

METROPOLITAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TEAMS COMPETITION

RULES

1. COMPETITION

The Metropolitan Secondary Schools Competition is played in three separate grades. These grades are as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>School Years</u>
SENIOR	11 and 12
INTERMEDIATE	9 and 10
JUNIOR	7 and 8

Players must compete in the grade which corresponds to their school year. Exemptions from this rule will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the NSWJCL Council.

Schools are allocated to **regions** and, where necessary, teams are divided into **divisions** for the preliminary rounds. Division winners, and sometimes (at the discretion of the Secondary Schools Coordinator) second place teams will progress to the finals to determine the region champions and these will then meet to determine the overall competition champions for each grade. Trophies will be awarded to division, region and competition winners.

2. TEAMS

(a) Players: Each team consists of four players from the same school. Teams do not have to field the same four players for every match (although this is desirable). In the preliminary divisional games, a player may only play for one team in any particular round. For teams progressing to the finals, new players may not be introduced into the team, and players should have competed in at least fifty per cent of that team's preliminary matches. Exemptions to this rule may be granted in special circumstances by the Secondary Schools Coordinator.

(b) Board Order: Within each team, players must be ranked in order of playing strength. It is strongly recommended that where players have NSWJCL ratings, these be used to determine board order, but the rating order may be overridden where a school has determined that the ratings do not reflect the current relative playing strengths of the players. [Permission of the Secondary Schools Coordinator is no longer required to field players out of rating order.] However, where players are blatantly fielded out of strength order (for example, by sacrificing the weakest player on Board 1 in order to improve the chances of winning on the lower boards), then forfeits may be incurred.

Before the commencement of each match the team captains should present a team list nominating the board order of their players and listing their correct ratings. [Ratings are available at www.chessratings.com.au.]

(c) Forfeits: If one team is incomplete and no reserve is available, that team will normally forfeit the board on which the absent player usually plays. For example, if the Board 2 player is absent, it is not necessary to move the lower board players up and forfeit on Board 4 as this would be a double penalty. In this example Boards 1, 3 and 4 should be played and Board 2 forfeited. It would not be permissible to move the Board 1 player down and play Boards 2, 3 and 4, forfeiting Board 1.

Note: Every effort should be made to avoid forfeiting games. If forfeits are unavoidable the opposing team should be notified beforehand to avoid unnecessary travel and time wastage. Repeated forfeits without notifying the opponents may lead to the team being removed from the competition.

(d) Penalties: A player who plays in a team for which he or she is not eligible (for example, the incorrect grade for his or her school year) will lose any points scored. Playing out of strength order may lead to forfeiture of the higher rated player's game (see Rule 2(b)).

3. MATCH CONDITIONS

(a) Pairings: The draw for your region is included separately and also on the NSWJCL website, www.nswjcl.org.au. The draw for the finals will be advised at the conclusion of the preliminaries.

(b) Colours: In the draw the team listed first in each pairing is the home team, and plays White on Boards 1 and 3, and Black on Boards 2 and 4.

Note: the allocation of colours has changed since last year (for consistency with other competitions).

(c) Starting Time: 4.00 p.m., unless otherwise agreed. Forfeiture time is 60 minutes after the agreed starting time. Where chess clocks are used the clock of the absent player may be started 30 minutes after the agreed starting time.

Note: Visiting teams sometimes encounter unexpected delays in travel - please make allowance for this, particularly when the visitors have to travel long distances or where traffic delays are likely. Visiting teams expecting to be late should contact the host school beforehand to request a later start.

(d) Directions: Where directions to the playing room are not clearly set out in the competition booklet, a representative of the home team should meet visiting players at the main entrance and escort them to the playing room.

(e) Equipment: The home team is required to provide standard (Staunton Pattern) competition sized sets and boards for the match, plus materials for adjournments and/or adjudications (see Rules 5(b) and 5(c)).

(f) Clocks: Use of chess clocks is highly recommended. Either player may insist on the use of a standard chess clock, if available (visiting teams may bring their own clocks). Each player shall have 60 minutes for the game or, if digital clocks are available, 45 minutes plus 10 seconds per move (from move 1). Shorter time limits may be allowed, at the discretion of the match supervisor, if there would otherwise be insufficient time for the match; however, each player must be given at least 30 minutes. Clocks may be used at the resumption of an adjourned game, even if not used in the previous session: the time limit in this case shall be 30 minutes each for the rest of the game (plus 10 seconds per move if digital clocks are used).

- (g) Telephone:** Access to a telephone (or mobile phone) at all times is mandatory (for emergency and other reasons).
- (h) Supervision:** Home teams are required to provide an adult to supervise the match.
- (i) Results:** Both teams must submit the full results as soon as possible after the match, using the online scoring system. The match may be scored 0-0 if results are not received within seven days of the due date for the match.
- Forfeited games (where one or both players are absent) should be indicated as such, as forfeited games do not count towards ratings.

Please ensure that names are spelt correctly so that the results can be processed correctly for rating.

4. POSTPONED GAMES

- (a)** When postponement of a match or game is necessary, prior contact must be made. It is not sufficient just to leave a message at the School – the message might not be delivered, or the requested postponement might not be convenient.
- (b)** A later starting time or an alternative date may be agreed between teams, but any such arrangements should be made well in advance to ensure that all parties concerned can be advised in time. Claims of altered arrangements cannot be considered if the opposing school's chess coordinator was not informed.
- (c)** Games may not be postponed more than one week after the due date except with the approval of the Secondary Schools Coordinator. Note, however, that games may be played at any time earlier than the due date, on any day of the week.

5. UNFINISHED GAMES

(a) Where a chess clock is used, the time limit should ensure that the game is finished in approximately two hours. Where a chess clock is not used, if any games are unfinished after 2 hours (this is a guide only), or less by agreement between captains or on the direction of the Match Supervisor, they may be either sent for adjudication or adjourned, if a suitable date and resumption time can be negotiated between parties.

(b) In the case of adjudication, the position and relevant details (including which player is to move) must be sent within three days of the game to:

The Adjudicator
NSW Junior Chess League
Email: RichardGH@nswjcl.org.au
Fax: 9499 4131

An official Adjudication Form may be downloaded and printed from the NSWJCL website. It is also printed in the competition booklet, and should be photocopied (enlarged to A4 size) and used whenever possible. A clear photo of the board is acceptable provided that the details requested in the adjudication form are also supplied (players' names and teams, which player is to move, the last move, eligibility to castle, piece count, etc.).

(c) In the case of adjournment (which is rare as unfinished games are usually sent for adjudication), the procedure is as follows: The home team should provide adjournment stationery (paper and envelope). The player to move writes his move on the paper provided and seals it in the envelope (this is called "sealing the move"). This move is not played on the board, and the written move should not be shown to the opponent. The following information should be recorded on the outside of the envelope: the players' names, the position immediately before the sealed move, the name of the player whose turn it is to move, and, if clocks are used, the time used by each player. Both players sign the back of the envelope across the seal. The envelope is put into safe keeping and, when the game is resumed, is opened in the presence of the player having to reply to the sealed move. If no impartial party is available to hold the envelope, it should be kept by the player who did not seal the move. If the envelope cannot be produced on resumption, the player who sealed the move may make any legal move.

If no envelope is available at adjournment time, sealing a move is not possible; the game should be adjourned after the home player has played a move on the board. Resumption should be at the home venue unless otherwise agreed by both players, or as otherwise directed by the Secondary Schools Coordinator. Resumption time, date and venue should be agreed on by the players before they separate, and should be written on the envelope. If unable to agree on these points, both players must contact the Secondary Schools Coordinator, who will make the final decision for them. Players may agree to a result before the scheduled resumption. Failure to appear for the resumption of an adjourned game without prior notification (thereby resigning through non-appearance) is considered highly unsporting.

(d) Results should be submitted without delay, with any unfinished games indicated as such. When the game has been completed, the result should be submitted online as soon as possible.

6. BEHAVIOUR

- (a)** Players are forbidden to distract or annoy their opponents.
- (b)** Players and spectators must remain silent during play. Players are forbidden to have recourse to the advice or opinion of a third party, whether solicited or not.
- (c)** If at any time during a match a player feels that he/she is being deliberately annoyed or harassed, the game must stop and the matter be brought to the attention of the supervisor. If the matter cannot be settled immediately, proceed with 7 (a). Supervisors should report any conduct problems to the Secondary Schools Coordinator.
- (d)** Note that the Laws of Chess provide that infractions of the rules relating to the behaviour of players may incur penalties, even to the extent of the loss of the game.

7. DISPUTES

Procedure:

(a) In the case of an unresolved dispute, the player to move shall seal his move and stop the game. Within four days, both players and any witnesses must report in writing to the Secondary Schools Coordinator, giving complete details.

(b) An appeal against the Secondary Schools Coordinator's decision may be made by either school to the Appeals Committee appointed by the NSWJCL Council. The appeal must be lodged in writing with

The Membership Registrar
NSW Junior Chess League
Email eunice.koh@nswjcl.org.au

within 7 days (or, in the finals, within 3 days) of the Secondary Schools Co-ordinator's decision. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

8. RECORDING OF MOVES

(a) The recording of moves is highly recommended, particularly in the Senior grade and in the finals of all grades. A sample recording sheet is printed in the competition booklet and may be photocopied [[enlarge to A4 size](#)].

(b) Claims for a draw by repetition of position or the 50-move rule can only be claimed where it can be demonstrated from a scoresheet.

9. LAWS OF CHESS

(a) The FIDE (International Chess Federation) Laws of Chess¹ shall apply, unless specifically modified for this competition as follows:

- **Mobile phones:** Players may bring mobile phones into the playing venue, but if, during a game, a player uses a mobile phone or his mobile phone rings the game is awarded to his opponent.
- **Illegal moves:** If a player completes (including pressing the clock, if one is used) three illegal moves his opponent may claim the game (rather than two illegal moves, as in the recently revised FIDE laws).

(b) Please note the following FIDE law in particular:

- **Castling:** When castling, the king should be touched first; if the rook is touched first, the opponent may insist that the rook only be moved.

10. FINALS

All matches played after the Divisional (preliminary) rounds are called *finals*. Each region (Metropolitan North, etc.) will produce its own regional champion team in each grade and this team will then play off against the winners of the other regions. The finals will commence at the beginning of third term and will generally be played in knock-out format. Finals matches must be played on (or prior to) the dates scheduled, but not later unless with the approval of the Secondary Schools Coordinator. (This is particularly important in Senior grade as the finals must be completed before the HSC).

Starting time for Finals: 4.00 p.m., unless otherwise agreed. In arranging the starting time, adequate allowance should be made for the longer travelling time for teams from other regions.

Chess clocks are highly recommended for all finals.

If a match between teams in the knock-out finals results in a tie then the result is determined by weighting the board scores of the match with weighting factors of 4, 3, 2 and 1 for boards 1 to 4 respectively. If the teams are still tied then the results from Board 4 are discounted, then if necessary Board 3. If this does not resolve the tie then a rematch will be necessary (with colours reversed).

11. VARIATION TO RULES

The Secondary Schools Coordinator has the right to vary, at his discretion, any of these rules. Any such variation is subject to the normal right of appeal by an aggrieved party – see Rule 7(b).

¹ The FIDE Laws of Chess may be found on the FIDE website, www.fide.com – click on “FIDE” then “Handbook” then “E.I Laws of Chess”.