



P. S. 9

Chess Tournament

What's Going On and Why

October 1, 1998

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P. S. 9 Chess Tournament Procedures and Rules

Introduction

The Procedures and Rules included in this booklet are not new. Most of them have been in effect at PS 9 for some time. Many of these Procedures and Rules are the same or similar to rules at other tournaments. The purpose of this booklet is to inform those attending a P. S. 9 tournament of our goals, expectations of players and non players, the administrative functions and rules governing a tournament .

The P. S. 9 Chess Tournament Procedures and Rules have been documented to ensure that:

- ?all those involved understand the goals of a P. S. 9 Chess Tournament.

- ?players, parents and coaches understand how our tournaments are conducted.
- ?the bases for actions taken is known to insure a fair tournament.

Goals of the PS 9 Chess Tournament

The purpose of the PS 9 Chess tournaments is to be a learning experience. This includes teaching sportsmanship and fair play in a chess environment. We strongly encourage the following:

Players should shake hands before and after the game.

Win, lose, or draw, player and non-player support should be positive.

Competition can bring out the best and occasionally the worst in people. Our goal is to emphasize the positive.

Procedures

These procedures cover the administrative aspects of a P. S. 9 Tournament.

Pre-Registration, Cancellations and Refunds

Pre-Registration greatly assists us in starting a tournament on time. **Phone Pre-Registrations are accepted until 9 PM the night before a tournament (call 212 724-6367, Fax 212 724-4328)**, in addition you save \$10.00 over a walk-in registration.

Prepaid participants who cancel prior to the start of the tournament will have their **payment refunded** or credited towards the next P.S. Chess Tournament (their choice). Any pre-registered participant is encouraged to notify us if they cannot attend the tournament.

Playing up: In Higher Sections

All participants can register to play in the **Grade sections** which are higher than the school grade they are current in. A player may chose to do this because games in the higher grade sections tend to be more challenging. Playing up in the **OPEN Section** is generally for players with an established rating of at least 1000.

No Shows and first round pairings

Players who do not have an opponent at the start of the first round will be paired against other players without an opponent. Late arrivals may be paired against each other or against another player at the discretion of the tournament director. 'No show' Players who are not present by the completion of the 1st round will be dropped from the tournament unless a bye had been agreed to before the start of play.

Byes (Requested and Awarded)

Players may request byes if they are not available for one or at most two rounds. This must be done before the

completion of the previous round or by 9 PM the day before the tournament for first round bytes. A player requesting a bye is awarded 1/2 points (a draw) for each requested round.

When there are an odd number of players in a section, one player is awarded a Tournament Director Bye. This is a 1 point (Win) bye. Based on pairing logic, the Tournament Director Bye tends to go to the last player in the pairing sequence.

Start of Rounds & Pairing Postings

Starting of each round by section will be **announced in the auditorium**. An effort will also be made to announce start of rounds in the gym and hallways. Pairings for each round are **posted in both the cafeteria and the auditorium**.

Players are given a reasonable period of time (10 minutes) to be seated in the cafeteria for play. A tournament director can request that the clock be started at that time. A 'no show' will be dropped from the tournament and the opponent awarded a 'Forfeit Win'. A 'Forfeit Win' is declared when 1/2 of the total round time has expired.

Access to the Tournament Room (Cafeteria).

Access to the Tournament Room is restricted to Players, Tournament Directors and their assistants. **Non participants including parents and coaches are not permitted in the tournament room**. While we realize that this may be an inconvenience, we have found that the players are capable of getting themselves seated and started. It also helps the rounds start more quickly. For the K-1 section there are two tournament directors and one director for each of the other sections plus several assistants to help the players get seated and started.

Results Postings

Results of each round will be posted shortly after pairing for the next round are posted. Players, parents and coaches are requested to **check these sheets to insure that results have been recorded properly**. Remember these sheets show a cumulative score.

Ratings:

PS 9 uses the officially issued ratings from the USCF. The USCF issues ratings quarterly usually a month after the end of a quarter. It includes all tournaments received and processed by the USCF by the end of the quarter. Participants who become a USCF member as a result of a PS 9 tournament will have their new membership rating recorded for the next PS 9 tournament. Ratings are listed on the *School Mates* mailing label after the USCF Number. They are also listed on PS 9 mailing on the top line after the word 'Rating' and on PS 9 certificates.

Lunch Breaks|

Lunch Breaks will be announced by section. They will be determined on how rounds are progressing. Generally the announcements are made between 11:30 A.M. and 12:30 P. M.

Trophy Awards

Trophies are awarded by section shortly (usually about 15 minutes) after the last game of the 4th round is completed. Trophies are awarded to all players with 2 1/2 points or more. A win = 1 point, a draw = 1/2 point, a loss = 0 points. Certificates are mailed to all participants. Frequently trophies are 'left over' from a section because it is not possible to determine the number of players who will score 2 1/2 points or more until a section has completed four rounds. PS 9 Chess believes the awarding of trophies bases on points is easier to understand than awarding a fixed number of trophies with 'tie-breaks' being the determining factor on who receives a trophy.

Trophies awarded based on incorrect results

If trophies have been awarded based on incorrect results, trophies will not be altered or recalled for players not directly involved in the dispute. Based on the decision of the Tournament Director, trophies may be re-issued to the players involved in the dispute. This will be done within one week of the tournament. **Certificates issued will reflect the changes in standing of all players.** This means that the 'Place in Section' on the certificate may differ from the place on the trophy.

Rules of the Tournament

These rules cover how the tournament is conducted.

Touch Moves and Illegal Moves

If a player intentionally touch a piece when it is the players turn to move, that piece must be moved if the player can do so legally. If a player intentionally touches an opponent's piece, it must be captured if it can be done so legally. A player must clearly say "adjust" before touching a piece the player does not intend to move but only wants to adjust on the board. A player may "adjust" when it is her/his turn. If a player accidentally releases a piece on an unintended but legal square, the piece must be left on that square.

If an illegal move takes place and it is not immediately corrected, the opponent should stop the clock and raise his hand to have a Tournament Director resolve the position. The Tournament Director can add 2 minutes to opponents clock after resolving an illegal position.

Clocks and Time Controls

Clocks are not required in the K - 1 section, however if both players agree a clock may be used. The use of clocks is required in all other sections. If neither player in a non K- 1 Section has a clock, then the tournament director has the option to place a clock on the game at any point. Both players will be given the same amount of time. The total time allocated will be the time remaining for that round.

Time control for all sections except the OPEN section is a total of 1 hour (30 minutes per player)' the OPEN section in 1 hour 30 minutes (45 minutes per player).

Notation

Notation (the recording of moves) is encouraged in all sections except K - 1. Players should continue notating even after making a mistake in notating or not notating some moves. Players have the option to stop notating when there is five minutes left on their clock. If one player stops notating the other player has the option to stop notating. The Tournament Director may assess a 5 minute time penalty to a player who does not notate when the opponent is notating.

Resolving Discrepancies during a game

Players who have a complaint or question during a game should **raise their hand and stop the clock**, a tournament director will resolve the issue before play resumes. A player is entitled to a game which is free of distractions by his opponent and others around him.

Recording Results

At the start of each round, both players at a board are required to enter their name, board number and round number on the Results Sheet. At the completion of the round the results are jointly marked on the Results Sheet and turned in to the Tournament Director of the Section. Players are also requested to remove all their equipment from the Tournament Room between rounds.

Pairing - Or Who Plays Whom and Why:

Most Chess Tournaments including PS 9 use a pairing system called SWISS. The major goals of the Swiss pairing system are: 1) don't play the same player twice, 2) play against players who have scored the same number of points whenever possible, 3) within a scoring group the top half plays the bottom half 4) Players receive the same chance to play either color and alternate colors whenever possible. In addition PS 9 Chess adds a rule that players from the same school do not play each other (see next page 'Pairing Against Players from the Same School').

If for example there are 20 players in a section, the player with the highest rating is assigned pairing number 1. The second highest rated person is assigned pairing # 2, etc.

For the first round in the group of 20, the player with pairing number 1 plays pairing number 11, #2 plays #12 etc. down to #10 plays #20. After the first round (assuming no draws) there are 10 winners and 10 who have lost.

For the second round the 10 winners play each other. The players are matched based on pairing numbers. Assuming that pairing numbers 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 15, 16, 19, & 20 all won then for the second round. Then for round two its 2 vs. 11; 3 vs. 15; 4 vs. 16; 7 vs. 19 and 8 vs. 20. (the top half play the bottom half with the same score). A similar pairing would be done for those who lost the first round. Since another goal of the SWISS pairing system is to alternative colors (Black & White), the above pairing may be altered to accomplish this.

For the start of the third round, again assuming no draws, there should be five players with 2 wins (2 points), 10 players with 1 win (from either the first or second round) and 5 players with no wins (0 points). The five players are paired against each other and to make it an even number in the group one of the players with 1 point is added to this group. It is usually the player with the highest pairing number however another player may be selected so that the correct color and different school requirements are fulfilled. The same process is used for the group with 1 point, since there are now 9 players left in this group, the 'left over' player is added to the 0 points group (which needed the extra player.)

This process of matching by points, switching colors, not playing someone twice or not playing someone from the same school continues for all rounds of the tournament. Sometimes it is not possible to switch colors every round in order to meet the other criteria. Therefore a player may play the same color twice in a row. But they should not play the same color three times in a row. However it is possible to play the same color in 3 of the 4 matches.

Pairing Against Players from the Same School

Generally, we **try to avoid pairing players from the same school against each other**. However when there is a preponderance of players from a few schools, it is unavoidable in order to assure fair pairings. This means matching players who have the same number of points or only a minimum difference. Therefore in the later rounds (3rd and/or 4th) players from the same school may be paired against each other. This determination is made by the tournament director. However as a guideline whenever one school constitutes 1/3 or two schools constitute 50% of a section then the same school restriction will be eliminated in the fourth round It may be invoked in the third round if warranted. When this rule is invoked it is applied to all schools in the section not just those with a preponderance of players.

Tie Breaks - What are they and how are they calculated.

There is no perfect process to inter-rank players with the same score. Tie Breaks are the preferred method used at most chess tournaments to rank players with the same number of points for their place in the tournament. PS 9 Chess uses four USCF approved methods of calculating tie breaks. Generally the first method is sufficient however if two or more players have the same tie break points after method 1 is used then method 2 is used to resolve the tie. Similarly method 3 is only used to resolve ties resulting from method 2. And method 4 is only used to resolve ties resulting from method 3. Over 90% of all tie-breaks are resolved by the first method. If the four methods fail to resolve tie then rating is used. If rating does not resolve a tie then a coin toss is used.

The four methods used are:

Solkoff (Method 1) Evaluates the strength of a player's opposition in the tournament by summing the final score of his or her opponents. Since there are four opponents for each player at a PS 9 tournament, these four scores are summed for each player.

In the pairing example above if the final results were: 1 player with 4 points, 3 players with 3 points, 10 players with 2 points, 4 players with 1 point and 2 players with 0 points, tie breaks would be calculated for each point group. In the 3 point group the 3 players are vying for 2nd, 3rd, and 4th places in the tournament. If one of the players opponents had a total of 8 points (i.e. each of them won 2 games) (s)he would have 8 tie break points. If the other two players opponents each had a total of 7 points, then each

of them would have 7 tie break points. The player with 8 tie break points would be awarded 2nd place. The second tie break method would have to be used to determine 3rd and 4th places.

Cumulative (Method 2) Evaluates the sequence of a player's results by adding up the cumulative (running) score for each round. Go back to the two players vying for 3rd and 4th places each with 3 wins (3 Points). If the one player had a Win, Win, Win, and Loss then his round cumulative scores would be: 1, 2, 3, 3. The sum of them is 9. If the other player had a Loss, Win, Win, and Win then his round cumulative scores would be: 0, 1, 2 and 3. The sum of them is 7. Thus the player with a cumulative total of 9 would be awarded 3rd place and the player with 7 cumulative points is awarded 4th place.

The theory behind this process is that earlier wins presumably set a player up for stronger competition then early losses.

Opponents Cumulative (Method 3) This is similar to the Cumulative Method (Method 2) except the cumulative tie breaks of the four opponents are calculated and added together.

Sonneborn-Berger (Method 4) This process is similar to the Solkoff Method (Method 1) except it focus on the scores of the opponents the player either defeated or drew, it ignores the scores of the opponents the player loss to.

Comments

Comments are welcome on these procedures: Please address the comments to John Kennedy, PS 9 Chess, 100 West 84th Street, NY NY 10024 or to Rob Young, Apt. 8F, 90 Riverside Drive, NY NY 10024