

# CINCINNATI SCHOLASTIC CHESS SERIES

## Participant Handbook for 2013-14

August 1, 2013

We, the CSCS organizers, thank and applaud not only those who play in our tournaments but also their parents. Your enthusiasm, commitment and support make our tournaments possible. We recognize that your time is valuable, and we know there are many other things you could be doing on the Saturdays that you choose to spend with us. We strive to run our tournaments to a very high standard, meaning that they are conducted efficiently and in accordance with the official rules of the US Chess Federation (USCF), begin and proceed in a timely manner, promote fair competition, foster good sportsmanship, and overall provide a good experience for both players and parents — an experience that we hope you will be encouraged to repeat frequently.

This Handbook provides information that is specific to the 2013-14 Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series (CSCS) tournaments as well as information that applies to tournament chess generally. It explains some — but only some — of the official rules of tournament chess. On points not covered in this Handbook, the rules and policies of the U.S. Chess Federation will govern. For information on these points participants are referred to the *U.S. Chess Federation's Official Rules of Chess, 5th Edition* (2003) and its subsequent amendments and additions as published on the U.S. Chess Federation's website, [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org). Even if you have read an earlier version of this document, we encourage you to become familiar with several important changes we made for this year. Major changes are summarized below and explained in further detail later the document. We request that all players and their parents be familiar with, understand and comply with this information, which is accurate as of August 1, 2013. If anything changes, we will notify participants by email and post the changed information on [www.chessinnati.com](http://www.chessinnati.com).

*Editorial note:* Cincinnati Scholastic Chess recognizes that a number of girls play in its tournaments, and we enthusiastically welcome and encourage them. Nevertheless, the repeated use of the phrases “he and she,” “his or her,” “her and his” and the like to recognize that people of both sexes play the game can get quite annoying. As a practical matter, then, and with deference to the reality that about 80% of scholastic chess players are boys, we use masculine pronouns throughout this handbook with the explicit acknowledgement here that whenever “he” or “his” is used in any general reference, the intended reference is to any player of either sex.

### **Summary of Changes for 2013-14**

#### *Sections and Rating Ceilings*

One of the problems that we have continually dealt with is how to design sections such that all the sections in a tournament attract enough players to make them work well. This involves how many sections there should be and what rating ceilings should apply. Moreover, many strong scholastic players prefer (or are advised) not to play with a time control of G/30. Taking these considerations into account, and recognizing that it isn't feasible for us to offer a significantly longer time control, we have decided to reduce the number of sections from five to four, including a non-rated section, and to adjust the rating ceilings. Accordingly our rated sections will be K-6 U700, K-12 U1000 and K-12 Open. See **Tournament Format** for further details.

## *Prizes*

As in the past, two sets of prizes will be awarded: *tournament prizes*, awarded at each tournament based on the results of only that tournament, and *series prizes*, awarded based on players' cumulative scores for the entire series. With respect to *tournament prizes*, we are increasing the number of prizes in each section from three to five: at each tournament and in each section the top five finishers will be awarded either a trophy or a medal. With respect to *series prizes*, there will be three categories of trophies. First, the player scoring the most points in the K-12 Open section will win the "Cincinnati Scholastic Series Champion" trophy. Second, the Ron Giffin Trophy will be awarded to the player showing the greatest improvement, as measured by the number of rating points gained, in series tournaments. Finally, class trophies will be awarded to anyone (other than the series champion) scoring a designated number of points as follows:

- First-class trophy – 34.0 points or more
- Second-class trophy – 30.0 to 33.5 points
- Third-class trophy – 26.0 to 29.5 points

For purposes of all series trophies, a player's score will be the sum of combined tournament and playing scores for his best five tournaments out of six. Except for the "Cincinnati Scholastic Series Champion" trophy, series prizes will not be specific to a particular section. All points scored in a rated section will count toward class trophies regardless of which rated section they are scored in; some points scored in the non-rated section may also count for series trophies. See ***Points and Prizes*** for details.

## *Byes*

For the 2013-14 CSCS season, players may take one half-point bye in each tournament. A player who is not paired in round 1 due to late arrival at the tournament will be given a half-point bye for round 1. For a player who has already taken a half-point bye, a bye taken in any later round will be scored as a zero-point bye. When a player takes a half-point bye, he will have a tournament score of one-half point and a playing score of one-half point for that round. (See ***Tournament Format, Byes*** and ***Points and Prizes*** for more information.)

## *Onsite Check-In*

***We will no longer take a roll call***, as we have done in past years, to determine whether players are present who registered in advance but did not sign in. Accordingly, ***it is imperative that players who registered in advance arrive and check off their names on the advance entry lists upon arrival at the tournament — no later than 8:45 am***. These lists will be taken down at 8:45, and round 1 pairings will be prepared based on who is checked in and who registered onsite. (Players who register onsite, of course, will not be on the advance entry list and do not need to be concerned about checking off their names.)

Players who arrive after 8:45 should not expect to be paired in round 1; however, they should make the tournament director aware that they are present as soon as they arrive because they *may* be paired in round 1 at the tournament director's discretion.

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## ***What is the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series?***

Now in its seventh year, the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series (CSCS) is a series of four-round, Swiss tournaments for scholastic players conducted during the school year and sanctioned by the US Chess Federation (USCF). The series comprises six tournaments, but there is no requirement that players play in every tournament — they are welcome to play in one or six or any number in between as they choose. Some prizes will be awarded at each tournament; others will be awarded based on cumulative performance in the entire series, taking each player's best five scores out of the six tournaments into account.

## ***Tournament Dates and Locations***

2012-13 tournaments are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

October 12, 2013	<b>Fairfield High School</b> 8800 Holden Boulevard, Fairfield, OH 45014
November 2, 2013	<b>Lakota West High School</b> 8940 Union Centre Boulevard, West Chester, OH 45069
December 14, 2013	<b>Sycamore High School</b> 7400 Cornell Road, Montgomery, OH 45242
January 11, 2014	<b>Walnut Hills High School</b> 3250 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207
February 1, 2014	<b>Loveland Middle School</b> 801 South Lebanon Road, Loveland, OH 45140
March 1, 2014	<b>Sycamore High School</b> 7400 Cornell Road, Montgomery, OH 45242

Driving directions to these sites, maps and other venue-related information and updates are provided on our website, [chessinnati.com/venues](http://chessinnati.com/venues).

## ***Tournament Registration***

To register in advance by mail, complete and mail an entry form (one per player) to Cincinnati Scholastic Chess, PO Box 499006, Cincinnati, OH 45249-9006. *It is recommended that players mail their entries no later than on the Tuesday preceding the earliest tournament for which they are registering.* An entry form can be downloaded from the CSC website, [www.chessinnati.com](http://www.chessinnati.com). For payment of the entry fee and dues (if applicable), include a check payable to *Cincinnati Scholastic Chess*. (Checks payable to the US Chess Federation cannot be accepted.)

To register onsite at any series tournament, complete an entry form (one per player) during the onsite registration period between 8:00–8:30 am. Please arrive at the tournament no later than 8:15 am to allow sufficient time to complete the registration process by 8:30. Make payment for the entry fee and dues (if applicable) by cash or by check payable to *Cincinnati Scholastic Chess*. (Checks payable to the US Chess Federation cannot be accepted.)

## Entry Fees

Our entry fee structure is intended to help us accomplish two major objectives. First, we want to keep entry fees as low as feasible to encourage players to play as often as they can.

Accordingly, when a player registers for multiple tournaments, the entry fee is progressively discounted. The fee for entering a single tournament is \$25, but the fee for entering all six tournaments is \$78, which is only *\$13 per tournament*. The more you play, the lower the per-tournament entry fee.

Second, we want to encourage players to register in advance rather than on the day of the tournament. Minimizing the number of onsite registrations helps us start the tournaments on time and reduces errors. Therefore, we discount entry fees additionally for players who register in advance, reducing their entry fee further by \$5 to \$12.

By taking full advantage of these discounts, a player who registers for all six tournaments in advance pays an entry fee of only *\$11 per tournament*. Entry fees for the 2013-14 season are shown in the table below.

	<b>Onsite Entry Fees</b>	<b>Advance Entry Fees</b>
One tournament	\$25	\$20
Any two tournaments	\$42	\$35
Any three tournaments	\$57	\$49
Any four tournaments	\$68	\$59
Any five tournaments	\$75	\$65
All six tournaments	\$78	\$66

Onsite entry fees apply when a player registers at a tournament for any number of tournaments. Advance entry fees apply to entries received by Cincinnati Scholastic Chess on or before the Friday preceding the earliest tournament which a player is entering.

You may pay for both the entry fee and, if applicable, USCF dues, for one or more players, with a single check. **Make checks payable to Cincinnati Scholastic Chess. Entry fees are non-refundable.**

## USCF Memberships

US Chess Federation (USCF) memberships may be purchased or renewed as part of registering for any series tournament(s), whether onsite or in advance. Players may also purchase or renew their USCF memberships independently of registering for any series tournament(s). See **US Chess Federation** below for details.

## Confirming Advance Registration

Entries received in advance will normally be acknowledged by email (if an email address is provided on the entry form), although time might not permit acknowledging entries received immediately prior to a tournament. In any case, all advance entries received will be posted at a tournament during onsite registration. If, when you check in at the tournament, you do not find your name listed among the advance entries and believe it should be, see the registration staff. (See **Tournament Check-In** for more details.)

## Changing Tournaments

Players are asked to indicate on the entry form which tournaments they are entering, and sometimes they later want to change an entry to a different tournament. They may do so as long as there is a tournament in the current series to which they can change. To change an

entry, notify Alan Hodge by phone or text to 513-600-9915 or by email to [a.hodge195@gmail.com](mailto:a.hodge195@gmail.com).

### **Tournament Format**

Each tournament will be a four-round Swiss tournament with a time control in all sections of G/30 d5, meaning that each player has 30 minutes for the entire game and at each move there will be a five-second delay before a player's clock begins to run. See **Chess Clocks** for more information.

### *Tournament Sections and Round Times*

Each tournament will have four sections as detailed below:

- **K-6 U700 (Rated):** Only players who are in kindergarten through 6th grade *and* either rated less than 700 or unrated may play in this section.
- **K-12 U1000 (Rated):** All scholastic players (kindergarten through 12th grade who are either rated less than 1000 or unrated may play in this section.
- **K-12 Open (Rated):** All scholastic players (kindergarten through 12th grade) may play in this section. Scholastic players whose rating is 1000 or more must play in this section.
- **K-6 Non-Rated:** Only players who are in kindergarten through 6th grade *and* unrated may play in this section. An unrated player is one who (1) is not and has never been a member of the US Chess Federation (USCF), or (2) is a past or present USCF member who has played fewer than four rated games. Players will not earn a rating as a result of playing in this section, and membership in the USCF is not required to play in it. Any player who becomes rated during the series season will no longer be eligible to play in the series Non-Rated section. Depending on the number of players who enter it, the Non-Rated section might be split into multiple sections.

For all sections round 1 will begin at 9:00 am. Projected starting times for rounds 2, 3 and 4 are 10:05 am, 11:10 am and 12:15 pm respectively, so that the tournament will end no later than approximately 1:30 pm. The next round in each section will begin as soon as possible after the previous round ends, however, and rounds 2, 3 and 4 are therefore likely to begin earlier than these projected times, especially in sections with younger players.

### *Playing in Different Sections*

Players have the option of playing in different sections in different tournaments. Players may choose to play in their “natural” section (the section designated for their grade and rating) or to “play up” (meaning to play in any section higher than their natural section). On their entry form players must indicate one section to play in but may decide at any later time to play in a different section (for which they are eligible) for one or more tournaments; however, a player may not change sections *during* a tournament (i.e., after onsite registration has ended). Players who want to change sections must either notify Alan Hodge *before the tournament date* (by phone or text to 513-600-9915, by email to [a.hodge195@gmail.com](mailto:a.hodge195@gmail.com)) or see the registration staff during onsite registration.

All the points a player scores in any rated section will count toward series prizes regardless of which rated section they are scored in. Points scored in the non-rated section of not more than two tournaments might also count toward series trophies (but not to the Cincinnati Scholastic Series Championship trophy). See **Points and Prizes** for details.

## Combining Sections

Our intention in reducing the number of sections is to prevent a situation where any section does not have enough players to work well in the Swiss format. However, should this situation arise, a section may be combined with the next higher or lower section, and accelerated pairings may be used in the combined section. Accelerated pairings are a method of pairing used in the first round or two in order to reduce the average difference in rating between the players paired against each other — in other words, to pair players with opponents of a more comparable skill level. See **Ratings** and **Pairings** for more information.

## Byes

In tournament chess a *bye* indicates that a player will not (or did not) play the particular round for which the bye is taken. In most cases players elect to take byes, but the bye is not optional in the case of a player who is “paired out” — meaning that because an odd number of players are in a section, one player is necessarily left without an opponent. (No player may be paired out more than once in any tournament.) When a player is paired out, the bye is a full-point bye. An elective bye is either a half-point bye or a zero-point bye depending on the circumstances of the particular tournament. For the 2013-14 CSCS season, players may take one half-point bye in each tournament, subject to the following conditions:

- The deadline for requesting a bye for a tournament is the end of the onsite registration period. A player can request (or change) a bye:
  - (1) on the entry form, whether entering in advance or onsite,
  - (2) by notifying Alan Hodge prior to the tournament (by phone or text to 513-600-9915, by email to [a.hodge195@gmail.com](mailto:a.hodge195@gmail.com)), or
  - (3) by making a request to the registration staff during the onsite registration period.
- A player who has requested a half-point bye will not be paired out unless there is no better alternative.
- Except as noted below, a player may take a half-point bye in any round.
- A player who is not paired in round 1 due to late arrival at the tournament will be given a half-point bye for round 1. (See *Late Arrivals* under **Tournament Check-In**.)
- For a player who has already taken a full-point or half-point bye, any additional bye taken will be a zero-point bye.

## Tournament Check-In

On the day of the tournament, lists of players who registered in advance will be posted, by section, near the registration desk. When you arrive at a tournament, check off your name to indicate that you are present. If your name is not listed, or is listed in a section other than the one you want to play in, see the registration staff. Unless the tournament directors have received instructions from you otherwise, they will place you in the section for which you initially registered. (See **Tournament Format** for more information.)

If you want to change sections, request byes, or correct any information relating to your entry, please notify the registration staff accordingly before onsite registration ends.

## Late Arrivals

**We will no longer take a roll call**, as we have done in past years, to determine whether players are present who registered in advance but did not sign in. Accordingly, **it is imperative that players who registered in advance arrive and check off their names on the advance entry lists upon arrival at the tournament — no later than 8:45 am**. These lists will be taken down at 8:45, and round 1 pairings will be prepared based on who is

checked in and who registered onsite. (Players who register onsite, of course, will not be on the advance entry list and do not need to be concerned about checking off their names.)

Players who neglect to check off their name upon arrival or arrive after 8:45 should not expect to be paired in round 1; however, they should make the registration staff aware that they are present as soon as they arrive because they *may* be paired in round 1 at the tournament director's discretion. Additional details of this policy are as follows:

- The tournament director will preferentially pair unrated players so that they play four games in the tournament (because a player must play four rated games to earn a rating).
- The tournament director will preferentially pair a late-arriving player into a section where another player has been paired out. When there are two or more late-arriving players for such a section, the tournament director may, at his sole discretion, choose which late-arriving player to pair. The late-arriving player in this situation will suffer a time penalty if round 1 was started before he was paired.
- With respect to any late-arriving player who is not paired against a paired-out player, the tournament director may, at his sole discretion, either pair him against another late-arriving player in the same section, if one is available (reducing the time control for their game by the time elapsed since the start of round 1, split equally between the two players), or not pair him at all until round 2.

Players arriving after close of registration but prior to 9:30 am who are not paired in round 1 will receive a half-point bye for round 1. This means that he will have a tournament score of one-half point and a playing score of one-half point for round 1. Late-arriving players may, of course, play in the remaining rounds of the tournament. There will be no refund of entry fees, partial or otherwise, due to any rounds missed as a result of late arrival. See **Byes** and **Points and Prizes** for additional related information.

### ***What to Do When Your Game is Over***

When you finish your game, stop both clocks and raise your hand. *Do not alter the game position or leave your board until a tournament director confirms with you the result of your game.* This is especially important if you want to claim a win on time. After the tournament director confirms the result of your game:

- Set the pieces up in their correct starting position so that the board is ready for a new game. (Do this even after round 4, please.)
- Leave the tournament room promptly and *record the result of your game on the pairing sheet* (see **Pairings**). Both players are responsible for making sure that the result of their game is correctly recorded on the pairing sheet.
- Once they have finished a game and its result has been confirmed by the tournament director, players (except in the K-12 open section) are asked to stay out of the tournament rooms until pairings for the next round are announced. Players in the K-12 Open section may watch other games in progress in their section, even after they have concluded their own games, provided that they observe proper conduct for spectators (see **Watching Games in Progress** and **Sportsmanship** for related information).



## ***Withdrawing from a Tournament***

To withdraw from a tournament means to choose not to play any remaining rounds. You may withdraw from the tournament at any time; however, *you must notify a tournament director that you are withdrawing* before pairings are done for the next round. Failure to so notify a tournament director will cause you to be paired in the next round as though you were still playing in the tournament. This causes pairing problems, is unfair to the person paired against you (who will end up without an opponent), and makes you guilty of a forfeit.

## ***Forfeits***

A player who fails to show up for a game for which he has been paired will be forfeited. For CSCS purposes, a game is not officially a forfeit until the player's time expires or, if no clock is being used, until 30 minutes have elapsed since the tournament director started the round.

A player who abandons a game in progress is likewise forfeited. A player abandons a game if he (1) begins the game by making one or more moves, (2) leaves the board and does not return for the duration of the round, and (3) did not resign or accept a draw before leaving the board.

When a forfeit occurs, the score should be marked on the pairing sheet as "F" for the player who forfeited and as "X" for the opponent. For the player who forfeited ("F"), a forfeit counts as zero for purposes of both the tournament score and the playing score. For the opponent ("X"), a forfeit win counts as 1 point for the tournament score and as 1 point for the playing score, but will not be included in the calculation of the player's new rating.

The tournament directors will withdraw any player who forfeits a game, meaning that he will not be paired in *any* remaining rounds of that tournament. Moreover, the tournament directors, at their sole discretion, may prohibit the player who has forfeited multiple times in various tournaments from participating in future CSCS tournaments.

## ***Points and Prizes***

A player scores two types of points, one representing his "tournament score" and the other representing his "playing score."

- A "tournament score" indicates a player's actual game results. It is the sum of all wins, draws and byes that the player had in the tournament. Each win counts as 1, each draw counts as  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and a loss counts as zero. A bye counts as 1 point when it results from a player being paired out and either a half-point or zero if it is an elective bye or results from a late arrival. (See ***Pairings*** for an explanation of getting paired out; see also ***Byes*** for additional information.)
- A "playing score" refers to points a player scores simply for playing a game, regardless of the game's outcome. A player scores one point for each game played and for each full-point bye (resulting from getting paired out), and a half-point for each half-point bye. A player scores zero for a zero-point bye and for a forfeit.

To illustrate, a player who plays all four rounds of a tournament and wins all four games earns 8.0 points toward series trophies (a tournament score of 4 plus a playing score of 4); a player who plays all four rounds of a tournament and loses all four games earns 4.0 points toward series trophies (a tournament score of 0 plus a playing score of 4). A player who is paired out of one round and scores a draw and two losses in the other three rounds, earns 5.5 points (a tournament score of 1.5 plus a playing score of 4). A player who takes a half-point bye and scores two wins and a draw in the other three rounds, earns 6.5 points (a tournament score of 3.0 plus a playing score of 3.5).

The following prizes will be awarded for CSCS tournaments:

- *Individual Tournament Prizes:* At each tournament and in each section, including the non-rated section, trophies will be awarded to those who place first and second, and medals will be awarded to those who place third, fourth and fifth. Tournament prize winners will be determined based on their *tournament score* only. Calculated tie-breaks will be used to determine prize winners among players with the same score (see *Breaking Ties*.)
- *Series Prizes:* The series trophies described below will be awarded based on players' best five scores during the series, counting both tournament and playing scores. A maximum of 40 points will count for purposes of series prizes. Calculated tie-breaks will be used to determine prize winners among players with the same score (see *Breaking Ties*.)
  - The "Cincinnati Scholastic Series Champion" trophy will be awarded to the player scoring the most points in the K-12 Open section exclusively.
  - A series class trophy will be awarded to each player (other than the Cincinnati Scholastic Series Champion) who scores a designated number of points as indicated below:
    - First-class trophy: 34.0 points or more
    - Second-class trophy: 30.0 to 33.5 points
    - Third-class trophy: 26 to 29.5 points
- *The Ron Giffin Trophy:* The Ron Giffin Trophy will be awarded to the "most improved player" as measured by the number of points gained in the player's regular rating (as opposed to quick or blitz ratings) as a result of the series tournaments. The following conditions apply:
  - Only players with established regular ratings will be eligible for this prize. Provisionally rated players will be eligible once their rating is no longer provisional, but only tournaments played after their rating is no longer provisional will be considered.
  - Only players who play at least three series tournaments will be eligible for this prize. For players who play all six tournaments, their best five tournaments will count for this prize.
  - Only games played as part of the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series will be considered.
  - The trophy will be awarded to the player who shows the greatest net gain in regular rating points as determined by summing the rating point gains and losses for the player in all of his series tournaments.
  - For each tournament the beginning rating used for determining rating changes will be the most recent regular rating published on [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org), since this is the input rating that the US Chess Federation will use to calculate a new regular rating based on the tournament results. This beginning rating may differ from the rating used to determine sections and pairings for a particular tournament, since the latter is the official rating published in the most recent USCF supplement and may be a few weeks out of date. To see a player's most recent published ratings, go to [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org) and use the Player Lookup function to find the player's record, click on the player's name, and then look on the Tournament History ("Tnmt. Hst") tab. All the tournaments that the player has played in (since late 1991) are listed in order from the most recent to oldest, and the beginning and ending ratings will be shown for each tournament.

A player who begins the series playing in the non-rated section and later moves to a rated section may count the scores from one or two non-rated tournaments in addition to points scored in rated sections; however, points scored in a rated section will be counted preferentially before any points scored in the non-rated section. The following examples illustrate when scores from the non-rated section will be counted:

- Player A plays the first two tournaments in the non-rated section and then plays the last three tournaments in the K-6 U700 section. He may count the scores of all his tournaments, including both of his non-rated tournaments, toward a series class trophy.
- Player B plays the first two tournaments in the non-rated section and the last four tournaments in the K-6 U700 and K-12 U1000 sections. She may count only the higher score from her two non-rated tournaments toward series trophies and the four scores from her rated tournaments toward a series class trophy.
- Player C plays the first three tournaments in the non-rated section and the last three tournaments in the K-12 U1000 section. He may count only the two highest scores from his non-rated tournaments and the three scores from his rated tournaments toward a series class trophy.
- Player D plays three tournaments in the non-rated section before playing the last two tournaments in the K-6 U700 section. She may count only the two highest scores from her non-rated tournaments and the two scores from her rated tournaments toward a series class trophy — giving her a total score based on only four tournaments.
- Player E plays the first tournament in the non-rated section and then plays five tournaments in the K-6 U700 and K-12 U1000 sections. His five rated tournaments will count toward a series class trophy. He may not count the score from his non-rated tournament even if it is higher than one of his rated tournament scores.
- Player F plays the first two tournaments in the non-rated section and the last four tournaments in the K-12 Open section. She may count only the higher score from her two non-rated tournaments and the four scores from her rated tournaments toward a series class trophy. She may count only the four scores from her K-12 Open tournaments toward the “Cincinnati Scholastic Series Champion” trophy.

Tournament results and cumulative point totals will be posted throughout the year both on [www.chessinnati.com](http://www.chessinnati.com) and at the series tournaments.

Players need not play in every tournament to be eligible for a trophy, but players who play in fewer than five tournaments will be at a substantial disadvantage in competing for series trophies.

## **Ratings**

A rating is a numerical measure of a player’s playing strength. A player earns a rating simply by playing in a tournament or section for which the game results are reported to the US Chess Federation (USCF). Based on the results reported, the USCF calculates one or more of several different ratings depending on the form of play (over-the-board, correspondence, Internet) and time control (e.g., quick, regular). It is not necessary that a player already have a rating in order to play in rated tournaments — indeed, it is necessary to play in at least one tournament as an unrated player because that is the only way to get a rating.

Unrated players will earn a provisional rating as soon as they have played four rated games, the results of which have been reported to the USCF.<sup>1</sup> A rating is indicated as provisional in various ways, including *1150 (P15)*, *1150P15* and *1150/15*, where *P*, if it occurs, stands for *provisional*, and the following number indicates the number of games on which the rating is based. A rating is provisional until the USCF has processed the results of 25 games for the player. When the rating is no longer provisional, the number of games is not shown. For example, *1150/15* indicates a provisional rating of 1150 based on 15 rated games, whereas *1150* by itself indicates a regular (not provisional) rating that is based on more than 25 rated games. A provisional rating typically fluctuates greatly as new results are processed, but usually a rating based on 25 or more games is a reliable indicator of playing strength. Established rating will still fluctuate, of course, as new results are reported, but changes will usually be of a much smaller magnitude than for provisionally rated players.

The USCF has defined class designations based on rating, and players are often referred to by these designations according to what their rating is; for example, as a “Class C” player or an “Expert” player, and so forth. These designations mean something quite specific for the chess community. A “Master” player is someone who has objectively achieved and maintains a rating of 2200 or more, not anyone who is merely perceived subjectively to play the game really well. A player rated 2150 plays the game really, really well but is only an Expert, not a Master. The USCF rating classes are shown in the following table:

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Class</b>		<b>Rating</b>	<b>Class</b>
2400 and above	Senior Master <sup>2</sup>		1000–1199	Class E
2200–2399	Master		800–999	Class F
2000–2199	Expert		600–799	Class G
1800–1999	Class A		400–599	Class H
1600–1799	Class B		200–399	Class I
1400–1599	Class C		100*–199	Class J
1200–1399	Class D		<i>*A rating cannot be lower than 100.</i>	

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<sup>1</sup> The USCF-stipulated threshold for earning a provisional rating is four games. Since most tournaments are four or more rounds, a player can usually earn an official rating after playing in only one tournament. (This is the rationale for not pairing out an unrated player in a four-round tournament.) However, situations do arise where a player plays in more than one tournament before playing his fourth rated game. Therefore, you might see a player listed with a rating such as 150/2. While this rating is calculated just like any other rating, it is not recognized as an *official* rating because it is based on fewer than four games. Any player who has played only one, two or three rated games will have a rating number listed after his name, but will nevertheless *officially* be unrated until the result of his fourth rated game is **processed**. Because players who have played fewer than four rated games are officially still unrated, they are generally eligible to play in a non-rated section of a tournament. To complicate matters further, tournament organizers are free to set other criteria for their non-rated sections. For example, an organizer may decide that anyone who has played fewer than ten rated games is eligible to play in a non-rated section. Players who are interested in playing in a non-rated section must pay close attention to the requirements published for any particular tournament they are considering. The practice of Cincinnati Scholastic Chess is that only players who are unrated according to the USCF definition (i.e., a player who has played fewer than four rated games) may play in the CSCS non-rated section.

<sup>2</sup> The highest rank in chess (other than World Champion) is Grandmaster. The Grandmaster (GM) title is conferred on the basis not only of rating but also of specified results achieved in particular, qualifying tournaments. These results are called “norms.” Once a player has attained a specified rating (currently 2500) and achieved the requisite number of norms (or satisfied certain alternative criteria), the international governing body of chess, the *Fédération Internationale des Échecs* (FIDE) officially confers the Grandmaster title. Lesser titles, including FIDE Master (FM), International Master (IM), and National Master (NM) are similarly conferred based on their own specific criteria.

Because CSCS tournaments are rated events, participants must be current members of the USCF in order to play in any *rated* section. Both rated and unrated players may play in a rated section, while only unrated players (those who have played fewer than four rated games) may play in the non-rated section. Membership in the USCF is *not* required to play in the *non-rated* section, and players will not earn a rating as a result of playing in the non-rated section. See **US Chess Federation** for more information about membership.

### *Rating of Record*

In combination with other factors, ratings are used to determine pairings (see **Pairings** for details). The rating used for each player in each tournament will be his rating in the most recent “rating supplement” published by the USCF. Because of the time needed to prepare and publish each supplement, its data may be a few weeks old by the time it is actually published. For that reason players who play in tournaments frequently will often find that their supplement rating is different from their post-tournament rating from their most recent tournament. Nevertheless the use of supplement ratings for tournament pairings is standard practice for USCF-sanctioned tournaments, although tournament organizers may choose to use alternative ratings. In any case, organizers should indicate in materials advertising their tournaments what ratings they will use.

### **US Chess Federation**

The United States Chess Federation (USCF) is the national organization governing chess in the United States and is the US member of the *Fédération Internationale des Échecs* (FIDE, the International Chess Federation), the organization that governs chess globally. Besides determining and publishing the rules of tournament chess, the USCF assigns every USCF member a unique identification number and a rating calculated from the member’s performance in USCF-sanctioned tournaments and matches. Because the CSCS tournaments are USCF-sanctioned, rated tournaments, membership in the USCF is a requirement for participation in CSCS tournaments.

The USCF offers a variety of membership options for scholastic players, detailed in the table below, which include either a subscription or online access to the magazines *Chess Life* or *Chess Life for Kids*. Family memberships are also available for parents plus all children under 25 or for all children under 25 only. The information below is current as of August 1, 2013.

<b>Membership Type</b>	<b>1 Year</b>	<b>2 Years</b>	<b>3 Years</b>	<b>Membership Details and Benefits</b>
Premium Young Adult (Age 24 and Under)	\$33	\$61	\$88	Includes 12 issues per year of <i>Chess Life</i> . Must be 25 or under at expiration, whether paying for one year or multiple years.
Regular Young Adult (Age 24 and Under)	\$26	\$47	\$67	Includes online access to <i>Chess Life</i> . Must be 25 or under at expiration, whether paying for one year or multiple years.
Premium Youth (Age 15 and Under)	\$28	\$51	\$73	Includes 6 issues per year of <i>Chess Life</i> . Must be 16 or under at expiration, whether paying for one year or multiple years.
Regular Youth (Age 15 and Under)	\$22	\$40	\$57	Includes online access to <i>Chess Life</i> . Must be 16 or under at expiration, whether paying for one year or multiple years.
Premium Scholastic (Age 12 and Under)	\$24	\$43	\$61	Includes 6 issues per year of <i>Chess Life for Kids</i> . Must be 13 or under at expiration, whether paying for one year or multiple years.
Regular Scholastic (Age 12 and Under)	\$17	\$30	\$42	Includes online access to <i>Chess Life for Kids</i> . Must be 13 or under at expiration, whether paying for one year or multiple years.

USCF memberships may be purchased or renewed online at [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org) (click on “Join/Renew” in the top navigator bar), as part of an advance registration mailed to CSCS, or at the tournament site as part of onsite registration.

### **Chess Clocks**

A chess clock is used to enforce the time control for a game. A chess clock is actually two clocks in one device, one clock for each player. While it is one player’s move, his chess clock runs while the opponent’s clock does not. A player completes each move by stopping his clock, which simultaneously starts the opponent’s clock. If time expires for one player before the game is otherwise decided, and if the other player still has time remaining on his clock, the player with time remaining may claim a win (or draw<sup>3</sup>) on time. When time expires for a player, it is said that his “flag fell”; the expiration of time is called “flag fall.”

There are different types and styles of chess clocks. Flag fall is indicated variously by the physical drop of an indicator (the “flag”) or by the time display changing to “0:00” with or without an accompanying light signal. Some clocks also have an optional audible signal, such as a beep, but if such a clock is used in tournament chess, this option should be set to “silent” mode so that no audible signal is given at flag fall. Every clock has a way to stop both clocks temporarily (by pushing a “pause” button or by depressing both stems half-way down), which is permissible only when a player wants to ask a tournament director a question or make a claim relating to the game (see **Player Claims**).

For CSCS tournaments, the time control in all sections for all rounds is game in 30 minutes with a five-second delay (G/30 d5), meaning that each player has 30 minutes for the entire game and at each move there is a delay of up to five seconds before a clock resumes running.

Players in all rated sections must use a clock; players in the non-rated section must use clocks, beginning with the top board, to the extent that clocks are available. Players do not have the option, either individually or jointly with their opponent, to choose not to use a clock when a clock is available for them to use. The organizers will provide clocks for all players as required in the rated sections. Players who wish to do so may bring and use their own clocks subject to the official US Chess Federation rules governing equipment and the use of clocks.

In a situation where two players begin a game without a clock because none was available, the following condition applies. If the game has not been concluded when only ten minutes remain in the round period, a tournament director will place a clock on that game, with each player having five minutes of time to complete the game. If one player’s time expires before the game has been concluded on the board, that player’s opponent may claim a win (or draw<sup>3</sup>) on time. If both players’ time expires before the game has been concluded on the board, the game will be scored as a draw.

If a player is paired out in round 1, the tournament director will set him up at a board with a clock and direct him to start the opponent’s clock when the tournament director starts the round. If an opponent is found for the player from among late-arriving players, the late arriving player will be paired with the paired-out player and will play the game with whatever time

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<sup>3</sup> In order to claim a win on time, a player must have mating material remaining on the board, meaning that with the pieces a player has left, he could checkmate the opponent if the opponent had only a king (regardless of what pieces the opponent may actually have left) and if the game continued. Since it is impossible to checkmate a lone king with only a king, a king and a bishop, a king and a knight, or a king and two knights, a player with such material may claim only a draw when the opponent’s time expires. Note that a player with even one pawn has mating material because the pawn could *become* another piece that would enable him to achieve checkmate.

remains on the clock, incurring the penalty of whatever time elapsed since the start of the round.

### *Setting the Clock*

Set a digital clock to a single time control of 30 minutes and set the time delay to 5 seconds. There is no deduction in time to offset the delay. When using a clock without a delay feature, set it to a single time control of 30 minutes. When using an analog (non-digital) clock, set the time to 5:30 to start the game so that the time control expires at 6:00.

### *Clock-Related Rules*

Some rules that apply specifically to the use of clocks are stated below. References are to the rule numbers in the *U.S. Chess Federation Official Rules of Chess, 5th Edition, 2003*.

- The player who has the black pieces has the choice of which side of the board the clock is placed on. (16L, 39A1)
- Each player must operate the clock with the same hand that he uses to move his piece. (16C1) This does not mean that a player must make all moves of the game with the same hand, but rather that on each move of the game, he must operate the clock with whichever hand he used to move a piece on that move.
- After pressing the clock to complete a move, a player must remove his hand entirely from the clock until pressing it again to complete the next move. That is, a player may not keep a hand on or in contact with the clock in between moves. (16C)
- Only the two players involved in the game may call flag fall. For anyone else to bring attention to the fact that a player's flag has fallen is both a violation of USCF rules and unsportsmanlike interference in the game. Anyone who does this is subject to expulsion from the tournament and forfeiture of all games played, at the sole discretion of the tournament director. (13C1)
- If time expires for both players before either player calls flag fall, then the game is a draw, regardless of the position on the board. (14G, 14G1, 14G2, 16T)
- The flag is considered fallen when either player points this out. (16E) A checkmate or stalemate played on the board before flagfall is *called* determines the result of the game (as a win or draw respectively), even if the flag of the player who effected the checkmate or stalemate had fallen before the checkmating or stalemating move was made. (13A1, 13A2, 13A3, 14A1, 14A2, 14A3)

### ***Touch-Move***

“Touch-move” refers to US Chess Federation Rule 10, which is a rule applicable to chess when played in sanctioned tournaments. The touch-move rule is in effect for all CSCS games. In simple terms, this rule states:

- If you touch one of your own pieces, you must move that piece if you legally can.
- If you touch one of your opponent's pieces, you must capture that piece if you legally can.
- If you legally move one of your pieces to a square and release it (meaning that physical contact between your hand and the piece is broken), it must remain on that square whether or not that is the square to which you intended to move it.



- If you touch or move a piece that you cannot legally move, you must leave that piece on the square where it was before you touched or moved it and make any other legal move.

The touch-move rule does not apply to any piece touched accidentally or to any piece off the board, i.e., any piece that has been captured, removed from the board, and not yet restored to the board through pawn promotion. (See Rule 10 in the *U.S. Chess Federation Official Rules of Chess, 5th Edition, 2003* for complete details.)

### **Player Claims**

There are a number of situations in which a player may make a claim under the rules of tournament chess. Some claims determine the result of the game; others impose a time penalty on the player at fault; others may impose a penalty of a different nature. Examples are:

- Claiming a win on time when the opponent's time has expired
- Claiming that the opponent made a move in violation of the Touch-Move Rule
- Claiming that the opponent made an illegal move, such as failing to get out of check
- Claiming a draw on the basis of three-fold repetition of position or the 50-Move Rule
- Claiming any activity that is contrary to the rules, such as leaving one's hand on the clock in between moves, engaging in any distracting or unsportsmanlike behavior, or using an electronic scoresheet in an unpermitted manner

Such claims must be made only by one of the two players engaged in a particular game. No other person, except a tournament director in certain circumstances, may make any claim on behalf of a player or any comment that such a claim may be made. For example, it is a player's responsibility to notice when his opponent's time has expired; no other person may bring this to the player's attention in any manner. Any person who brings attention to the possibility of a claim in any game in which he is not a player is subject to penalties at the discretion of the tournament director, which may include forfeiture of games and withdrawal from the tournament. See ***Watching Games in Progress*** and ***Sportsmanship*** for related information.

### **Announcing Check**

A player is not required to announce "check" when he checks his opponent, although it is a common practice to do so, especially among younger players. Every player is responsible for recognizing when he is in check.

When a player fails to recognize that he is in check and makes any move that does not get him out of check, his opponent should then immediately stop his own clock without moving and bring to the player's attention that he is in check, and may make a claim of an illegal move. Whether or not the opponent makes a claim of an illegal move, the player must take back the move he made and make another legal move that gets him out of check, if he can.

When both players fail to recognize a check and continue to make moves that disregard the check, the played moves stand until one player or the other recognizes the check, in which case the preceding paragraphs apply.

### **Game Records**

US Chess Federation Rule 15A stipulates that "each player is required to record the game (both the player's and the opponent's moves), move after move, as clearly and legibly as possible ..."



However, guided by the policy of the Ohio Scholastic Chess Association, CSC does not require players to record their games if (1) they are in any grade from kindergarten through third grade, (2) they do not know how to record a game regardless of grade, or (3) they are playing in a non-rated section.

Any player who does not record his game forfeits the right to make any claim that is dependent on having a record of the game (even if his opponent has a game record). Examples of such a claim include a draw by repetition of position (unless a forced perpetual check can be demonstrated) or by the 50-Move Rule (see **Ways to Draw**), and a claim of an illegal move made when several moves have been played after the alleged illegal move.

A scoresheet may lack one or more moves and still qualify as “reasonably complete” for the purpose of demonstrating a claim as long as the moves necessary to establish the claim are all present.

It is not uncommon that during the course of a game a player will forget to record one or more moves and will want to use his opponent’s scoresheet to correct his own scoresheet. Doing so is allowed by the rules of tournament chess, and it is unsportsmanlike for any player to refuse to allow his opponent to examine a scoresheet for this purpose. A player should make corrections to his scoresheet only when it is his move, and while doing so the player’s clock will continue to run (i.e., a player is not permitted to pause the clock when correcting a scoresheet). If any issue arises in connection with correcting a scoresheet, a player should request the assistance of a tournament director; in this case it is permitted to pause the clock until the issue has been resolved.

### ***Use of Electronic Scoresheets***

An electronic scoresheet (or handheld recording device) is a device that automatically records the moves of a game and can be used to print out the game record after the game has been concluded. A common example is the Mon Roi Personal Chess Manager. Some players find the use of an electronic scoresheet to be more convenient and accurate than recording moves manually. Such devices typically have a display screen that shows the board position, and a player records a move by replicating on the device’s display screen the move made physically on the actual game board.

Because the device shows the new game position immediately when a move is entered, it is possible that a player, before moving on the actual game board, could “try out” a possible move, see the resulting position, “take the move back” if he doesn’t like the position, and “try out” another move. To use an electronic scoresheet in this manner to aid in the selection of a move is unsportsmanlike, and the CSCS tournament directors consider it a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of US Chess Federation rule 20D, prohibiting the use of a computer for assistance during a game. Players using an electronic scoresheet to record their games are therefore reminded that such devices are to be used exclusively for recording moves *after* they are played on the board and not for analysis or any other purposes that could be construed as assistance.

All users of an electronic scoresheet are expected to comply with the *US Chess Federation National Scholastic Chess Tournament Regulations, Appendix F: Use of a Handheld Recording Device*, which describes the player’s responsibilities as follows:

1. Register the Device with the TD [tournament director] prior to the first round in which the player uses it.
2. Set it at the Record Mode and verify setting with the TD.

3. Show it to one's opponent and explain its usage to that player and, if requested, to his or her parent and/or coach *each round Device is used*.
4. Make the move on the board before recording the move on the Device.
5. When recording moves, the player should have the Device on the table in view of the opponent.
6. When not recording moves the player should keep hands off the Device and leave the Device on the table in plain sight until the end of the game.
7. When opponent requests the player's device to enter missing moves on his own scoresheet, player will set the mode to algebraic and turn the device around so opponent can view the display screen. Device will remain on table.
8. The player may request the TD to provide security for the Device when the player uses the restroom.

CSC tournament directors will monitor the use of electronic scoresheets. Failure to comply with the above regulations will result in a warning upon the first instance, and in forfeiture of the game and withdrawal from the tournament upon the second instance.

### ***Ways to Draw***

There are several ways for a game to end in a draw:

- *Stalemate*: A player is stalemated when (1) it is his move, (2) he is not in check, and (3) he has no legal moves. Note that this does not mean that the player's *king* has no legal moves; it means that the player has no legal moves with *any of his pieces* still on the board.
- *Mutual Agreement*: The two players could agree to end the game as a draw, in which case one player offers a draw and the other accepts. Draw offers must be made according to these rules:
  - You may offer your opponent a draw only when it is your move.
  - If you offer a draw before moving, your opponent has the right to require that you move before accepting or refusing your offer.
  - A draw offer must be accepted or refused during the same move on which it is made. When a player offer his opponent a draw and the opponent moves without verbally accepting or refusing the offer, the move made constitutes a refusal of the offer.
  - Once refused, a draw offer is null; one player or the other must make a new draw offer for the game to end as a draw by mutual agreement.
  - Offering a draw so repeatedly as to be annoying is unsportsmanlike.
- *Insufficient Mating Material*: Material refers to the pieces (including pawns) that a player still has on the board. A player has insufficient mating material if it is impossible for him to checkmate a lone opposing king given the pieces left on the board. Rule 14D and 14E specify the situations that qualify as insufficient mating material, but in summary a player has insufficient mating material if he has only:
  - A king
  - A king and one bishop
  - A king and one or two knights

If both players have insufficient mating material, the game is a draw as soon this situation arises — no draw offer is necessary. Also, the game is a draw if time expires for one player and the player with time remaining has insufficient mating material. In other words, a player who cannot win the game by checkmate cannot claim a win on time either.

- *Repetition of Position:* If the identical position occurs for the third time in a game, a player may claim a draw. Two positions are identical only if all the *same pieces* occupy precisely the *same squares* and possess the *same rights* with the *same player* to move. “Rights” refers to the ability to castle or capture *en passant*. The occurrences of the same position do not need to be consecutive or even close together. It doesn’t matter how many moves are played in between occurrences.

The game is not automatically a draw when the third occurrence of the position is played; one player or the other must make a claim of a draw either immediately before or immediately after the move is played that causes the position to occur for at least the third time. If any move is played after the position repeats, a draw claim cannot be made until such time as the position repeats again.

The player claiming the draw must be able to prove the repetition of position by:

- Demonstrating a “perpetual check,” which is a situation where one player can force the repetition of the same moves to keep the opponent in check.
  - Demonstrating the occurrences from his record of the game. If his record is incomplete or inaccurate so that the repetition of position cannot be demonstrated, the draw claim will not be upheld. The player making the claim may not use the opponent’s record of the game to help prove the claim.
- *50-Move Rule:* If both players make 50 consecutive moves (1) without moving any pawn and (2) without capturing any piece, then either player may claim that the game is a draw. This series of 50 moves can begin at any point during the game, but if any capture or pawn move occurs, the 50-move count begins all over again. To claim a draw on the basis of the 50-Move Rule, a player must either have a reasonably complete record of the moves of the game or engage a third party, acceptable to his opponent (such as a tournament director), to count moves while the game is played.

## **Pairings**

### *How Players are Paired*

There are different types of tournaments, and players are paired differently in each type. The CSCS tournaments are all Swiss tournaments and individual (as opposed to team) competitions. The method of pairing described below is standard for a Swiss tournament.

Players play only other players in their own section and never play the same player twice in the same tournament. Because there are usually more players in each section than there are rounds in the tournament, each player plays only some (not all) of the other players in his section. Players are paired against each other as follows within each section separately.

- *Round 1:* All players are listed in descending order by rating. Unrated players are listed, in no particular order, at the bottom of the pairing list. The list of players is then divided into two halves. The first player in the upper half is paired against the first player in the lower half (on the top board), the second player in the upper half is paired against the second player in the lower half (on the second board), and so forth until all players are paired.

Colors are assigned randomly on the top board, then alternate on each following board. For example, if the higher-rated player on the top board gets white, then the higher-rated player on second board gets black, and so on.

If the number of players in a section is odd, the lower half has one more player than the upper half. In this case the player with the lowest rating gets “paired out” — meaning he has no opponent for that round. *Unrated* players may not be paired out unless there is no possible way to arrange the pairings otherwise. (See also **Byes** and **Side Games**.)

- *Subsequent rounds*: For rounds 2 through 4 players are first sorted by score group; a score group is a group of players with the same tournament score. Within each score group players are paired as explained above for round 1, taking into account the other factors relating to pairing mentioned below. If the number of players within a score group is odd, one player in that score group is paired with a player from the next lower score group. If the number of players within the lowest score group is odd, the lowest-rated player in that score group who has not already been paired out is paired out.

### *Other Factors Relating to Pairing*

Pairings are influenced by several other factors, including alternation of color, the number of times a player has had black or white, whether unrated players are in the section, whether a player has been paired out previously in that tournament (no player may be paired out more than once in a tournament), and whether any players have elected to take optional byes. Moreover, players who have already played each other in a tournament may not be paired against each other again in that tournament. Because all these factors must be taken into account, it is sometimes a complex process to predict or arrange pairings. Tournament directors commonly use pairing software to determine pairings.

Accelerated pairings may be used in certain situations, including where two or more sections are combined (see *Combining Sections* under **Tournament Format**) and where the number of players in the section approaches or exceeds a specified number, determined by the number of rounds. When accelerated pairings are used, the effect is to divide (by rating) a section or score group into quarters rather than halves, then to pair the first quarter against the second quarter, and the third quarter against the fourth quarter. In other respects the pairing process is as described above. Accelerated pairings are typically used only in the first round or possibly in the first two rounds of a tournament.

### *Pairing Non-Rated Sections*

Players in a non-rated section do not have ratings, of course, so some other means must be employed to determine non-rated pairings. The means that CSC uses is to assign each player an arbitrary, initial “rating” equal to his grade times 100. For example, a non-rated third-grader would be assigned a rating of 300; a non-rated kindergartner would be assigned a rating of 90. Within each grade group (i.e., each set of players with the same rating), players will be listed in no particular order. Pairings are then determined in the manner described above for rated sections.

### *The Pairing Sheet*

At the beginning of every round, a pairing sheet for each section is posted in a designated location. The pairing sheet is used to let every player know (1) who his opponent is, (2) what color he is playing, and (3) what board he is playing on. The board numbers on the pairing sheet correspond to numbered “stations” in the playing room where each pair of players will

play their game. The player listed in the left player column is always the person playing white; the person playing black is always listed in the right player column.

A pairing sheet sometimes shows other information as well, such as the players' ratings, US Chess Federation (USCF) identification numbers, and tournament scores. The ratings are as of the start of the tournament and remain the same throughout the tournament. "Unr" stands for "unrated" and indicates a player for whom the USCF has not yet calculated a rating — normally this is a player who is playing in a rated tournament for the first time. The pairing number simply indicates the player's place in a list of all players in the tournament (or section) based on rating, with number 1 being the highest-rated player.

The pairing sheet includes result columns where the players record the result of their games. To record a game's outcome, a player enters a "1" to the right of the name of the winner and a "0" to the right of name of the loser. If the game is a draw, a player enters "1/2" beside each name. (In the case of a forfeit, enter "F" for the player who forfeited and "X" for the player who did not.) *Both* players are responsible for making sure that the result is recorded correctly. Here is an example of what a pairing sheet looks like, with all results filled in.

<b>[Tournament Name] – Open Section Pairings for Round 1</b>						
<b>Board</b>	<b>White Player</b>		<b>Result</b>	<b>Black Player</b>		<b>Result</b>
1	Michael Monster	925	0	John Champion	1025	1
2	Ross Knight	1000	1/2	Benjamin Bishop	900	1/2
3	Wannabe Queen	875	1	Carlyle Castle	975	0
4	Rudy Rude	950	F	Penny Pawner	Unr	X

The results recorded show that on board 1 Champion defeated Monster, on board 2 Knight and Bishop played to a draw, on board 3 Queen defeated Castle, and on board 4 Rude forfeited.

### ***The Wall Chart***

The wall chart shows the results of all the games in each section of a tournament round by round. By consulting the wall chart you can find out who has played whom in what round and with what color and result, who is in the lead, who is in each score group, and who has taken a bye or withdrawn from the tournament. Players are listed in order of their (pre-tournament) rating. For each player the wall chart shows name, US Chess Federation identification number, and rating; and additional information may also be shown optionally, such as a player's school grade ("Cl/Gr"). For each round of the tournament played (or paired) so far the wall chart shows:

- Color played (W or B)
- Opponent (identified by pairing number)
- Cumulative tournament score
- If the player has a bye ("bye")
- If the player has withdrawn ("----")

One the next page is an example of a wall chart for a four-round tournament, of which two rounds have been completed. Round 3 has been paired but not completed, so colors and opponents (by pairing number) but no scores are shown for it. The first column shows the pairing number.

[Tournament Name] – [Section] Wall Chart							
Pair #	Name/Rating/ID	Cl/Gr	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Total
1	John Champion 2295 10000001		W 4	B 3	W 2		2.0
		12	1.0	2.0			
2	Ross Knight 2000 10000002		bye	W 6	B 1		1.0
		10	0.0	1.0			
3	Benjamin Bishop 1937 10000003		bye	W 1	B 5		0.0
		11	0.0	0.0			
4	Michael Monster 1855 10000004		B 1	W 7	B 6		1.0
		9	1.0	1.0			
5	Wannabe Queen 1735 10000005		B 7	bye	W 3		1.0
		9	0.0	1.0			
6	Irwin Eliminator 969 10000006		bye	B 2	W 4		1.5
		7	1.0	1.5			
7	Carlyle Castle Unr 10000007		W 5	B 4	bye		0.0
		6	0.0	0.0			

Because the wall chart shows cumulative scores, it takes a bit of calculation to determine the result of any particular game after round 1. To know whether a player won his round 2 game, subtract the round 1 score from the round 2 score. For example, John Champion’s round 1 score was 1 and his round 2 score was 2. This means that he scored 1 point in round 2 — indicating that he won his round 2 game. Michael Monster’s score, however, did not change from round 1 to round 2, meaning that he scored 0 in round 2 — indicating that he lost his round 2 game. In other words, a player’s result from any individual game, or round, is reflected by the *change* in that player’s score from the preceding round. In a similar fashion, by comparing the score for the bye round with the score for the preceding round, you can determine whether a bye was a full-point, half-point, or zero-point bye.

### **The Standings Chart**

The standings chart lists players in descending order by score so it is easier to see immediately what players have the highest scores. Players with the same score are listed by rating within the score group. Differences between the standings chart and the wall chart are as follows:

- The order in which players are listed will change on the standings chart as their scores change, whereas players are always listed in the same order on the wall chart.
- The standings chart does not show the color played by the players; the wall chart does.
- The standings chart shows the results of each round as a win (“W”), loss (“L”) or draw (“D”) rather than as a cumulative score as on the wall chart; however, the standings chart includes a total score column at the right where each player’s current cumulative score is shown.

The standings chart may optionally show additional information, such as the player’s post-tournament rating (“Post”) and school grade (“Grd”), as shown in the example below. The post-tournament rating is an *estimated* new rating for the player calculated by the pairing software. While these estimated ratings are often quite accurate, they are not official; only the US Chess Federation can calculate and publish a player’s official rating.

An example standings chart is shown on the next page.

<b>[Tournament Name] – [Section] Standings</b>										
<b>#</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>ID</b>	<b>Rtng</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Grd</b>	<b>Rd 1</b>	<b>Rd 2</b>	<b>Rd 3</b>	<b>Rd 4</b>	<b>Tot</b>
1	Penny Pawn	12345678	1482	1476	8	W8	W9	D2	W3	3.5
2	Ross Knight	22345678	1249	1266	10	W4	W8	D1	W7	3.5
3	Brook Rook	32345678	1007	1062	8	W6	W5	W9	L1	3.0
4	Michael Monster	42345678	654	663	9	L2	D7	B---	W6	2.5
5	Wannabe Queen	52345678	1306	1240	9	W7	L3	L6	W9	2.0
6	Irwin Eliminator	62345678	642	665	7	L3	B---	W5	L4	2.0
7	Carlyle Castle	72345678	715	773	6	L5	D4	W8	L2	1.5
8	John Champion	82345678	735	708	12	L1	L2	L7	B---	1.0
9	Benjamin Bishop	92345678	555	551	11	B---	L1	L3	L5	1.0

From this standings chart we can see, for example, that Michael Monster (player 4), a 9th grader, lost in round 1 to player 2 (Ross Knight), drew player 7 (Carlyle Castle) in round 2, got paired out in round 3, and beat player 6 (Irwin Eliminator) in round 4, for a total tournament score of 2.5. (Note that we can't tell from the standings chart what color he played in any of his games.) He entered the tournament with a rating of 654, and gained an estimated 9 rating points, for an unofficial post-tournament rating of 663.

### **Side Games**

When players are paired out in more than one section, it is possible to pair two players from different sections against each other in a side game. The purpose of a side game is simply to give the players the opportunity to play another game rather than be idle during the round in progress. Side games do not have any bearing on a player's score either for the individual tournament or for the series, but they may be counted as a rated game if the players so choose. For all side games the time control will be in G/30 d5, and colors will be assigned by any commonly accepted method (selecting from hidden pawns, coin flip, etc.). When two or more players are paired out, the tournament director will determine whether they are interested in playing a side game. The tournament director will suggest the most reasonable pairings, if there are options, and the players may then decide whether or not to play the side game, and, if yes, whether to have the game submitted for rating or not. In order for a side game to be submitted for rating, both players must agree, before play begins, that it will be a rated game.

Players are under no obligation to play a side game or to have it rated if they decide to play one.

### **Breaking Ties**

In all cases of tied scores, trophy and medal winners will be determined according to USCF standard tiebreaks in accordance with USCF Rule 34E. The tie break methods, in order of application, are listed below and explained by way of the pertinent USCF rule (excerpted).

1. Modified Median
2. Solkoff
3. Cumulative Score
4. Cumulative Score of Opposition
5. Result between tied players ("head-to-head")
6. Speed playoff game(s)

#### *Modified Median (Rule 34E1)*

"The Median system ... evaluates the strength of a player's opposition by summing the final scores of his or her opponents and then discarding the highest and lowest of those scores.

In the Modified Median system, players who tie with even scores (an even score is equal to exactly one half of the maximum possible score), have the highest- and lowest-scoring opponents' scores excluded. The system is modified for players with non-even scores to disregard only the least significant opponents' scores: the lowest-scoring opponent's score is discarded for tied players with plus scores and the highest-scoring for players tied with minus scores. ..."

#### *Solkoff (Rule 34E2)*

"The Solkoff system is the same as the Median (explained above, Rule 34E1) except that no opponents' scores are discarded."

#### *Cumulative Score (Rule 34E3)*

"To determine cumulative tie-break score, simply add up the cumulative (running) score for each round. For example, if a player's results were win, loss, win, draw, loss, the wall chart would show a cumulative score round by round as 1, 1, 2, 2.5, 2.5. The cumulative tie-break total is 9 ( $1 + 1 + 2 + 2.5 + 2.5 = 9$ ). ... One point is subtracted from the sum for each unplayed win or full-point bye (22B); likewise, one-half point is subtracted from the sum for each unplayed draw or half-point bye."

#### *Cumulative Score of Opposition (Rule 34E9)*

"The cumulative tie-break points of each opponent are calculated as in 34E3, and these are added together."

#### *Result between tied players ("head-to-head") (Rule 34E5)*

"Self-explanatory if two tie, but useful only when they were paired and did not draw. If more than two tie, all results among tied players should be considered, with rank according to plus or minus, not percentage. For example, 3-1 (+2) beats 1-0 (+1)."

#### *Speed Playoff Game(s) (Rule 34E12)*

In the unlikely event that a tie needs to be broken by means of a speed playoff, the methodology is explained below. In most respects the normal rules of chess will apply also to the speed playoff games, but the following exceptions should be noted:

- The usual time control will be G/5 (game in five minutes for each player), with no time delay. In some circumstances, as explained below, the time control will be G/3 or G/1 (game in three minutes or one minute for each player), with no time delay.
- Initial colors will be determined randomly, and then alternate if necessary.
- "Clock move" will govern rather than "touch move." This means that a player is not obligated to move or capture any touched piece while his or her move is in progress; a player may "take back" and change a move any number of times until he or she hits the clock to complete the move. Once a player hits the clock, the move is final and cannot be changed — unless it is an illegal move that is called by the opponent.
- Only the players playing the game may call illegal moves; if an illegal move is not called, it stands as played except as provided for below:
  - Failure to get out of check must be called if either player is aware of it. Capturing the opposing king is not permitted.



- If the player giving check does not call the opponent's failure to get out of check and makes a move other than capturing the opponent's king (as when the player giving check was unaware of the check), then the played moves stand and play continues.
- There will be no time penalty for called illegal moves; however, the player calling the illegal move should start the opponent's clock again immediately without moving, so that the opponent repairs the illegal move on his or her own time.
- Standard USCF rules governing the use of clocks apply for all speed playoff games except for the rule relating to time delay.
- If a speed playoff game ends in a draw, the players will play again under the same format but with colors reversed. If the second playoff game also ends in a draw, a third, and if necessary fourth, game will be played with colors reversed each round and with the time control reduced to three minutes. If the third and fourth playoff games also both end in a draw, the players will play additional games as required with colors reversed each round and with the time control reduced to one minute until such time as one player or the other wins a playoff game.

### ***Chess Equipment Provided***

Boards, pieces and clocks will be provided by the tournament directors; however, players who own clocks are welcome to bring and use them if they wish to do so, subject to the US Chess Federation rules governing equipment and the use of clocks.

### ***Watching Games in Progress***

Except for the tournament directors, we ask that all adults, including parents and coaches, stay out of the tournament playing room while any game is in progress. Adults may watch the proceedings from outside the playing room if the venue makes this possible. In the K-12 Open section only, players may watch other games in progress in their section when they have completed their own games, provided that they observe proper conduct for spectators (see ***Sportsmanship***). However, any player may object to the actions or presence of a spectator and has the right to have the spectator removed. Players in all other sections are required to stay out of the tournament rooms after they have completed their own games until pairings for the next round are posted.

### ***Sportsmanship***

All players are expected to show good sportsmanship throughout the tournaments. Good sportsmanship includes but is not limited to the following practices:

- Shake hands with your opponent before and after your game.
- Avoid behavior that annoys or distracts your opponent.
- Be a gracious winner when you win; don't make a big show about winning a chess game, don't gloat, and remember what it feels like to lose. When you lose, lose with dignity. It's OK to be disappointed, even upset, but keep it in perspective. Learn from your losses, and you will have more opportunities to win.

A chess game is a contest between only the two people playing it. It is unsporting and against the rules to interfere in any way with someone else's game. Interference includes both commenting on the game and doing anything that distracts the players. This means:

- No kibitzing — ever!
- No comments to either player or to anyone else while the game is in progress — including, for example, any comment relating to illegal moves, flag fall, or the position on the board; and gestures or facial expressions that could be construed as comments, whether directed to anyone in particular or not.
- No behavior that might disturb or distract any player, whether related to a game in progress or not — this includes loud talk and noisy activity anywhere near where games are being played.

### ***Food and Drinks at Tournaments***

Vending machines might be available in some venues, but they might not be accessible or stocked. The organizers will publish on [www.chessinnati.com](http://www.chessinnati.com) such information as they have about the availability of food at any tournament site or conveniently nearby; however, as a general rule, absent any specific information to the contrary, participants should not expect food to be available at the tournament. Participants are welcome to bring whatever lunch, snacks and drinks they might want for consumption (in the skittles area) during the tournament.

We ask all players and their families and friends to be conscientious about cleaning up after themselves so that we do not jeopardize the privilege of using our venues in the future. We ask that players not have food or drinks other than water in the playing rooms. Thank you for your understanding and assistance in this important matter.

### ***Weather Policy***

It is possible that inclement weather or some other serious circumstance will make it prudent to cancel a tournament. When circumstances permit in such a situation, the tournament directors will post advance notice on [www.chessinnati.com](http://www.chessinnati.com) no later than 6:00 pm on the evening prior to the tournament. In the absence of such notice, parents are asked to be guided by weather or other advisories issued by the government, and to exercise their own best judgment. The tournament directors emphatically do not want to put any players or their families at risk by conducting a tournament under hazardous conditions, and sensible caution should govern everyone's actions.

### ***Contact Information for Tournament Directors***

If you have any questions or need to contact a tournament director for any reason, please contact Alan Hodge at 513-600-9915 or [a.hodge195@gmail.com](mailto:a.hodge195@gmail.com).

More information is also available on [www.chessinnati.com](http://www.chessinnati.com).