

Notes for National Schools Managers

Managers should make those parts of the following Notes for National Schools Team Managers that apply to players clear to their teams before the first round. Throughout these Rules and Regulations 'Arbiter' means either the officially appointed EPSCA Arbiter or any one authorised by the officially appointed EPSCA Arbiter. **Teams should not touch anything in their team rooms or write on the boards. Litter must be placed in the bins or bags provided.**

These Notes apply only to the National Primary Schools Chess Championships. Rules for the Inter-Association Championships are different.

1. The competition will be organised as a Team Swiss Tournament provided there are sufficient teams to do so. Any variation must be approved by the National Controller.
2. A team is five players and one reserve. Teams with less than 4 players will not be accepted as a team in its own right. The children who turn up may form part of an aardvark team if one is required. Their scores will not count towards any schools qualifying total.
3. The laws of chess and EPSCA Quickplay Rules¹ will apply.
4. Each school may enter as many Under 11 teams and/or Under 9 teams as it wishes.
5. The Under 9 team players must have their ninth birthday on or after 1 September of the current school year.
6. The Under 11 team players must have their eleventh birthday on or after 1 September of the current school year.
7. If necessary, teams in the qualifying competition and final, subject to rule 8, with equal points will be split in the following order:
 - (a) a school's first team will qualify before any other school's second or third teams. (This does not apply for places in the Final).
 - (b) results against teams on equal score will count.
 - (c) if teams on equal scores have not played the results against teams that each have played will count.
8. If teams are tied with equal points for first place in the final, the title will be shared.
9. A list of players, in strength order, must be handed to the Arbiter before the draw is made.
10. The reserve may substitute in any round, but the team must still play in order of strength.²
11. If a team is drawn to play White, the Board 1 of that team plays white, Board 2 plays black and so on. If a team is drawn Black, the Board 1 of that team plays black, Board 2 plays white and so on.
12. The player acting as reserve for the team will play the reserve of the opposing team in each round, if possible.
13. The Arbiter must approve of any change of board order before the round begins.
14. Each school should provide a Room Steward, if possible.
15. Only EPSCA officials, the Team Manager and players actually involved in a game may remain in the Playing Area while the round is in progress.
16. Players must play all their moves in 35 minutes on the clock in the qualifying round and in 50 minutes on the clock in the weekend Semi-Finals and Final. Any variation must be approved by the National Controller.
17. Players do not have to score, but, except in the last five minutes on their clock, will not be able to claim a draw by repetition of position or the 50 move rule. **Players who record moves must write the move down only after it has been made on the board.**
18. Before each round the Team Manager should fill in the names of the players on the Result Sheet.
19. Clocks will be started at the appointed time whether both players are present or not.
20. Only the EPSCA Arbiter will answer questions or give rulings on the games unless the Arbiter has delegated responsibility.
21. If there is a dispute, the player should stop the clock and call the Team Manager. This must be done before any further move is made in the game.
22. Only the Team Managers involved may discuss a disputed decision with the Arbiter. Where there is still disagreement, the officially appointed EPSCA Arbiter's decision will be final and binding.

23. A player offered a draw may not consult anyone before deciding to accept or reject the offer.
24. The Arbiter will not answer the question, "Is it checkmate?" If the game continues, the Arbiter may point out an illegal move if it is noticed.
25. The EPSCA Quickplay Rules: It is each player's responsibility to claim a win on time or to claim that their opponent is not trying to win, or cannot win by normal means. Players who are short of time may ask the Arbiter to arrange for someone to watch their game because they think their opponent is not trying to win, or because they think their opponent cannot win by normal means. In the first case the Arbiter may need to watch the game long enough to decide whether progress is being made. The Arbiter will not step in unless requested to do so by one of the players. A player who is short of time [i.e. in the last two minutes] may ask the Arbiter to verify repetition or the 50 move rule. The Arbiter will point out flag fall. If both flags are down the game is drawn.
26. Team Managers should point out an illegal move if they notice it.
27. At the end of the game, the players, having agreed a result, should raise their hands and check that it is correctly recorded on the result sheet.
28. No claim about a position can be made after the board has been reset unless an accurate record of the game, agreed by both players, is available.
29. Both players should reset the board, and leave the playing area.
30. Players should not re-enter the Playing Area until the beginning of the next round.
31. Mobile phones are forbidden in the playing area. If a player ignores this and their phone goes off they shall immediately lose their game. *Should an adult's phone go off their team shall be defaulted one point in the competition* **Rule 31 to be confirmed at the beginning of each event.**

Notes for the Guidance of Board Stewards

- 1. Where you are not certain of your answer to a question**, you should approach the Chief Steward, the Controller or, **at a qualifying zone only, the EPSCA Arbiter**, on the matter. A player has the right to ask you to call his/her Team Manager, the Controller, or, **at a qualifying zone only, the EPSCA Arbiter** if s/he is not happy with a decision you have taken.
 - 2. Before each round begins** make sure, on the boards where your team is playing that:
 - (a) all clocks are set at to the appropriate time
 - (b) each board is correctly set up
 - (c) each table has a results sheet
 - 3. At the start of the round** check that the players sit at the correct board and have the correct colour.
 - 4. During the round** only step in if requested by one of the players. Do not show how a child may get out of check, even if asked. Do not answer the question: "Is it checkmate?" If one player accuses the other of touching a piece without intending to move it, unless you saw the offence, you must give the benefit of the doubt to the child who denies touching a piece. Keep some record of the alleged offender in case it happens again. Stalemate ends the game and a player thinking the game lost may be advised that it is a draw. If you have agreed a player's claim for an illegal move in the last 5 minutes of either player's time then an "X" should be marked on the result slip. Three "X"s mean that the game is defaulted.
 - 5. At the end of the game** record the result agreed between the players on the results sheet provided. See that the board is set up for the next round. Reset the clock, and wind it up if necessary.
 - 6. Players who are short of time** (i.e. with only 2 minutes left on the clock) may ask you to watch their game because they think their opponent is not trying to win, or because they think their opponent cannot win by normal means. You must be satisfied that there have been enough moves to decide whether progress is being made. If you have any doubt about making a decision, call the EPSCA Arbiter. **Do not** step in unless requested to do so by one of the players except in the case of pointing out flag fall, checkmate or stalemate. A player who is short of time [i.e. in the last two minutes] may ask you to verify repetition or the 50 move rule. The Team Manager should point out flag fall. If both flags are down the game is drawn
- End of 'Notes for National Schools Team Managers' [Issued Oct 2011]**

¹ EPSCA Quickplay Rules overleaf

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² When considering 'order of strength', the player acting as reserve does not count as a member of the team.

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EPSCA Quickplay Rules

Revised October 1999

General:

1. An EPSCA Quickplay game is one in which each player has a specified period in which all moves must be made.
2. The FIDE Laws of Chess which regulate the normal game of chess and the ECF Tournament Rules apply except where specifically modified below.
3. Spectators must never interfere. Normally the Arbiter will not intervene unless invited to do so by one of the two players involved in the game.

Starting a Quickplay Game

4. The Arbiter will decide where the clock is to be placed.
5. Before commencing an EPSCA Quickplay game, the players must inspect the positions of the chessmen and the settings on the clock. An error cannot normally be corrected after each player has made three moves.
6. Players are not obliged to record their moves, except in games where each player has at least one hour for all moves or where the rules of the competition require it. Where a game is being recorded, the Arbiter must have full view of the scoresheet.

Use of the Clock

7. Only one hand shall be used to move the pieces and the same hand must be used to press the clock button.
8. The clock must not be picked up by either player.
9. Any player using undue force on a clock after a warning by the Arbiter, may be penalised by the loss of the game.
10. The clocks must not be stopped except for a query requiring the presence of the Arbiter.

Illegal Move

11. An illegal move suffers the normal penalties of the touch-move rule. Such a move is completed once the opponent's clock has been started. If either player has less than five minutes left on the clock and an illegal move is made, the Arbiter will award the opponent two minutes for the first offence, and two minutes for a second offence. A further offence will lead to the loss of the game.

Win On Time

12. A player will win on time if he can stop the clocks showing that his opponent's flag has fallen and his own has not fallen, unless the player cannot possibly checkmate, in which case the game is drawn.
13. If both flags are down, the game is drawn, irrespective of which flag fell first.

Declared Draw

14. A player may claim a draw during the last two minutes on his clock and before his own flag falls. He should offer a draw to his opponent. If it is refused he must stop the clocks and

summon the arbiter. The Arbiter may then, or subsequently, declare the game drawn if he is satisfied that the opponent is making no effort to win the game by normal means.¹ The Arbiter may declare the game drawn even after the claimant's flag has fallen. If the Arbiter considers the claim invalid he may award extra time to the opponent.

15. After a draw has been claimed, the fact that the opponent has mating material does not necessarily mean that they will be awarded a win on time.

Guidance for Players who are short of time (less than 2 mins)

1. If you play for a win, you risk losing, unless your opponent has a bare king.
2. If you are holding a position so that your opponent cannot make progress, offer him a draw. If he rejects the offer, stop the clocks and summon the Arbiter.
3. If you wish to claim that your opponent is not making progress, do so immediately you have only two minutes left. Any later and the Arbiter may not be able to observe enough moves to make a decision.

Guidance for Arbiters:

1. Rule 12 '*cannot possibly checkmate*' is defined as there being no mating possibility even with the help of the opponent.
2. Rule 14 is the only rule which requires some chess judgement from the Arbiter. In positions such as where a player has a bare king blocking the opponent's sole rook's pawn, the Arbiter may declare the game drawn if he believes the defending player is of adequate playing strength to hold the position.
3. The Arbiter is not expected to adjudicate a position but he should make himself aware of the circumstances, usually by watching a few moves. For example, if a player:
 - a) makes tangible progress before his opponent's flag falls, he will be awarded a win.
 - b) makes no progress, either because of lack of ability or because of his opponent's sound defence, he will not be awarded a win.
 - c) makes no progress because his opponent makes little effort to move, the player will be awarded a win when his opponent's flag falls.
4. The player who is short of time should make sufficient moves in their remaining time to allow you to judge the merits of the claim.
5. The results of games which have been cleared away should not be decided upon unless you are satisfied that the players observed the correct procedure for reporting the results, and that there is an intelligible record of the game available. Otherwise the declared result should stand.

End of EPSCA Quickplay Rules Oct 99 [Issued Jan 2011]

¹ Players often misinterpret this phrase. The onus is on the player to win in the time limit. The Arbiter will normally give the advantage to the player with time left. Players who are short of time should make enough moves in their remaining time for the Arbiter to judge the merits of any claim. A player with a material advantage whose flag falls first does not automatically get a draw. The Arbiter will award a draw only if the player with time left doesn't have mating material, or is making no attempt to win, or is forced to defend with no possibility of attack, or the position is a normally accepted draw, or so blocked that whichever player tries to break out will lose. If the player with time left is able to attack s/he will usually be awarded a win even if, had the game been able to continue, s/he could have lost.