

NORTHERN SCHOOLS CHESS LEAGUE

December 15, 1990 (Revised 11/9/03)

Suggested Challenge Ladder Format

Once an initial, approximate ranking is obtained by a startup tourney, a challenge ladder could proceed as follows.

1. Write each player's name on a small tag, say 3/4" by 3". (A flexible magnetic strip on a magnetic board will do very well.)
2. Hang the tags on the challenge board, in order of estimated rank. Only the club sponsor should be allowed to rearrange the tags.
3. Starting with the top of the ladder, set up a group of challenges according to Rule 4, one game per player. Make sure that over the long run, a player gets to challenge up as often as he/she is challenged from below. Don't allow players to assign their own challenges.
 - Give players a set number of days to complete their challenge, say three days. Results not received in the set time are discarded.
 - Establish time controls as close as possible to the League's G/60. In no case should time controls be less than G/15.
4. Set up challenge rules so that the closer a player is to the top, the fewer the number of steps he can challenge up. For example:
 - Boards 2 to 5 can only challenge as far as two positions above them.
 - Boards 6 to 10 can challenge as far as 3 positions above them.
 - Boards 11 to 15 can challenge as far as 4 positions above them.
 - Boards 16 and higher can challenge as far as 5 positions above them.
 - No one is required to accept more than two consecutive challenges without a chance to challenge up.
5. Once a set of challenges is complete,
 - If the higher ranked player wins the match, there are no position changes.
 - If the lower ranked player wins, he takes the place of his opponent, and the opponent moves to the space immediately below and intervening names move down one.
 - If there is a draw, the lower ranked player moves either to the position immediately below his opponent or up two ranks, whichever represents the smaller jump.
 - Be sure to rearrange the rankings before the next set of challenges is started.
6. New Players
 - Do not place a new player at the bottom of the ladder. To place a new player on the ladder, pair him/her against one player from the upper third of the ladder, one from the middle third, and one from the bottom third. If he/she defeats all 3 opponents, place him just above or just below the highest ranked opponent. If he wins 2 of 3 games, place him slightly above the midpoint. Some judgment is required here.
7. Discipline
 - Do not promote or demote a player except as a result of challenge matches. Do not use demotion to discipline a player for failure to attend club meetings, for bad behavior, or for any reason not related to chess skill.
 - A player who is absent from challenges for an extended period, say a month, shall be removed from the ladder and considered a new player. Use Rule 6, or knowledge of the player's chess skills, to re-rank the player.