

Southern Counties Online Championship

Southern Counties Chess Union

SCCU Online Team Championships: Rules 2020/21 Season

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A. General

1. This is an online team competition open to all SCCU Member Organisations, County and Non-County. It is a condition of entry that all players must have read and comply with the SCCU's Conditions of Entry <https://sccu-chess.com/index.php/en/conditions-of-entry-to-competitions> and with the Terms and Conditions and Fair Play Rules of the host platform provider <https://lichess.org/terms-of-service> and the ECF's Online Fair Play and Anti-Cheating Rules <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-online-fair-play-and-anti-cheating-rules/>. Each player must complete a declaration of fair play to be eligible to play.

B. Eligibility

2. To be eligible players must be members or Supporters of the English Chess Federation. No player may represent more than one SCCU Member Organisation during the course of the competition. No player may represent more than one team in the same section.

3. To be eligible to play for a Member Organisation:

(a) The qualification to represent a Member County shall be based upon birth or residence in the County, or membership of a chess club in or affiliated to the County, or attendance at an educational establishment in the County, as specified by the ECF county championship rules currently in force.

(b) The qualification to represent a Non-County Member Organisation shall be regulated by its definition of membership, which must be supplied with team entry. This definition shall be binding for the duration of the competition.

4. A definition submitted by a Non-County Member Organisation shall be subject to variation by the Executive Committee for this competition. A player whose qualification was valid when first playing for a Member Organisation in this competition shall remain qualified for that Member Organisation until the end of the competition.

5. In this competition, teams from junior chess Member Organisations may include one regular chess coach/teacher.

C. Format of the Competition

6. The competition shall be open to all Member Organisations and shall be divided into two sections:

- Major - restricted to teams of 8 whose average rating is not more than 2050
- Inter - restricted to teams of 8 whose average rating is not more than 1675

7. Each team must have an average rating not exceeding those for the relevant section. For every five rating points, or part thereof, by which the average grade exceeds the limit, one penalty game point will be deducted from the team's total score in the match.

8. A Member Organisation may enter multiple teams in any section of the competition. Each team will usually comprise of eight players on match days. Member Organisations must register their squad of players covering all of their teams and their Lichess.org usernames with the Organiser at least 7 days before the start of the competition. Late registrations will only be accepted at the discretion of the Organiser. Member Organisations may list as many players as they wish but for all teams the team average on match days must not exceed the average limit. No player may represent more than one team in the same section during the course of the competition. Games will take place on the Lichess.org platform. All players must register their username beforehand, which must be used for the duration of the competition, save as otherwise provided by the Organiser.

9. Each section will use ECF over-the board four-digit standard ratings from the August 2020 list (i.e. as at 1 September). If no August standard rating is available, the default will be the equivalent rapid rating. Players with neither rating in these lists will be given an estimated rating by the Organiser. It is a requirement of registration that unrated players, or team captains/Member Organisations on their behalf, supply all relevant game data and co-operate with the Organiser as fully as possible.

10. Team captains will be responsible for naming their teams in descending rating order pursuant to Rule 9 above in the Event for their section (2050 or 1675) in the League Management System (LMS) <https://ecflms.org.uk/lms/node/63543/home> by 8.00pm on

the Friday before match days, to allow time for eligibility checks and appropriate adjustments by the Organiser. A default must be assigned to the lowest board(s). Team changes may only be made before publication with the permission of the Organiser provided that the team average does not exceed the section limit. Board pairings and players' real names with Lichess.org usernames will be published by the LMS one hour before the scheduled start of each match.

11. All games will be submitted to the ECF for online standard rating.

12. In calculating the team average:

- a) a player with a rating, or given an estimated rating under Rule 9, that is more than 400 rating points below the average rating limit for the section, shall be deemed to have a rating that is exactly 400 points less than the average rating limit for that section;
- b) a pre-declared defaulted board shall be deemed to have a rating at the rating limit for the section;
- c) a named player that defaults shall not be disregarded for this purpose, but an additional default penalty under Rule 25 may nevertheless apply.

13. The Organiser retains the right to refuse and/or cancel a player's or a team's registration at any point without explanation. In all cases the Organiser's decision shall be final.

14. The format of the competition will depend upon the number of entries, but the aim will be for each section to be arranged as an all-play-all or alternatively a Swiss over the course of the set match days. All teams are expected to play in all rounds.

15. The following points will be awarded per match:

- Winning the match - two match points
- Drawing the match - one match point
- Losing the match - zero match points

16. The top team in each section will be the team that scores the most match points. If this is tied between two or more teams, then the following tie-breaks will be used:

- i Game points in all matches
- ii Result of Head-to-Head match(es)
- iii Board count in Head-to-Head match(es)
- iv Board elimination in Head-to-Head match(es)
- v Sum of Opponents Match points
- vi Removing the game points scored on the bottom board

vii Repeat vi by removing further boards until no further boards can be removed.
Teams will be eliminated from the tie-break will not be reckoned for in later tie breaks.

D. Platform Familiarity

17. Players are expected to register and familiarise themselves with the operation of the lichess.org platform prior to playing in this competition. This includes the circumstances in which a game maybe terminated by the platform, such as timeouts for not making the first move in time or loss of connection.

18. Players must comply with platform rules in relation to general standards of conduct, sportsmanship and online behaviour. In addition to game result sanctions by the Organiser, in the event of persistent deliberate gamesmanship a player may also be suspended from the competition. Examples of gamesmanship include disconnecting rather than using the resign button, allowing the clock to run down in a lost position, delaying the start of play, distractions during play.

E. Match Conditions

19. The time control for each game shall be one hour plus a 15-seconds increment per move.

20. The player with the White pieces is responsible for making the Challenge at or shortly before the scheduled start of play. This is best done following the hyperlink from the matchcard to the opponent's lichess player profile page and issuing a challenge from that page, via the crossed-swords icon.

21. The player with the White pieces is responsible for making the correct settings for a 'rated' game with the correct time control and colours (a white king press will give the challenger the white pieces). The White player then issues a challenge to his opponent after searching for the Black player's username. Once the Black player responds to the challenge the game can begin.

22. The player with the Black pieces should check the challenge has been correctly constituted before accepting. If declined, a message to the opponent should be sent. Players are expected to co-operate including accepting a correctly constituted challenge issued by the player with the Black pieces.

23. In the event that it is noticed that an incorrectly constituted Challenge has been accepted the game shall: (a) be restarted with a correctly constituted challenge if less than 10 moves have been played by both players; (b) continue if white has played 10 moves or more.

24. All players should report results to their team captain and check their results in the LMS after play. In the event of any discrepancy, a player should contact the Section Manager or if not available the Organiser straight away. Within 48 hours of the match each team captain must submit to the Organiser the Lichess URLs for all games played by their team's members.

F. Defaults

25. Defaults must be placed on the lowest board or boards. Where a named default is not playing on the lowest board or boards, the team shall be penalised one additional game point towards the total game points awarded in that match.

26. In the event that the average rating of the remaining players who did not default exceeds the team limit for the section, the teams shall be penalised one further additional game point towards the total game points awarded in that match.

27. The default time shall be 15 minutes after the scheduled start of play for each round unless extended by the Organiser or Section Manager.

G. Fair Play

28. Team captains are responsible for reminding their players that no external assistance is permitted. All players are required to complete and abide by a declaration of fair play before they are eligible to participate in the competition.

29. All games must be lichess rated and as such the platform's anti-cheating and gamesmanship mechanisms will be in operation.

30. In the event that a player's designated account is suspended, flagged for engine assistance or closed by lichess.org that player shall not be eligible to participate in the competition for the duration of the suspension or closure. Neither the Organiser nor the SCCU has any control over these lichess.org processes and appeals. All such disputes must be taken up with lichess.org in accordance with the terms of service entered into and not the Organiser or the SCCU. There is no appeal to the SCCU for these decisions.

31. The Organiser and/or the SCCU may commission its own independent engine correlation analysis of one or more games played in the competition for empirical use. A player whose lichess account has been flagged or closed for engine assistance during the competition may request such independent analysis be obtained and made available to

lichess.org. For the avoidance of doubt neither the analysis provider nor the SCCU can provide any interpretation of the analysis so obtained.

32. All games will be submitted for ECF online standard rating. The ECF online fair play and anti-cheating rules and guidelines apply. For the purposes of ECF rating sanctions that may apply the competition is a tier two event. No other ECF sanctions apply to the event.

H. Disconnections

33. If players are disconnected before or during a game they should try to reconnect and log back in as quickly as possible. Failure to make a move within the allowed time or to reconnect following a disconnect will result in the game being recorded as a loss in the absence of agreement to the contrary. Players are encouraged not to accept a platform invitation to claim the game without allowing a reasonable time for the opponent to reconnect.

34. Where games are defaulted as a result of the Lichess server going down for both players, players should speak to the Organiser who will decide how to proceed.

35. Players should avoid disconnecting in a lost position and should make use of the resignation button if they wish to concede the game. Failure to do this could result in a suspension from the platform.