

Live Chess World League – Season 3 Rules

1) Teams

- a. The LCWL's aim is to allow for friendly competition between teams, and to provide fair and balanced matches between national teams. It is expected of all organisers and team admins to show respect to all involved within the league.
- b. The league shall be open to any national teams on Chess.com that wish to enter the league. Each nation should only be represented by one team and no team should represent multiple nations. If there are multiple teams representing a nation, the organisers will decide which team shall represent the nation in the LCWL, and their decision shall be final.
- c. Before the commencement of the season, the admins of each team should be familiar with the setting up of live club matches on Chess.com v3. Teams should have completed at least 4 live matches within the LCWL framework (e.g. organised friendlies, mini-tournaments, previous seasons) before the league begins; however this stipulation may be waived by league organisers.

2) Competitions

- a. There will be 3 competitions in the main season:
 - i. Blitz Open
 - ii. Blitz U1600
 - iii. Bullet
- b. Teams will be split into divisions for the Blitz Open (and potentially the other competitions) based on the number of entries. League organisers will decide the composition of each division before the start of the season, using previous season results and assessing the strength of new teams to do this.
 - i. The organisers may give higher priority to teams that have higher turnouts than teams above them, despite having a worse standing. This is so that as many players as possible are able to play in LCWL matches.
 - ii. Playoff matches may be used by the organisers to allocate teams to divisions.
 - iii. No new team should directly enter Div.1 in the Blitz Open, unless they have participated in a playoff in order to qualify, or they have been given special dispensation to do so from the organisers.
- c. A team must not play in multiple LCWL matches at the same time.

3) Blitz Open

- a. For Season 3, each division will consist of 8 teams, in a 10 round format. Each division will be run in two stages.
- b. The first stage will be a single round robin, with teams awarded 1 point for a won match, $\frac{1}{2}$ a point for a draw, and 0 points for a loss. At the conclusion of the first stage, divisions will be split into two halves (top 4 and bottom 4).
- c. The second stage will be a single round robin within each division half, with teams awarded 2 points for a won match, 1 point for a draw, and 0 for a loss. Teams will carry over their first stage results into the second stage.
 - i. A team in the bottom half of a division for the second stage cannot finish above a team in the top half, even if they achieve more points.
- d. Pairings for the first stage will be released prior to the start of the tournament, and for the second stage will be released after adjustments have been finalised for the first stage. Each round of matches will be allocated a week time slot to be played; however with the mutual agreement of both teams and the tournament director, a match may be played at a time outside this slot.

- i. Free weeks will be allocated to allow for any rescheduled games to be played, and also for rest weeks.
 - ii. Different divisions may have differing schedules; these will be confirmed by the league organisers before the start of the season.
- e. At the end of each stage, a week will be scheduled to allow match score adjustments to be made. After the adjustments for each stage have been finalised, they shall remain final.
- f. If teams are tied in match points at the end of a stage, then the following tiebreaks will be used in the below order (explanations for some tie-breaks can be found [here](#)):
 - i. Direct encounter
 - ii. Sonneborn-Berger
 - iii. Average percentage of points scored in each match (e.g. winning 6-4 [60%] and losing 5-3 [37.5%] will give a score of 48.75%)
 - 1. For the purposes of this tie-break, a forfeit win will count as a 100% score, a forfeit loss a 0% score, and an unplayed draw as 50%.
 - 2. Matches played in the second stage of the tournament will be weighted double, to reflect their added importance.
 - iv. If teams are still tied, the organisers shall select the ranking of the teams in such a way as they see fit. Alternatively, if the league positioning is not of major importance, then the order may be decided by a random draw, or the teams will be declared tied for position.

4) Blitz U1600

- a. The U1600 format will be a single round robin with one division for all entered teams.
- b. The pairings schedule will be released before the start of the season. For teams in the same division in both the Open and U1600, they will be paired in the same weeks for both of those tournaments where possible.
- c. Teams will be awarded 1 point for a won match, ½pt for a draw and 0pts for a loss. If there are teams tied on points, then the same tiebreakers as in the Blitz Open will apply.
- d. A close eye will be kept on players sandbagging below the 1600 threshold in order to play in this tournament. If teams are found to be taking advantage of players sandbagging, then a penalty may be applied.

5) Bullet

- a. The Bullet format will be a single round robin with one division for all entered teams.
- b. The pairings schedule will be released before the start of the season. For teams in the same division in both the Open and Bullet, they will be paired in the same weeks for both of those tournaments where possible.
- c. Teams will be awarded 1 point for a won match, ½pt for a draw and 0pts for a loss. If there are teams tied on points, then the same tiebreakers as in the Blitz Open will apply.

6) Matches

- a. Matches will be played using the live club match feature on the Chess.com v3 server.
- b. Matches will be played at the following time controls:
 - i. Blitz: 5|2
 - ii. Bullet: 1|1
- c. Matches will be played at the following rating ranges:
 - i. Blitz Open and Bullet: Open rating range

- ii. Blitz U1600: 0 to 1599
- d. Match titles should follow the format: LCWL S3 <League> <Division> <Round> - <Team 1> vs <Team 2>
 - i. <League> - Blitz Open, Blitz U1600, Bullet, (choose the appropriate one)
 - ii. <Division> - Div.1, Div.2, Div.3 (choose the appropriate one; note this applies only to Blitz Open matches)
 - iii. <Round> - Rd.<number> (e.g. Rd.4)
 - iv. <Team 1> and <Team 2> - the full names of the teams, as they appear on Chess.com (e.g. Team of the Czech Republic, not just Czech Republic)
- e. Matches will have the following player minimums per team:
 - i. Blitz Open:
 - 1. Div.1: 20 players
 - 2. Div.2: 10 players
 - 3. Div.3: 5 players
 - ii. Blitz U1600: 5 players
 - iii. Bullet: 10 players
 - iv. Teams should choose to not enter the minimum players into the match settings so that if a team does not make the requirement, the match will still be played with the players that showed up, but the result will be recorded as a forfeit for LCWL purposes.
- f. Once pairings have been announced, the admins from each team should start negotiating a time to play their match. The match should preferably be played within the scheduled period; however teams may play their match outside the scheduled week with the permission of the organisers. It is the responsibility of both teams to make a fair effort to schedule their game. The recommended negotiating format is as follows:
 - i. One team should offer at least 2 time slots (preferably 3 time slots) to play their match. Offers should be realistic (e.g. at a convenient time for both teams, not during any national holidays etc.).
 - ii. If no slots are accepted by either team, then the teams should offer additional time slots. Each offer should bring teams closer towards an agreement. Teams should also be aware that a level of compromise might be needed to ensure a match is played.
 - iii. This continues until a time has been agreed by both teams, or until the organisers take an action under rule 5.g.
 - iv. Team admins should also agree to meet in Live at least one day before the match (if possible) to create the match, and should also circulate the match link to team members.
- g. If a game cannot be scheduled within the allocated time slot, then the organisers may take any of the following actions:
 - i. The match may be scheduled for another period (e.g. the free weeks made available).
 - ii. Declare the match an unplayed draw, if both teams have made a fair effort to schedule the game and are unable to reschedule their match for another period.
 - iii. Declare the match a forfeit win for one team and a forfeit loss for another, if one team has not made a fair effort to schedule the game

- iv. Declare the match a forfeit loss for both teams, if both teams have not made a fair effort to schedule the game
- h. All matches must be played by a final deadline. This will be announced by the organisers with the pairing schedule, and deadline may differ for different tournaments and stages. Any matches not played by the deadline will be scored as a double default (F-F).
- i. If a team(s) is unable to make the minimum players for the match time, then it shall default the match. If both teams do not make the minimum, then the result will be a double default. Rescheduling should only take place if there are extraordinary circumstances that resulted in a team defaulting (this will be decided by the organisers).
 - i. Note: This is a change from Season 2. Teams will now only have one chance to make the minimum number of players.
- j. If a player's account is closed after the match is completed, then the player will be subject to a penalty under 6.l.
- k. Each player shall play for only one team for the duration of the season. If a player, after playing for one team, then plays for another team, a penalty under 6.l. will apply only after the second infraction of this rule for each additional team.
- l. The penalty for 6.j. and 6.k. will be the amendment of the match score as if the player lost both games, even if this affects the match points awarded. If both players on a board are subject to penalty, the board score will be declared as 1-1, and the match score amended as appropriate.
- m. Final match score adjustments for round-robin matches will be made one week after the conclusion of the final round of each stage. This is to allow Chess.com to screen any suspicious games.
 - i. Interim match score adjustments may be made by the organisers at any time, however they are not final until declared.

7) Following Seasons

- a. All division champions will be offered promotion into the next division up. Teams finishing in the bottom places may be relegated to lower divisions in order to facilitate this.
- b. As the league is constantly welcoming new teams, additional promotion and relegations between divisions will vary depending on which new teams enter the league (dependent on number and strength).

8) Miscellaneous

- a. In this document, these phrases mean the following:
 - i. "Organisers" - the board of directors and the tournament director, who shall work together to ensure the smooth running of the league.
 - ii. "Tournament director" or "TD" - the person responsible for pairings, results, scheduling, and initial dispute rulings.
 - iii. "Board of directors" or "board" - the group of elected directors that oversee the running of the league, and who make appeal decisions.
- b. Any disputes arising which cannot be resolved by the parties involved may be taken to the organisers in order for a ruling to be reached. This should be done within a reasonable period of the incident occurring.
 - i. The tournament director shall make initial rulings based on his understanding and interpretation of the issue, and of the rules. If a team affected by the issue disagrees with the initial ruling, even after an

explanation has been given, they may refer the matter to the board, who may overturn the initial decision by a majority vote.

1. If an appeal is made, both teams will be allowed to submit their version of events, and the tournament director will submit their reasoning for the initial ruling.
 2. The board members shall each vote on whether to accept or reject the appeal. A majority of voting board members is needed to overturn a TD's decision.
 3. Any board member whose team is affected by the decision of the board shall be ineligible to vote.
- ii. The tournament director may also directly send the dispute to the board without the need for either team to request this.
- c. The organisers shall make every attempt to make a ruling that is both fair and according to the rules of the league. The organisers' interpretation of the rules is final.
 - d. It is expected that the organisers, team representatives, team admins and players conduct themselves in a fair manner, and take no action that may bring the league into disrepute.
 - e. It is the teams' responsibility to promote maximum participation in the matches. Teams must not restrict participation unless there is a fair reason for doing so.
 - i. Teams should not remove players to gain a more favourable matchup (e.g. removing lower boards where a team is outrated).
 - ii. Under no circumstance may a team restrict players from playing for the team by ratings or strength. This includes setting a minimum rating for entry into the team (teams however may require a minimum number of games to be played prior to acceptance).
 - iii. Teams may remove players if they have a history of deliberately timing out or prematurely resigning games; however they must announce this, and be able to prove that the player is eligible for removal under this rule.

9) Penalties

- a. League organisers may apply any of the following penalties to teams for breach of rules 1-8 where no penalty is already specified (in order of severity):
 - i. Warning (if multiple warnings are accrued in a season by a team, a more severe penalty may be applied for later offences)
 - ii. Adjustment of the match score
 - iii. Loss of the match (declared a forfeit)
 - iv. Point deductions
 - v. Demotion into a lower division
 - vi. Disqualification from the tournament
- b. Penalties will be applied in accordance of 8.c., in such a manner that 'the punishment fits the crime'.
 - i. Example: A team making a minor breach of the rules will not be disqualified; instead a warning or score adjustment would be a more suitable penalty.