

## 05. FIDE Competition Rules

### FIDE Competition 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 chess competitions shall be played in according to the FIDE Laws of Chess (E.I.01A). The FIDE Competition 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 competitions, 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 Scope**

- 1.1 Where an event has a problem not covered by internal rules, these Rules shall be considered to be definitive.
- 1.2 These rules apply to the following levels of competition.
  - L1: Official FIDE events as defined by the FIDE Events Commission (D.IV.01.1) or FIDE World Championship and Olympiad Commission (D.I, D.II)
  - L2: Competitions where FIDE titles and title norms can be earned
  - L3: FIDE Rated Competitions
  - L4: All other competitionsRules that apply to specific types of competitions shall have the competition level indicated. Otherwise the rules should apply to all levels of competitions.
- 1.3 These competition rules may contain regulations defined by other FIDE Commissions, which are listed in the FIDE Handbook. Where possible, references to these external regulations shall be shown.

#### **2 The Chief Organiser (CO)**

- 2.1 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 or organising body, shall appoint an Organising Committee to be responsible for all financial, technical and organisational matters.  
Other rules hereunder may apply also to the role of the CO. He and the Chief Arbiter (see 3) must work closely together in order to ensure the smooth running of an event.

#### **3 The Chief Arbiter (CA)**

- 3.1 The duties of the CA are as specified by the Laws of Chess, the Rules 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.
- 3.2 Prior to the start of the competition:
  - (1) he may draw up additional rules in consultation with the CO;
  - (2) he shall check all the conditions for play, including the playing venue, playing area, lighting, heating, air conditioning, ventilation, noise, security, and so on.;

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

3.3 At the conclusion of the event the CA shall report as appropriate.

#### **4 Preparation of the Playing Hall**

4.1 Lighting of a standard similar to that used for examinations should be used, at least 300 lux. 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.

4.2 If possible the hall should be carpeted. If this is impossible, it may be necessary to request players not to wear hard-soled shoes.

4.3 All areas to which players have access during play shall be inspected carefully and repeatedly.

4.4 4.5 square metres should be available for each player in a high-level event (L1,L2). For lower levels (L3,L4) 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.

4.5 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 at least 110 cm to 140cm by (80 cm to 83 cm). The height of a table shall 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.

4.6 The conditions for both players in a game shall be identical. If possible the conditions for all the players shall be identical.

#### **5 Chess Equipment**

5.1 For World or Continental Championships (L1), wooden boards shall be used where possible. For other FIDE registered competitions (L1, L2, L3), 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 CA finds it acceptable. Natural wood with sufficient contrast, such as birch, maple or European ash against walnut, teak, beech, and so on., 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, and so on. 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. 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.

5.2 The recommended height of the pieces is as follows: King – 9.5 cm, Queen – 8 cm, Bishop – 7 cm, Knight – 6 cm, Rook – 5.5 cm and Pawn – 5 cm. The diameter of the pawn base should measure 50% of its height.

5.3 Stability of pieces must also be taken into account. It means the weight of the pieces should be suitable for comfortable moving and stability

5.4 If mechanical chess clocks are used, they should have a device (a "flag") signalling precisely when the hour hand passes 12 o'clock. The flag must be arranged so that its fall can be clearly seen, helping the arbiters and players to check the time. The clock face should not be reflective. It should run as silently as possible.

5.5 If electronic chess clocks are used, they must function in full accordance with the FIDE Laws.

Electronic chess clocks used for FIDE events must be endorsed by the FIDE Technical Commission.

From 1 July 2017 all L1, L2 competitions shall use clocks endorsed by the FIDE Technical Commission.

5.6 The same type of equipment should be used throughout the competition.

## 6 **Play**

6.1 All games must be played in the playing area at the times specified in advance by the organisers, unless otherwise decided by the CA (in consultation with the CO).

6.2 If possible, a separate area outside the playing area shall be provided where smoking is permitted. This should be easily accessible from the playing area. If local ordinances totally prohibit smoking on the premises, the players and officials shall be given easy access to the outside.

6.3 If mechanical clocks are used, they shall be set so that each unit registers six o'clock at the first time control.

6.4 For FIDE events (L1) with more than 30 participants, at any stage, a large digital countdown device shall be installed in the playing hall. For FIDE events with fewer than 30 players an appropriate announcement shall be made five minutes before the game is due to start and again one minute before the start of the game.

6.5 After the finish of the game, and the scoresheets have been signed, 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.

6.6 Where it is clear games have been pre-arranged (E.I.01A.11.1), the CA shall impose suitable penalties (E.I.01A.12).

6.7 A glossary of common relevant terms in several languages should be available to the arbiter.

## 7 **Pairings**

7.1 Responsibility for the drawing of lots and the actual pairings, rests with the CA.

7.2 The drawing of lots for the first round of a round-robin competition shall be arranged by the CO, to be open to the players.

7.3 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.

7.4 If a player withdraws, or 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.

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

7.6 If the pairings are to be restricted in any way – for example, 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.

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

7.8 For the pairings of a Swiss-system competition the pre-announced pairing system and

program shall apply. (C.04)

## 8 **Unplayed Games**

- 8.1 If a player has lost a game by default for insufficient reason, the player shall be expelled unless the CA decides otherwise.
- 8.2 If a player withdraws or is expelled from a round-robin competition, the effect shall be as follows:  
(1). If a player has completed less than 50 % of his games, his score shall remain in the competition 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 competition 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 competition table and shall be counted in the final standings. The unplayed games of the player are shown as indicated as above.
- 8.3 If a player withdrew or has been expelled from a Swiss-system competition, the points scored by him and by his opponents shall remain in the cross-table for ranking purposes. Only games that were actually played shall be rated.
- 8.4 Clauses 8.2 and 8.3 also apply to team events. Both unplayed matches and unplayed games shall be clearly indicated as such

## 9 **Conduct of the Players**

- 9.1 Once a player has formally accepted an invitation, he must play except in exceptional circumstances (force majeure), such as illness or incapacity. Acceptance of another invitation is not considered to be a valid reason for not participating or for withdrawing.
- 9.2 All the participants should be dressed in a suitable manner.
- 9.3 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 (E.I.01A.12.9)
- 9.4 A player shall not speak about his game while it is in progress.
- 9.5 All complaints concerning the behaviour of players or captains shall be made to the arbiter. A player is not permitted to complain directly to his opponent (E.I.01A.11.5)

## 10 **Penalties, Appeals**

- 10.1 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 of Chess or the Competition Rule. Then the CA (in consultation with the CO) shall have discretionary power to impose penalties. He should seek to maintain discipline and offer other solutions which may placate the offended parties.
- 10.2 In all events there shall be an Appeals Committee (AC). The CO shall ensure that the AC is elected or appointed before the start of the first round, usually at the drawing of lots. It is recommended that the 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 shall not be younger than 21 years old.
- 10.3 A player or a registered official representing a player or team may appeal against any ruling made by the CA or CO or one of their assistants. Such an official may include the player's team captain, head of delegation or other person as defined in the rules of the event.,

10.4 An appeal shall be 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. The fee (or part of it) may also be returned if the appeal is unsuccessful but considered reasonable in the view of the committee.

## 11 **TV, Filming, Photography**

11.1 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.

11.2 Only authorised photographers may take photographs in the playing venue. Use of flash in the playing area 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.

The Competition Rules may include other rules due to the peculiarities of the event Only with the permission of the CA the authorised photographers may take photographs without flash during the rest of the round in the playing area.

## 12 **Team Captain's Role in Team competitions**

12.1 Depending on the rules 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 the pairings, to sign the protocol indicating the results in the match at the end of play.

12.2 The role of a team captain is an administrative one during play. The captain shall refrain from any intervention in any game during play.

12.3 If the team captain needs to speak to one of his players, he shall approach the arbiter first. If the arbiter agrees, the captain shall speak to the player in the presence of an arbiter, using a language the arbiter can understand. The same procedure shall be followed if a player needs to speak to the captain.

12.4 The team captain may delegate his functions to another person, provided he informs the CA of this in writing in advance.

## 13 **Invitation, Registration and Functions**

13.1 Invitations to an official FIDE competition shall be issued as soon as feasible.

13.2 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.

13.3 The invitation shall 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 Competition
2. The hotel(s) where the players are to stay (including e-mail, fax and telephone numbers)
3. The Competition 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 Competition.
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. Any smoking restrictions shall be mentioned in the invitation.
14. Security Arrangements.
15. Special medical considerations such as vaccinations recommended or required in advance.
16. Arrangements for: tourism, special events, internet access, and so on.
17. The date by which a player must give a definite reply to the invitation and where and when he shall report his arrival.
18. In his reply a player may mention pre-existing medical conditions and special dietary and/or religious requirements.
19. If the organiser has to take special measures due to a disability of the player, the player shall notify the organiser in his reply.
- 13.4 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.
- 13.5 The CO shall guarantee medical treatment and medicines for all participants, official seconds, arbiters and officials of an official FIDE competition and shall insure said people against accidents and the need for medical services, including medicine, surgical procedures, and so on, but shall have no responsibility where there is a chronic condition. An official doctor shall be appointed for the duration of the competition.

#### 14 **Appointments**

- 14.1 (a) The CA of an official World Event shall be nominated by the President of FIDE in consultation with the CO., The CA of a Continental Championship competition shall be nominated by the Continental President, in consultation with the CO. However, if the Continental Championship is a qualification event for the World Championship the candidacy of the CA must be agreed with FIDE.
- (b) The CA shall have the title of International Arbiter classified "A" or "B" (B.06) and shall have adequate experience of FIDE competitions, FIDE official languages and relevant FIDE regulations. FIDE and/or the Organising Committee shall nominate the arbiters and other staff.