points first and then match points. For any remaining ties the results of the matches between the tied teams will be used in the same way to determine placings.

17. TROST TROPHY RULES

The rules for the Trost Trophy will be sent out at least two weeks in advance of the Competition.

18. RAPIDPLAY DIVISION

- The preceding rules for standardplay competitions (for example, with regard to board order) apply unless otherwise stated below.
- Matches will be played in two parts, each over four boards. The first part of a match will start at 8pm and the second part will follow once the first part is complete.
- The team which wins the toss will be White on odd-numbered boards in the first part and Black on odd-numbered boards in the second part.
- The total grade limit for each team for each part is 650. A team may field substitutes for the second part of a match, but must remain within the total grade limit.
- Rapidplay category A-E grades will be used where available otherwise standard play category A-E grades where available otherwise estimated grades. A January category A-E rapidplay grade will supersede both an estimated grade and a standard play grade.
- The time limit for each game will be 25 minutes per player or, if both captains agree, 20 minutes with 10 second increment after each move per player.
- There will be no default time.
- The FIDE Laws of Chess for Rapidplay (in force at the commencement of the competition) will apply with one exception: illegal moves shall be treated in the same way as for standard play games. This means, in particular, that there is no requirement for the players to record moves. However, this may impact on the ability of a player to make a successful draw claim under the repetition rule, the 50-move rule or **Guideline III.6** of the FIDE Laws of Chess.