

**ABBREVIATED TOURNAMENT RULES**  
**NORTHERN SCHOOLS CHESS LEAGUE (NSCL)**  
**High School/Junior High/ Mid School Division - 2007-2008**

**BASIC RULES OF COMPETITION.** Each tournament will follow the rules of chess according to the *U.S. Chess Federation's Official Rules of Chess, 5th edition, 2003* and the League's **Rules of Competition**. The USCF's Sudden Death rules apply during the entire game.

**TOURNEY FORMAT.** There will be two Saturday meets, October 20 and November 17, and a third meet on the MLK holiday, January 21, Each meet consists of three rounds, matching team v. team. The first two meets are the qualifying rounds to determine which teams make the playoffs for the January meet. USCF Swiss pairings will be used. The "Slow" Swiss variation will be applied as needed

At the first two meets, all teams compete in a mixed pool of high schools, junior high schools, and middle schools. At the January meet, the top four finishing teams in each category (large high school, small high school, and junior high/mid school) will be separated and placed into their own playoff brackets to compete for the League Championship and trophies. Teams that don't qualify for the playoff brackets qualify for special brackets and trophies. No teams are eliminated. Standings are based on match points. Team tie-breaks are: 1. USCF's Modified Median, 2. Total game points (If tie persists, drop lowest board and recalculate total points.)

**TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS.** Tournament Directors (TDs for short) are available to resolve disputes and to answer questions. TDs are wearing yellow armbands. If you are making a claim, stop both clocks, raise your hand, and wait for the TD to come to your board. Coaches and spectators are to refrain from settling disputes, answering players' questions, or intervening in any games. **When in doubt, summon a TD.**

**CLUB CHALLENGE LADDER OR RATING SYSTEM.** Each school shall establish a club challenge ladder or rating system to determine player rank. Player rank shall be determined by regular playoffs among club members. A player's rank or rating shall be based exclusively on playing skill and may not be affected by disciplinary or other procedures. A school must bring a copy of its up-to-date ladder to each meet.

**TEAM SIZE.** Teams consist of 6 players. (Seven or more players are allowed if the paired teams agree.) The team's strongest player must play on Board 1, the next strongest on Board 2, and so on, until all boards are filled. The club ladder determines rank. A team that is short players must leave the lowest boards empty. The team loses one game point for each missing board. A team must have at least four players present to be paired into a round.

**COLOR ASSIGNMENTS.** A team designated White plays white on boards 1, 3, and 5, and black on 2, 4, and 6.

**ROUND TIMES.** 10:00 AM, 12:15 PM, and 2:00 PM. (Finish no later than 3:45 PM). Please be at your assigned board at least 5 minutes before the start time.

**TIME CONTROL:** G/50 (50 minutes per player per game). Delay clocks: set to 5 seconds delay and G/45. A delay clock must be used if available.

**TIME FORFEITS.** If your opponent's time has run out **AND** you point out the fact, you win on time provided you have enough material for a checkmate. Coaches, teammates, and spectators are to refrain from pointing out that time has expired.

**REPORTING RESULTS.**

1. Sign your notation sheet and your opponent's. Keep the notation sheet for future reference.
2. Use the Match Pairing Sheet (MPS) to report your result: WIN = 1 point, DRAW = 0.5 point, LOSS = 0 point.
3. The White team is responsible for the completeness of the MPS, for obtaining both signatures, and for turning in the sheet.

**LUNCH.** There will be a short lunch break between Rounds 1 and 2. **Use trash barrels** for leftovers.

**CHESS NOTATION.** Notation is required for the first 30 moves. Algebraic is preferred. If your opponent fails to keep notation, call the TD and your opponent will be warned. On a second warning, your opponent may forfeit the game. **Exception:** during the last 5 minutes of sudden death, if either player has less than 5 minutes, neither player is required to keep notation. (USCF Rule 15.C) ***A player competing in a tournament for the first time need keep only the first 10 moves in game 1, 15 moves in game 2, and 20 moves in game3.***

#### **SPECIAL SUDDEN DEATH RULES**

1. **Illegal Moves.** If any time in a sudden death time control your opponent makes an illegal move and punches the clock, you may request the TD to add 2 minutes to your clock. (USCF Rule 11.D)
2. **Claim of Insufficient Losing Chances.** In a sudden death time control when you have less than 2 (two) minutes on your clock, you may stop the clock and ask the TD to declare the game a draw on the grounds of insufficient losing chances. The USCF Sudden Death rule (14H) is intended for players who are ahead in material but are almost out of time and the opponent has enough material for checkmate. The rule allows a player to declare a draw rather than lose on time. (USCF Rule 14.H) **Note:** a claim under this rule is not allowed if you are using a time delay clock.

**SPECTATOR RULES and TALKING RESTRICTIONS.** If your game is over, you may watch games in progress provided you remain quiet. Do not talk to or distract a player in any way. Never, ever whisper anything to someone who is still playing. Ask a TD to deliver your message. Don't crowd around a game. Give the players plenty of air and light. Stand behind your own teammate to prevent eye contact. Don't say anything about the game that either player may hear!

**EXTRA PLAYERS.** If you don't have an opponent, listen for an announcement at the beginning of each round for special pairings. A House team is sometimes needed and will be formed from extra players.

**MEALS.** Food will be available at some of the tourneys. Listen for the announcement.

**SALE OF SETS.** Sets, clocks and books will be for sale throughout the day.

#### **IMPORTANT REMINDERS:**

- Touch move is in effect. Accidental touches won't be penalized.
- Don't ask a TD if you're in checkmate or stalemate. If you're in check and can't find a way out, it's the same as checkmate.
- You may offer your opponent a draw if you feel that neither of you can win the game. You may **only** offer a draw when it's your turn, as follows: 1. Make your move, 2. Offer the draw, 3. Punch your clock, 4. Wait for your opponent to respond. If your opponent makes a move, your offer has been rejected.
- When castling, move the king before you move the rook. There is no penalty for moving the rook first, but if you delay moving the king, your castling may not be valid.

**\* \* \* HAVE A GREAT TOURNAMENT \* \* \***