

## **FIDE Tournament Rules**

Approved by the 1986 General Assembly.

Amended by the 1989, 1992,1993, 1994 and 1998 General Assemblies.

The event shall be played according to the FIDE Laws of Chess. The FIDE Tournament Rules shall be used in conjunction with the Laws of Chess in no way contradict them. They are applicable to all official FIDE competitions. It is recommended they also be applied to all FIDE rated tournaments, if applicable.

The Organizers, the Competitors and the Arbiters involved in any competition are expected to be acquainted with these regulations before the start of the competition.

### **I. Invitation and Registration**

1. Once the organiser (administrator) is designated by FIDE, he must send, through the respective national federations, invitations to all participants qualified for that competition. The invitation letter should be first approved by the President of FIDE in the case of world competitions and by the Deputy-President concerned in the case of continental competitions.
2. The invitation should be as complete 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 :

- (a) The dates and site of the tournament
- (b) The hotel where the players are to stay (including e-mail, fax and telephone numbers)
- (c) The tournament schedule : dates, times and places of : arrival, the opening ceremony, drawing of lots, play, the closing ceremony, departure.
- (d) The rate of play and the kind of clocks to be used in the tournament.
- (e) The financial arrangements : travel expenses; accommodation, duration for which board and lodging will 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 will be disbursed; tax liability; visas and how to get them.
- (f) The intended category of a round robin tournament, the number of participants, the names of players invited and the name of the arbiter.

- (g) The date by which a player must give a definite reply to the invitation and where he shall report his arrival time.
  - (h) The responsibility system to be used.
3. Invitation to a FIDE competition shall be sent, if this is technically possible, at least four months before the start of the event.
  4. The national federation, which is responsible for the organisation of a FIDE competition can entrust the technical organisation to an administrator. The national federation shall appoint an Organising Committee, one of whose members shall be designated the Tournament Director. The Organising Committee shall be responsible for all financial, technical and organisational problems, to secure necessary conditions, equipment, accommodation, publicity.
  5. The organiser shall guarantee medical treatment and medicines for all participants, seconds, arbiters and officials of a FIDE competition and shall insure them against accidents and the need for medical services, including medicines, in the case of acute illness, surgical operations, etc., but not in the case of chronic disease. The organising committee shall appoint an official doctor for the competition.
  6. 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.
  7. 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 as a valid reason for withdrawing.

## **II. Drawing of lots**

1. The drawing of lots shall be open to players, visitors and media
2. The drawing of lots shall take place at least 12 hours (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 drawing of lots may be included at the discretion of the chief arbiter.

3. If a player withdraws or is excluded from a competition after the drawing of lots but before the beginning of the first round, then the lots shall be drawn again, except in the following two cases:
  - a) if, with an even number of participants, the player who withdraws had the last number on the table;
  - b) if a substitute replaces the player who has withdrawn.
- 4.1 If the pairings are restricted in any way, e.g. players of the same federation, if possible, shall not meet in the last three rounds, then this shall be communicated to the players as soon as possible
- 4.2 This restricted drawing of lots may be done by using the Varma tables, reproduced below, which can be modified for tournaments of from 10 to 24 players

**Direction for “restricted” drawing of tournament numbers :**

1. The arbiter shall prepare beforehand, unmarked envelopes each containing one of the below numbers. The envelopes containing a group of numbers are then placed in unmarked larger envelopes.
2. The order in which players draw lots is listed beforehand as follows : The players of the federation with 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 first 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 draw lots and the procedure is followed until all players have drawn their numbers.
5. The following Varma Table can be used for 10 to 20 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).

### **III. The play**

1. All games must be played in the tournament area at the times specified in advance by the organisers.
2. Mechanical clocks shall be set so that each unit registers six o'clock at the first time control.
3. The arbiter shall announce the time for starting and for adjourning the games.

### **IV. Team Captain**

1. The role of a team captain is basically an administrative one. Depending on the regulations of the specific competition, the captain may be required to deliver, at a specific time, a written list naming the players in his team who will participate in each round, report the results of a match to an arbiter at the end of the play, etc.
2. 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 to give only 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.

The captain should abstain from any intervention during play. He should not give any information to a player concerning the position on the chess board, nor consult any other person as to the state of the game. 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, the 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.

All discussions shall take place in sight of the arbiter and he shall be entitled to insist on hearing the conversation.

A team captain should influence 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 should be conducted particularly in the spirit of the highest sportsmanship.

## **V. The conduct of the players**

1. Where it is clear games have been pre-arranged, organizers may impose penalties.
2. A player who has lost three games by default (because he has not appeared for the beginning of the games within one hour of the commencement of the sessions) shall be expelled from the competition, unless the regulations of an event indicate otherwise
3. A player who does not wish to continue a lost game and leaves without resigning or notifying the arbiter is discourteous. He may be penalised, at the discretion of the arbiter, for poor sportsmanship.
4. When a player withdraws or is expelled from a round-robin tournament the consequence will be as follows:
  - (a) If a player has completed less than 50% of his games and leaves the tournament, his score remains in the tournament table (for rating and

historical purposes), but the points scored by him or against him are not counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player and his opponents are indicated by "-" in the tournament table and those of his opponents by "+". If neither players are present, this will be indicated by two "--".

- (b) If a player has completed at least 50% of his games, his score shall remain in the tournament table and will be counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player are indicated as above.
  
5. 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 are rated.
  
6. Articles 5.4 and 5.5 also apply to team events; both unplayed matched and unplayed games must be clearly indicated as such.
  
7. A player may speak only to the arbiter or to his opponent, as permitted in the Laws of Chess, or his match captain in a team event as in 4.
  
8. All complaints concerning the behaviour of players must be made to the arbiter. A player is not permitted to complain to his opponent.

## **VI. The Chief Arbiter and his duties**

1. The chief arbiter of a World competition shall be nominated by the President of FIDE, and of a Continent Competition by the Continental President, each in consultation with the Administrator. He shall have the title of International Arbiter and shall have adequate experience of FIDE Competitions, FIDE official languages and relevant FIDE Regulations. FIDE and/or the Organising Committee may also nominate of other arbiters.

His duties are specified by the Laws of Chess, the regulations of the competition and other FIDE Rules. During the tournament they are also 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 technical staff of the competition.

Before the start of the competition he may make additional regulations in consultation with the Administrator.

Prior to the commencement of the competition, he must check all the conditions for play, secure through the organiser all the necessary equipment and ensure a sufficient number of deputies and auxiliary staff are engaged.

He must check the playing venue, the lighting, heating, ventilation and other conditions. It is his final decision, whether all playing conditions meet the requirements of FIDE regulations.

2. He must ensure that the drawing of lots is done strictly according to FIDE regulations and that it takes place on the date and hour announced in advance by the organiser.
3. He shall note the special cases when the drawing of lots must be carried out in such a way that players of the same federation do not meet each other, for example, in the last three rounds, and follow the procedure prescribed by the regulations (see 2.4).
4. The arbiter shall ensure that the Appeals Committee, if one is prescribed by the regulations, is elected before the start of the first round, and usually at the drawing of lots.
5. At the end of a competition the arbiter shall deliver to the appropriate FIDE official and the organising Federation an official written report on the course of the contest, with documents if appropriate. At the same time he shall send through the organising federation, the cross-table and other necessary data for rating purposes. In the case of a big Swiss-system tournament a rating officer should be appointed to assist him with the large amount of data to be compiled for rating purposes.

## **VII. Penalties, appeals**

1. When there is a dispute, the chief arbiter should make every effort to resolve the matter by reconciliation. If such means fail, where penalties are not specifically defined by the Laws or the regulations, he shall have discretionary power to impose penalties for infractions of rules, to maintain discipline, to offer other solutions which may placate the offended party.
2. The Appeals Committee shall be nominated or chosen before the start of the first round. It shall consist of a Chairman, two members and at least two reserve members. If possible, the Chairman, the members and the reserve

members must belong to different federations. No arbiter, acting in the event shall be a member of the Appeals Committee.

3. If the Chairman or one of the members of the Appeals Committee may appear to have a personal interest of the claim, he shall be replaced by one of the reserve members.
4. A player may appeal any ruling made by the Chief Arbiter or one of his assistants, provided the appeal is submitted in written form not later than the deadline specifically fixed in advance. Decisions of the Appeals Committee are final.

### **VIII. Smoking Ban**

1. Smoking shall not be allowed in the playing hall for the duration of the event. This applies to everyone present: players, officials, media representatives and spectators.

The tournament organizers will provide the players and officials with a separate area outside the playing hall where smoking will be permitted. This area will be easily accessible from the playing hall. If local ordinances totally prohibit smoking within the premises, the players and officials should be provided with easy access outdoors.

### **IX. TV rights, filming, photographs**

1. TV rights, including video and film rights, belong to the organiser. But when appointing the organiser FIDE shall conclude an agreement detailing the specified percentages of money received for the organiser, the players and FIDE.
2. Television cameras are permitted in the playing hall with the approval of the organiser only if they operate noiselessly and are unobtrusive. Video cameras without any light are permitted in the spectators' area when the games are in progress. The Chief Arbiter shall ensure the players are not disturbed or distracted in any way by the presence of TV, video or cameras.
3. Only authorised reporters, with the express approval of the organiser, may take photographs in the playing hall. Permission to do so will be restricted



to the first ten minutes of the first round and the first five minutes each subsequent round, unless the chief arbiter decides otherwise.

**X. Miscellaneous**

1. Organisers and arbiters of a FIDE competition should also have in mind the Regulations for organisation of Top Level Tournaments (C.01), approved by 1983 General Assembly, and amended by 1991 and 1992 General Assemblies.

**Annex to the FIDE Tournament Regulations**

Approved by the 1998 General Assembly.

**1. Handling of unplayed games**

To avoid improper influence of unplayed games on the ranking these games shall be counted as follows :

Independently of the result of an unplayed game (win by Bye, win or loss by forfeit, no game because the player has withdrawn or was absent for some round(s)) for reasons of tiebreak, the result shall be counted as a Draw against the player himself.

This will have no influence on the Sum of Progressive Score or Koya System. In these Systems only the result counts.

**2. List of commonly used Tiebreak Rules**

In all Systems the players shall be ranked in descending order of the respective Tiebreak System. Within the following list there is no intention expressing an order of priority.

**2.1 Tiebreak Rules using the Player's own results****2.1.1 Sum of Progressive Scores**

after each round a player has a certain tournament score. These scores are added to the total Sum of Progressive Scores.

**2.1.1.1 Sum of Progressive Score Cuts**

is the Sum of Progressive Scores reduced by the tournament score of one or more rounds, starting with the first round.

**2.1.2 Matchpoints in Team Competitions**

2 points for a won match (a team has scores more points than half the number of boards a team should have)

1 point for a drawn match (a team has scored the same number as the number of boards a team should have)

0 points for a lost match (a team has scored less points than half the number of boards a team should have).

**2.1.3 The Koya System for Round Robin Tournaments**

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

**2.1.3.1 The Koya System extended**

The Koya System may be extended step by step to include score groups with less than 50 %

**2.1.4 Direct Encounter**

If all tied players have met each other, the sum of points from these encounters will decide.

2.1.5 Number of games won

## **2.2 Tiebreak Rules using the Results of Opponents**

2.2.1 The Buchholz System

2.2.1.1 The Buchholz Score is the sum of the score of each of the opponents of a player

2.2.1.2 The Median Buchholz 1

is the Buchholz Score reduced by the highest and the lowest score of the opponents.

2.2.1.3 The Median Buchholz 2

is the Buchholz Score reduced by the two highest and the two lowest scores of the opponents

2.2.1.4 The Buchholz Cut 1

is the Buchholz Score reduced by the lowest score of the opponents

2.2.1.5 The Buchholz Cut 2

is the Buchholz Score reduced by the two lowest scores of the opponents

2.2.1.6 The Sum of Buchholz is the sum of the Buchholz Scores of the opponents

2.2.2 The Sonneborn-Berger System

2.2.2.1 Sonneborn-Berger for Individual Tournaments

is the sum of the opponents a player has defeated and half the scores of the players he has drawn with.

2.2.2.2 Sonneborn-Berger for Team Tournaments 1

is the sum of the scores of the opponents teams, each multiplied by the scores achieved against this opponent team

## **2.3 Tiebreak Rules using Ratings**

2.3.1 The Average Rating of Opponents

is the sum of the ratings of the opponents of a player divided by the number of rounds.

2.3.1.1 The average Rating Cuts

is the Average Rating of Opponents reduced by one or more of the ratings of the opponents, started from the lowest rated opponent.

2.3.2 Tournament Performance Ratings (including the 350 points rule)

### 3. Application of Tiebreak System to different Tournament systems

The choice of the Tiebreak System to be used in a tournament shall be decided in advance taking into account the type of the tournament (Swiss, Round Robin, Teams, etc.) and the special structure of players to be expected in the tournament. For instance the application of Tiebreak rules using the ratings of players is dubious in tournaments where the ratings are not available or not consistent or not necessarily correct (e.g. Junior/Senior tournaments)

Only one type of the three categories described above should be used for a given event.

For example : a) Sum of Progressive Score + b) Buchholz would be incorrect.

For different types of tournaments the Tiebreak Rules are recommended as listed below :

Individual Round Robin Tournaments:

- direct encounter
- Koya System
- Sonneborn-Berger
- Number of won games

Team Round Robin System:

- Games points
- Match points
- Direct encounter
- Sonneborn-Berger

Individual Swiss Systems (all players have consistent ratings):

- Average rating of opponents
- Tournament Performance Rating

Individual Swiss Systems (most players are mostly rated, ratings are not consistent):

- Direct encounter
- Sum of progressive scores
- Buchholz
- Sonneborn-Berger
- Won games

Individual Swiss Systems (most players are not rated):

- Direct encounter
- Buchholz
- Sonneborn-Berger
- Won games

Team Swiss Systems :

- Games points
- Match points
- Direct encounter
- Buchholz
- Sonneborn-Berger