

THE "AMALFI" SYSTEM

FOR PAIRING IN CHESS TOURNAMENTS

A. BASIC PRINCIPLES

The basic principles of the "Amalfi" system are the following:

1. The number of the rounds to be played must be stated in advance.
2. Two players can not meet more than once.
3. A player should be paired with an opponent as closer to him/her in the table as possible.
4. A player should play an equal number of games with white and black pieces alternately.
5. Unless announced otherwise in advance, a player who wins his/her game or wins by forfeit, scores one point (1); a player who loses his/her game or forfeits, scores no points (0); a player who draws his/her game, scores a half point ($\frac{1}{2}$).

B. PAIRING RULES AND COLOUR ASSIGNING CRITERIONS

1. Rating

- 1.1. At the beginning of the tournament, the director must check all participants' ratings.
- 1.2. Should a player's rating be unknown, director will appraise it in the most accurate way.

2. Ranking numbers

- 2.1. At the beginning of the tournament, a list of participants must be drawn up and ranking numbers assigned to each one of them; this list is called "the assessment table".
- 2.2. Unless otherwise stated in the tournament announcement, ranking numbers will be assigned to players in order by:
 - a) rating (FIDE if provided, national as subordinate);
 - b) FIDE titles;
 - c) alphabetical order.
- 2.3. Players with no official Elo rating will enter the tournament with a fictitious rating of 1440 points.
- 2.4. The player at the top of the table gets ranking number 1 (#1) and is called "the player with the highest ranking number".

3. Pairing criterions

- 3.1. At any round – except the last one – two players are called "compatible for pairing" if:
 - a) they did not meet before;
 - b) none of both is forced to play with the same colour (White or Black) for the third consecutive time;
 - c) none of both is assigned a colour more than three times the opposite colour.In last round, two players are called "compatible for pairing" if they did not meet before.
- 3.2. Before fixing pairings, all players – except the player who gets the bye and all other players that will not play the round for any reason – must be listed by score in descending order (for example: 4, 3, 2.5, 1, 0.5, ...); if score is level, by ranking number in increasing order; this list is called "the pairing list".
- 3.3. Pairing procedure begins handling the first unpaired player in the list; that player will be paired with his/her opponent according to this formula: *opponent = player position + amount of rounds to be*

played (let be "I" player position and "G" number of rounds to be played, opponent position "P" will be:
 $P = I + G$).

- 3.4. If opponent in position P is not compatible for pairing, or value of P is greater than the total amount of players in the list, or opponent in P has been already paired with another player, then the opponent will be chosen according to the following order:
- a) scrolling the list upwards, from position P-1 to position I+1;
 - b) scrolling the list downwards, from position I+1 to the last position;
 - c) uncoupling the last paired couple and starting again from the player with the highest ranking number to set up new couples, following the above principles and rules.

4. Bye, games not played and latecomers

- 4.1. At any round, in case of odd number of participants, the last player in the pairing list will get a bye.
- 4.2. Unless otherwise specified in the tournament announcement, the player who gets the bye in a round scores one point (1) for that round.
- 4.3. A player, who previously scored 1 point in a game without having played that game for any reason, can not get a bye.
- 4.4. While fixing pairings, the games not played ("bye") have to be considered as if played with no opponent and no colour.
- 4.5. Once the tournament has started, late entrants can be admitted in the tournament if previously stated so in the tournament announcement; late entrants will be listed in the assessment table and in the pairing list according to the rules of this present system.

5. Assigning colour

- 5.1. At round 1, colour will be randomly assigned to player #1; the opposite colour will be assigned to player #2 and so on, alternating the colour to be assigned to the player with the highest ranking number in the succeeding couples.
- 5.2. White will be assigned to the player that played an higher percentage of games with Black, as long as rules in paragraph 3.1 have been complied with; percentage must be calculated over the amount of the games effectively played.
- 5.3. Percentage being equal, White will be assigned:
 - a) to the player that more recently played with Black in a round in which his/her actual opponent played with White or got a bye;
 - b) to the player that more recently got a bye in a round in which his/her actual opponent played with White.
- 5.4. All previous conditions still being equal, the player with the highest ranking number in the couple will play with the colour opposite to that with which he/she played the last round.