

Dear members of the chess fraternity,

Over the past month, the number of COVID-19 cases in the community has continued to rise and is not expected to peak until around mid- to end-November. The Ministerial Task Force has extended the Stabilisation Phase restrictions to 21st November, making it challenging to host large scale in person chess events until there is more certainty.

As such, we decided to cancel the remaining rated training games for the National Junior High Performance Intermediate Squad (HPI) for the rest of the year, and to provide refunds. For the unrated training games of the National Junior Development Squad (NJDS) and Junior Preparatory Squad (JPS), we will create online events instead. While we would much prefer to host in-person games and training in view of the better interactions and relations these foster, the safety of our players and staff take precedence. I am sorry for the inconvenience this has caused to our players and their parents.

For similar reasons, the 62nd National Inter-School Team Chess Championships will also be held online (30th November to 5th December 2021) using the Lichess platform. Given the changed nature of the event, we have decided to tweak the traditional format and eligibility to increase participation and give more opportunities for young people to play in a chess competition. More details are available [here](#), but in brief, we have changed this to a series of age-category events and opened the event to teams from local private schools as well as institutes of higher learning, as long as players are below 20 years of age as of 1st January 2021.

We are currently making plans for the 73rd National Chess Championships, which will be an in-person event. In addition to the traditional round-robin format, we will likely hold a series of small qualifying events in December 2021 to give more players the opportunity to play and qualify for the Finals, which will likely be held in January 2022.

Other than chess events, we have continued our efforts at improving the operations of the SCF and its communications with the chess community.

A FairPlay Commission has been established and its recommendations will be made known to the community for comment before the end of the year, both via the SCF website as well as a townhall for both players and parents. Our requirement for a declaration of closed chess server accounts for the recent Asian Youth Chess Championships Online event triggered off a complaint (you may read more about it and our reply [here](#) if you wish), and we feel it is important to share more about online FairPlay adjudications to help the chess community make sense of this up-and-coming area, as online chess events will be here to stay for the foreseeable future.

We have also established the Singapore Chess Magazine editorial team who are on track to deliver the first edition of the online magazine in January 2022, and our Training & Development and Selection committees are hard at work revamping the SCF training curriculum as well as

selection criteria for national teams. The work of the latter committees will also be covered in future townhalls for comments and suggestions.

Last but definitely not least, a series of congratulations are in order:

- We would like to congratulate FM Siddharth Jagadeesh for achieving his second IM norm at the First Saturday GM Tournament held in October in Budapest, Hungary. We hope he will complete his remaining title requirements in 2022 and become our next IM.
- We also congratulate our U8 Boys (Evin Sung, Nicholas Kuo and Ryan Li), U10 Boys (Siddharth Sai, Poon Ee Rui and Jared Teah) and the U10 Girls (Alyssa Ng, Advika Vinai and Chong Yong Qian) for doing us proud by obtaining the team bronze medals in their respective categories at the East Asia Youth Online Championships that concluded on 3rd October 2021.
- Finally, in the recently concluded Asian Youth Chess Championships Online event, although none of our players reached the top 3, they nonetheless played well, especially Marcus Chen (U18 Boys), Danyel Koordi (U10 Boys) and Ray Tan (U10 Boys). Marcus, who finished 4th, played 2 IM's, 1 FM and 1 CM, defeating IM Gan-Erdene Sugar of Mongolia in the final round.

Dr Hsu Li Yang,
On behalf of the SCF Executive Council
3rd November 2021