

Candidates 2023

Tournament regulations

- Eligibility: Participation is closed to players meeting all qualifying criteria per MCF Statute
 - a. Is a **member** of the Malta Chess Federation (former members seeking readmission must apply for membership and settle the 2023 subscription and readmission fee before the end of the registration period - no new memberships will be accepted at the tournament); and
 - b. Is registered and licensed as a player with FIDE under the **Maltese flag**, and
 - c. Is a **Maltese citizen** (as defined in Cap. 188 of the Laws of Maltese) or has been ordinarily **resident** in Malta for a period of at least six years in the preceding 8 years; and
 - d. Either:
 - (1) Qualified to participate through the Preliminaries 2023 (Top 8 for this year), or
 - (2) Had a rating of at least 1700 in either of the FIDE standard rating lists (i) prior to the Preliminaries (1 February 2023) or (ii) prior to the Candidates (1 June 2023). A player who never had a FIDE standard rating and used to have a national rating shall be deemed to have a rating equal to their rating in the final national active or inactive rating lists (dated 1 January 2014), or
 - (3) Placed as winner or runner-up at the 2022 Championship Finals tournament.
- Non-qualifiers from the Preliminaries who are interested in participating in the Candidates should submit a conditional application during the normal registration period. Should any of the qualifiers from the Preliminaries fail to register to participate in the Candidates, then the next highest ranked participant from the Preliminaries who submitted an application and so accepts shall participate in their stead.
- Participation is complimentary. There is no entry fee.
- Registration shall be by email to info@chessmalta.com by 28 June 2023 23:59 local time. Due to logistical reasons, the number of entries is capped at the first 64 to register. Late entries shall be accepted up to when the pairings for the third round are published, subject to an additional €10 late entry fee. By registering to participate in this tournament, players shall be agreeing to this protocol in its entirety.
- System: **7 rounds**, FIDE **Swiss** Rules - FIDE (Dutch) System (subject to a minimum of 13 entries). Software used for pairings: Swiss-Manager.
- **Scheduled play: Sa 1, Su 2, We 5, Sat 8, Su 9, We 12 and Sa 15 July 2023, with all games starting at 18:00 local time.**

- The official results for each round will be published on the official website within one hour from the end of the last game to finish, except in the case of an appeal in which case the results will be published once the appeal is decided.
- The official pairings for each round will be published on the official website by **09:00** local time of the day immediately preceding the scheduled day of the round, except for rounds 2 and 5 scheduled on Sundays for which pairings will be published by 09:30 local time of the day of the round. Where possible the pairings will be published earlier. However, the pairings for the first round will remain provisional and subject to change up until the start of that round. Any player who wishes to not be paired for the first round must inform the arbiter before the provisional pairings are published.
- Venue: Malta Chess Federation premises at Handaq Middle School, St Ignatius Complex, Tal-Handaq l/o Hal Qormi, Malta.
- Time control: 90 minutes for the first 40 moves followed by 15 minutes for the rest of the game with an addition of 30 seconds per move starting from move one (**40/90m+30s:G/15m+30s**).
- Clocks: DGT 3000 with seconds showing from move 1 and **no move-counter** (the clock will always add 15 minutes to both players when the first player reaches 00:00 and “flags”, irrespective of the number of moves played - claims to be based on the players’ scoresheets).
- All games will be internationally rated with FIDE. FIDE’s Laws of Chess taking effect from 1 January 2023, General Regulations for Competitions, Tie-Break Regulations effective from 1 July 2023, and Ethics & Disciplinary Code effective from 1 April 2022 shall all apply. The Malta Chess Federation’s Code of Ethics shall also apply.
- Default time: **60 minutes**. A player who is absent without notifying the arbiter shall be considered as withdrawn (to have withdrawn), unless the absence is explained, with acceptable reasons, before the next pairing is published.
- Off-schedule play:
 - a. If a player has to stop taking part or needs to miss a certain round, they shall inform the arbiter so they are not paired.
 - b. Players who cannot play at a specific scheduled time and are willing to reschedule the game are to inform the arbiter of this and their availability, ahead of time and not later than the start of the previous round.
 - c. Rescheduled games are to be played within the next three rounds or before the last scheduled round, whichever is earliest. Preferred start times for rescheduled games are: (1) delayed or anticipated start of up to 1 hour (17:00-19:00); (2) weekends in the morning (09:00-10:00); (3) other weekdays in the evening (18:00-19:00).
 - d. Prior to the pairings for the round being published, the arbiter shall ask their expected opponent whether they are willing to reschedule the game in accordance with the provided availability. If the expected opponent is not willing

to reschedule the game or a mutually agreed time and place is not found, the player will not be paired for the round and they will receive no points for the missed round. The pairings will be performed excluding the player, and consequently the expected opponent will not win by forfeit but will be paired with another player.

- e. If the expected opponent is willing to reschedule the game and a mutually agreed rescheduled time and place is found, any games not yet played by the scheduled publishing time for the pairings will be treated as if adjourned for pairing purposes. The game may be further rescheduled within the stipulated time frames by mutual agreement; however, if a rescheduled game is not played within the stipulated time frames, it will be scored as a forfeit for both players (-:-).
- For the final tournament standings, participants shall be ranked in the order specified by the respective tie-break below, starting from the first specified tie-break and moving to the next in the list whenever a persisting tie cannot be broken. When the tie-break list is exhausted, any remaining tie should be broken by the drawing of lots.

The tiebreaks shall be defined and applied in accordance with FIDE's Tie-Break Regulations effective from 1 July 2023. **ATTENTION: There have been several significant changes from the previously effective regulations.**

- a. **Direct Encounter (DE):** If all the tied participants have met each other, the percentage score from these encounters is used to produce separate standings. The participant with the highest percentage score is ranked first among the tied participants, and the others follow according to the separate standings. Forfeited games are not included.

If the tied participants have not played all the games against each other, but one of them is bound to be at the top of the separate standings whatever the outcome of the missing games, that participant is ranked first among the tied participants - the same applies to the second rank when the first is assigned this way; and so on.

Once applied to a set of tied participants, Direct Encounter shall be reapplied to any subset of this set of tied participants until no further ties can be resolved.

- b. **Average Rating of Opponents Cut-1 (AROC):** The average of the ratings of the opponents played over the board (ARO), modified to exclude the lowest-rated opponent.

All forfeits and byes are to be cut from the calculation of ARO and AROC. If a player has one or more forfeits or byes, then no additional results are to be cut from the calculation of AROC. The 1 July 2023 FIDE standard rating shall be used.

Players who never had a FIDE standard rating and used to have a national rating shall be deemed to have a rating equal to their rating in the final national active or

inactive rating lists (dated 1 January 2014). Unrated players without a prior national rating shall be treated as having a rating of 1500.

- c. **Direct Encounter (DE):** Applied again to the remaining set of tied participants after having applied the previous tiebreaks.
- d. **Average Perfect [Tournament] Performance of Opponents (APPO):** The average of the perfect performances (PTP) of the opponents played over the board. An opponent's PTP is the lowest rating that a participant should have in order to receive a rating variation of zero after meeting all the opponents faced during the tournament while obtaining the same results. The full rating scale is used in this computation (i.e. no ± 400 cut). Unrated players shall be treated as in AROC.
- e. **Buchholtz Cut-1 (BHC1):** The sum of the scores of each of the opponents of a player, modified to exclude the opponent with the lowest number of points and subject to the Unplayed Rounds Management described in Article 14 of the Tie-Break Regulations (reproduced below).

14. Unplayed Rounds Management

14.1 *The following definitions are used in this section:*

14.1.1 *unplayed round: any round in which a participant, paired or not, did not play a game in an individual tournament, or a match in a team tournament*

14.1.2 *requested bye: a half-point-bye or a zero-point-bye (note: any round after a participant withdraws is a zero-point-bye)*

14.1.3 *available-to-play round: any round in which a participant played their game, or ended up without a game due to a pairing-allocated bye, the opponent did not arrive to play, or unforeseen circumstances that resulted in the award of a full-point-bye*

14.2 *In Round Robin tournaments, forfeited games (the only possible unplayed rounds) are treated as regular games.*

14.3 *In Individual or Team Swiss tournaments, tie-breaks that directly or indirectly are based on opponents' results (mainly Type C tie-breaks and derivations) can be affected by the following categories of unplayed rounds:*

14.3.1 *Pairing-allocated byes, forfeit wins or full-point byes*

14.3.2 *Requested byes that are followed by at least one available-to-play round*

- 14.3.3 *Forfeit losses that are followed by at least one available-to-play round*
- 14.3.4 *Requested byes that are not followed by any available-to-play rounds*
- 14.3.5 *Forfeit losses that are not followed by any available-to-play rounds*
- 14.4 *When a participant has unplayed rounds, for the sole purpose of computing the tie-break of their opponents (see Articles 7.1, 9.1, 12.2, and Article 13 in full), the participant's score is adjusted in the following way:*
- 14.4.1 *Unplayed rounds of categories 14.3.1, 14.3.2 and 14.3.3 are evaluated with the result (win, draw, loss) corresponding to the awarded number of points or, for teams, match points and game points.*
- 14.4.2 *Unplayed rounds of categories 14.3.4 and 14.3.5 are evaluated as draws.*
- 14.5 *To compute the participant's own tie-break, any of their unplayed rounds are evaluated as if there was a game played against themselves, and ended with the result (win, draw, loss) corresponding to the awarded number of points or, for teams, match points and game points.*
- 14.6 *When a tie-break is modified with low cuts (i.e. cuts that eliminate the least significant values) and there are participants with unplayed rounds of categories from 14.3.2 to 14.3.5 inclusive, these unplayed rounds are the first games to be cut. If there are more unplayed rounds of this kind than required low cuts, the tie-break values coming from those unplayed rounds that contribute in the least significant way to the tie-break shall be cut first.*
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- f. **Buchholtz Cut-2 (BHC2):** The sum of the scores of each of the opponents of a player, modified to exclude the two opponents with the lowest number of points and subject to the Unplayed Rounds Management described in Article 14 of the Tie-Break Regulations (reproduced above).
- g. **The number of games won over the board with the black pieces (BWG).** Unplayed games shall be counted as played with White.
- Note that since Swiss-Manager is yet to be updated to reflect the new FIDE Tiebreak Regulations, **no tiebreaks will be provided for interim standings.** Tiebreaks will be calculated **for the final classification only** and published on the chessmalta.com website and facebook page. The final classification on chess-results.com will reflect the application of the tiebreaks without presenting them (unless an update becomes available in time).

- Qualification to Finals:
 - a. If up to 19 players take part and play at least fifty percent of the rounds of the Candidates, the **four highest ranked participants** of the Candidates shall qualify for the Championship Finals tournament, which will have six participants.
 - b. **If 20 or more** players take part and play at least fifty percent of the rounds of the Candidates, the **six highest ranked** participants of the Candidates shall qualify for the Championship Finals tournament, which will have eight participants.
 - c. Should either of (or both) the winner and runner-up of the previous Championship choose to participate in the Candidates, the number of qualifiers will be increased by one (or if both participate: two) ranked participants to fulfil the complement of six or eight players in the Final phase. In such a case, the winner and runner-up of the previous Championship participating in the Candidates shall not be counted in the tally of participants that determine the number of qualifiers to the Championship Finals.
 - d. Ranking shall be in accordance with game points (win = 1, draw = $\frac{1}{2}$, loss = 0) followed by the tiebreaks.
 - e. Reserve qualifiers shall be in accordance with the rest of the ranking.
- Guaranteed cash prizes: 1st €100, 2nd €75, 3rd €50. Prize-monies are split equally between tied players. Trophies for Top 3, in accordance with tiebreaks.
- Mobile phones should be switched off. If waiting for critical calls, the mobile phone is to be left with the arbiter on silent. If in urgent cases a phone needs to be used, it has to be used when in full view of others and in the presence of the arbiter. Players will lose a game if they have a device that produces any sound (e.g. mobile phone ringing, alarm, watch hourly beep, etc.).
- Recording of games:
 - a. In the course of play each player is required to record his own moves and those of his opponent in the correct manner, **move after move**, as **clearly and legibly** as possible, in the **algebraic notation**, on the prescribed scoresheet. For the abbreviation of the name of the pieces, each player is free to use the name which is commonly used in their country – if using other than English abbreviations, the language should be specified at the top part of the scoresheet.
 - b. A player must record their previous move before making another. It is forbidden to write the moves in advance, unless the player is claiming a draw according to Articles 9.2 or 9.3 of the Laws of Chess. Both players must record the offer of a draw on the scoresheet with a symbol (=).
 - c. A player has to deliver the scoresheet to the arbiter when the game is finished and should keep the carbon copy. A player is not allowed to keep the original scoresheet.

- No eating at the chessboard during the game.
 - Please keep the club clean. **Do not use the paper bins inside the club**; there are waste bins just outside the club.
 - All participants are to provide valid email and phone contact details at registration.
 - Chief Arbiter: IA Noel Grima
 - Official tournament website at: <https://chess-results.com/Tnr780041.aspx>
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