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If you should need more information than can be found in this document or on our website at *www.uschess.org*, please contact our Director of Events, Boyd Reed, at 931.787.2244 or boyd.reed@uschess.org. You can also contact our Assistant Director of Events, Pete Karagianis at 931.200.9477 or pete.karagianis@uschess.org. This document applies to all scholastic and youth events governed by the <u>US Chess Scholastic Regulations</u>.

Introduction

If this is the first time that you, your child, or your team is attending a US Chess national event, you should be aware that this can be an overwhelming experience! Our scholastic national championships have thousands of competitors, parents, and coaches on site,

spread over a large area. This guide is intended to help you and your child find your bearings at your first event. We want you and your child to have a positive experience to build a foundation for a lifetime of playing chess.



Behavior and Spectator Guidelines

US Chess has issued Safe Play Guidelines that covers safe play and conduct at our national events. We also have specific guidelines for spectators that can be viewed here.

The playing halls at scholastic events are only open to the following people while games are in progress:

- Players with games in progress in that room;
- ☐ Tournament staff;
- Press and other attendees with badges authorizing their access;
- Other persons directly authorized by the US Chess Director of Events.

Parents, coaches and other attendees who do not fall into the four above categories must leave the playing hall before the tournament director in charge of the playing

hall will begin play. Closing the floor virtually eliminates accusations of players receiving advice from spectators. It also makes the playing hall much quieter for the players!

US Chess will designate exits from each playing hall for certain grade levels or sections. Those exits will be clearly marked with signage, both inside and outside the playing hall. Players will be reminded before each round and after reporting their results which exit to take when finished playing for that round. The designated exits will also be reflected before the tournament on the appropriate tournament website. Handouts detailing the exit designations will be available at **Chess Control** (see next page) for each event.

Please make sure to read the Spectator Policy for a full understanding.



Chess Control

Chess Control is the nerve center of our operations. Think of it as an information booth. If parents and coaches have any questions about the tournament, they should go to Chess Control. Chess Control is the nexus between parents and the tournament staff. If you have a problem, Chess Control can help you get to the bottom of the issue whether that is a solution or an explanation of why something happened. Chess Control is **typically located somewhere**

outside of but near the playing hall, and their phone number is typically listed in the tournament program and newsletter.

A common use of Chess Control is requesting a "Bye"; this is a tournament round in which a player asks to not play a game. At times a section has an odd number of players. In such cases a player may receive a Bye. While there are 0, ½, and 1-point byes, ½-point byes are the most common, usually because someone requested one.



Tournament Program and Newsletter

A Tournament Program is produced for the National Elementary, Middle School, and High School Championships as well as the K-12 Grade Championships. The program is designed as a keepsake souvenir that also has helpful information such as the tournament schedule, staff list, seminar information, and QR Codes for the tournament website and pairing/results information. They are typically placed on the players' boards at the beginning of the event.

A newsletter is also available that duplicates much of the above information but that is easier to carry around. It is available at Chess Control, and the **Tournament Program can be downloaded from the tournament website**.

Cell Phones & Other Devices

Players may carry their cell phones into the playing hall, but they must be turned off for the start of the round—off, not on silent. The phone must be kept face-up on the table beside the player throughout the round, or stored away in the player's chess bag. While a game is in progress NO

PLAYER CAN HAVE A CELL
PHONE ON THEIR PERSON, and

the phone must remain on the table or in the chess bag for the duration of the game—players may not take their phones with them to the bathroom! If it is necessary to use a phone, the player must ask the TD, who will be present during the entire phone call. If your child is caught with a phone in the on position during a game, they

could lose half of their time or even be forfeited. If they are caught with the phone on their person, or blatantly cheating, they could be forfeited or removed from the tournament and face additional sanctions. So, make sure that your child understands these rules about phones. **This**

policy applies to other electronic devices too such as tablets and smart

watches. Electronic scoring devices such as the Monroi, PlyCount and ChessNoteR are not allowed. We strongly encourage players to not even come in the playing hall with these devices, as this is the surest way to avoid problems with our policy.

Scheduled Rounds

Many local events run "ASAP rounds," which means that as soon as a round is finished, the next round goes up. However, at nationals, all the rounds are scheduled. Be sure to obtain the schedule and stick to it—round times are on the tournament website, program, and newsletter. Otherwise, you may show up late to a game and find out you were forfeited. Everyone has one hour to show up after the round officially begins before they are

forfeited. So, you can be late and begin the game with up to 59 minutes less time on your clock; however, if you are too late you will lose the game by forfeit. If this occurs, you will lose that game and may be removed from the remainder of the tournament. Therefore, if you do show up late and are forfeited, you need to inform the staff at Chess Control that you are still present and want to continue to play in the tournament.





The Playing Hall

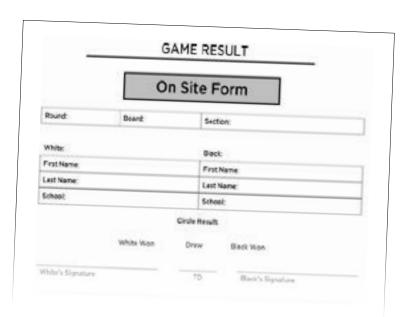
The Playing Hall is where the chess boards for rated competition are set up. It's also called "The Floor." Parents and coaches are allowed to escort their players to their boards on The Floor, but before the round begins the tournament staff will usher parents and coaches out of

the Playing Hall. This keeps the Playing Hall quiet, helps players think better, and enables tournament staff to focus on the games.

You can take photos of your child at their board before the round begins, preferably at least ten minutes before the round begins.

Results Slips

US Chess uses results slips to capture the official result of every game. The tournament staff uses them to tally the results for an entire section by round. Each player completes their portion of the result slip and then gives it to a TD, who verifies the information on the form with both players. Once both players agree to the result, they sign it. The TD will check it over, make sure both players agree to what is written, and then initial it themselves. If both players agree to what is written on the slip, it will be very difficult to overturn the result later. This is a critical part of being at nationals that needs to be understood so please discuss this with your child.



Notation Requirement

At US Chess nationals, notation is required in all sections as per the rules of chess. This rule is a bit more relaxed in the K-1 sections. Parents should note that a player's strongest evidence for how things went during a game is notation. There are also many chess rules that you can use to your advantage if you notate your game. If you do not, those rules do not help you. Examples of those rules would include draws by repetition, who made what move when (if you needed to prove it), or if you want to prove an illegal move occurred. At national scholastic events, US Chess provides



WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1		21.		41.	
2.		22.		42.	
3.		23.		43.	
4		24.		44	
5.		25.		45.	
6.		26.		46.	
7.		27.		47.	
8.		28.		48.	
9.		29.		49.	
10.		30.		50.	

scoresheets, including a <u>newly developed beginner one for the K-1 section</u>. Players <u>may not use</u> <u>their own scorebook</u> nor an electronic notation device. Click <u>here</u> for a primer on notation.

Wall Charts, Pairings, and Standings

There are a multiple types of wall charts used. They include pairings sheets, individual standings, and team standings. The pairings sheets display "who is playing who" for the upcoming round. It lists players in alphabetical order, annotated with "W" or "B" to indicate who is playing White or Black. The pairing sheets also list your opponent's name in the right column (not alphabetized) and contains your Board Number in the Playing Hall. We STRONGLY recommend that you ask your opponent their name when they arrive to ensure you are playing the correct player. See the Pairing Sheet on the next page.

Individual standings are generally posted after round one. These sheets are not organized alphabetically but are organized based on "score group." Score groups are the groups of people who have the same score.

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48 Servic times, Else strucks		W 1831 8.8		28.3 9.40 4.58 1.12 1.28 9.85 1.25 979
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46 Selffs, Sillar		W 1842 4.8		
Mit Ne., Links Village	a services			18.8 5 to 4112 5 to 9 27 6 78 1 1 10 101

It also contains the history of the tournament. Listings to the right of the player's names will print codes such as W28, L15, D23 which would be read as "Win against number 28, Loss against number 15, and Draw against number 23. The "number" is listed to the left of the player name list.

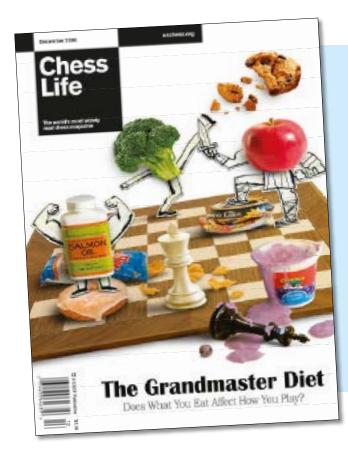
Team scores are pretty simple in that they read just like individual standings but have team names posted instead with a cumulative team score. Tiebreaks are also listed and often tiebreaks for individuals are different than they are for teams. At the end of the tournament, the final standings are posted. These results are used by the tournament staff to distribute awards to the players. **Please report any suspected errors to Chess Control IMMEDIATELY**.

Swiss System Pairings

The general idea in a Swiss System (SS) tournament is that players will approach their most closely matched opponent as the tournament progresses. After four rounds, if a player has one point, he will most likely play someone else with one point as well. SS also attempts to be fair with color distribution. By the end of a seven-round event, for example, a player has most likely played four times as White, and three as Black or vice-versa.

In general, a SS event will pair the top half of players in a score group against the bottom half. If there were 20 players with a score of three points, the highest-rated player in the three-point score group would play the 11th-rated player. There are many exceptions, however that might change that—color, team sensitivity, draws, and more.

Player	Color	Opponent	Doard
Bashtavenko, Aleks	White	Kovvali, Omkar V (1320)	24
Bhorgay, Karthik	White	Wu, Nether D (1549)	27
Bhargay, Samarth Bredesen, Zoe	White	Scott, Mark (1686) Holf point by:	25
Covey, Theodore De	Black	Porter, Wayne W (1712)	19
Deseri, Sentosh	White	Xig. Nicholas (1606)	26
Faries, Joe	Black	Guthrie, Duncan M (1489)	22
Guthrie, Duncen M Hiban, Michael	White	Faries, Joe (1623) Check with TO before you leave.	22
Holmes, Rodney Knoll, Lucas Michael	White	Sriniaiyer, Sudars (1582) Half point bye	23
Kowali, Omkar v Mak, Yoseph	plack	Dashtavenko, Aleks (1574) Half point bye	24
Natarajan, Varun Patel, Niral	white	Vivek, Mantra (1428) Half point bye	29
Phillips, David Leigh	Black	Rhodes, R Adnan (1529)	20
Ponugoti, Rahul	White	Wu, Yan (1817)	28
Porter, Wayne W	White	Covey, Theodore De (1540)	19
Rhodes, R Adrian	White	Phillips, David Leigh (1665)	20
Scott, Mark	Black	Bhargay, Samarth (1155)	25
Sciniaires, Sudans	Black	Holmes, Rodney (1344)	23
Suresh, Nithil	Black	Vishwa, Sushee (1638)	21
Vishwe, Susheel	White	Suresh, Nithii (1532)	21
Ovek, Mantra	Black	Natarajan, Varun (1098)	29
Wu, Nathan D	Black	Shargay, Karthik (1199)	27
Wu, Yan	Black	Ponugoti, Rahul (1436)	28
XIe. Nicholas Xing. Ashley	Black	Dasari, Santosh (1404) Holf point bye	26



Food & Drinks

We are currently not allowing food in the playing halls due to COVID regulations. The tournament provides water for all players and water bottles are allowed in. Making sure that your young player is properly fueled can require advanced planning by scoping out ahead of time what food options are available on site before and between rounds and/or bringing food with you.



Awards Ceremony

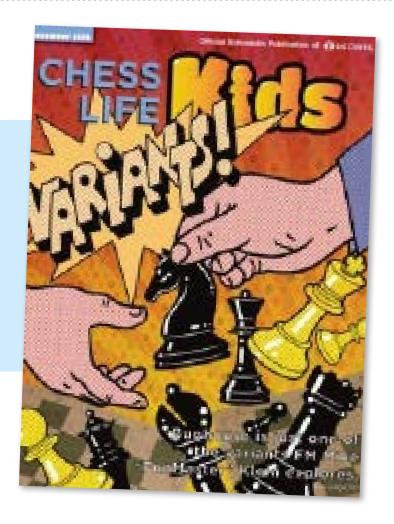
The Awards Ceremonies are scheduled to begin after all the games are finished. Sometimes the awards ceremony may start a little late if the last game of the tournament went overtime (rare, but it can happen). The Kindergarten and 1st grade awards ceremony(ies) are generally held in a separate location away from everyone. All others are held in the main playing hall.

Early Awards Pick Up

If you cannot wait for the awards ceremony or it starts late due to a game taking too long, you can request your award early at Chess Control. This process does take a bit of time because we have to give a slip of paper with your award information to our "runners," who take the paper, retrieve the award, and sign it out to you so that we have a record that you collected the trophy. If you are unsure whether you are getting a trophy, Chess Control can inform you. You will need your name and section for them to look this information up for you.

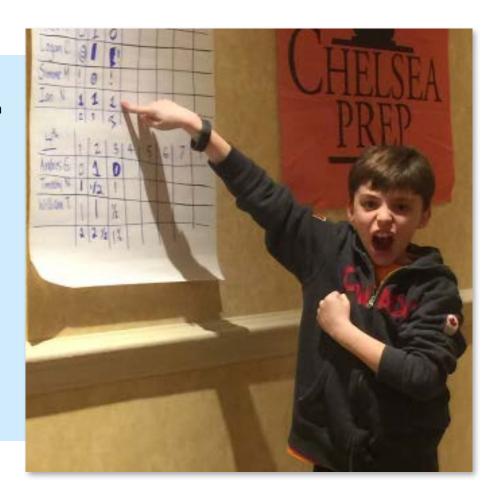
Side Events

National chess tournaments offer different side events (some of which parents can play in too). Take advantage of them as they are scheduled to avoid the main event. Side events usually include the Blitz tournament, Bughouse tournament, and the Friends & Family tournament.



Team Rooms

Schools with many players often request Team Rooms. Therefore, if you try to enter a room to sit down and a team informs you it is their room, don't be surprised or offended. These rooms act like central hubs for teams as a meeting place for when rounds finish. Teams, especially large teams, reserve these rooms through the US Chess Events Department. If you think your team might need a team room, contact the events staff well in advance of the event (see the tournament website for contact information).





Skittles Room

The "Skittles Room" is a casual play area. When a tournament game is finished, if the competitors wish to discuss their game they usually go to the Skittles Room to do so. This is also a good place for casual play between rounds. Sometimes we have special events in the Skittles Room, like "Take on all comers" games against a guest Grandmaster.

Special Section for our K-1 Participants

Because K-1 players are our youngest and least experienced competitors, US Chess offers a few extra helpful services to make national chess competitions go a bit more smoothly.

Parents and the Playing Hall

Our top priority at each event is player safety. We have systems in place that allow our tournament directors the ability to quickly cue up parent contact information when needed. US Chess also keeps EMTs near the playing hall (and sometimes in the playing hall depending on the facility) in case of an emergency. Finally, we also have Chess Control where parents can ask questions and get information when needed.





Other activities, such as football, soccer, tee-ball, school plays, etc ..., encourage parents to be present for the kid-centered performance at hand. Chess is different. The playing hall at each US Chess national tournament is closed to parents. Over the past 30 years of developing our events, we have found this to be the best practice to ensure each round is efficiently run and free from any perceived impropriety.

When your child has completed their game and given their result slip to a TD, they proceed to a specific exit where they are escorted to a holding area between the playing hall and the parent room. A US Chess staff member will then escort them to the parent room for the reunion.



Wristbands

Alongside our rule of safety, the Kindergarten and First grade participants wear wristbands each day of the event. These wrist bands are placed at their board at the start of the day. You should write your phone number(s) on the wrist band in case of an emergency. We do have the ability to look up your phone numbers, but this will hasten that process. If you need another wristband, they are located at the Section Chief's table off to the sides of the playing hall.



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Results Slips

You can learn more about results slips by looking on page four. The most important thing for you to understand is that players are responsible for filling out the results slips, including kindergartners.

When you arrive at their board before the round starts, you may help your child fill out the slip in advance. If you do this, do not sign your child's name at the bottom of the slip—they must do this part themselves. Also, do not circle the result in advance since you cannot know what the result would be until the game is over. Your children will also be responsible for that part. Both the result and the signature line are on the bottom third of the results slip. You may help them fill out the rest of the slip in advance.

The K-1 Playing Hall

Most National tournament locations allow us to separate the K-1 section from the rest of the tournament. This keeps the little kids in one area. a smaller area, and gives parents a waiting area outside that has less people when compared to the large playing hall. The trophy ceremony will also occur in this separate space to allow for the ceremony to conclude more quickly and also to keep it smaller scale for our youngest competitors.



Program Booklet and Notation

The program booklet contains all information needed for the tournament. There are seminars, side events, and news about the event. To get the most out of the event, read through the program booklet so you don't miss out. One major change to the program booklet is that we no longer print notation sheets inside of the booklet. Instead, US Chess provides notation sheets for each player which are located at the Chief Tournament Director's table off to the sides of the room. US Chess has been providing two types of notation sheets: traditional and a new kind called Figurine Notation.

The traditional sheets require players to write down their chess moves (and their opponent's moves) each turn. However, some Kindergartners and First graders struggle with writing. Therefore, we offer the Figurine Notation. With the Figurine style notation, all you must do is circle the image of the piece that moved (such as a knight) and the letter and number moved to (such as g5).



LEARN MORE!

Visit uschess.org

All of the information in this document is simply intended to get you started. There is always more to learn. Our website www.uschess.org is a good resource; see especially our Scholastic Chess pages. Another good resource is the article "The Challenges of Chess Parenting" by Jennifer Vallens in the December 2018 issue of Chess Life. For the complete Rules of Chess, you can purchase the rule book at uschess.com or download a "no frills" version here.

US Chess is grateful for the assistance of Ryan Velez and Jay Stallings in the preparation of this document. LAST UPDATED 11.2021

