



# Missouri State Scholastic Chess Championship

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Eligibility

#### Who is eligible to play in the tournament?

- All students enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 12 in Missouri are eligible to enter the Missouri State Scholastic Championship. There are no qualifying tournaments.
- Students [K-12] who are Missouri residents and homeschooled are also eligible to enter.

#### Is this tournament rated by the United States Chess Federation (USCF)?

Yes. All players must have a current USCF membership. Standard USCF tournament rules govern this tournament. Students may purchase one-year memberships on-site.

#### What is a USCF membership and do I need one?

The United States Chess Federation is the governing body for chess in the United States. Membership is required for all rated tournaments. Memberships are good for 1 year, and that is listed as the end of month in which it was purchased.

### Registration

#### How do I register for the tournament?

- Online registration is greatly encouraged, and is available at a reduced entry fee compared to registering on-site. The registration platform is through our partners at the Gateway Chess League. Please visit either <https://www.mochess.org> or <https://www.gatewaychess.org/events> and follow the links to register.
- Registration is also available onsite from 8:30am to 9:30am.

#### I registered online, do I need to check-in on-site?

- Players who have a **paid** online registration should check the Tournament Master List outside the main tournament hall to verify their registration. IF all is correct (including name spelling) you are set.

- Players who must still pay to complete their registration should enter the check-in line which opens at 8:30am. Unpaid registrations are not complete and will not receive a pairing in Round 1.

### **What is the entry fee?**

- **\$25** for players who are pre-registered online (for both online pre-payment or payment on-site)
- **\$30** for players registering on-site

### **What forms of payment are accepted?**

- Online Paid Registration is through **PayPal**.
- Onsite registrations and USCF Memberships are payable by **cash, credit card, or check** (made payable to Missouri Chess Association).
- Team rooms (FAQ follows) must be paid by **cash or check only**.

### **Can I make changes to my registration after submitting online?**

Yes. Individual and Team registration changes can be made during on-site registration beginning at 8:30am Saturday morning (i.e., changing board order, dropped players, etc.)

## **Teams and Sections**

### **What constitutes a Team?**

- A. Teams are 2 or more players enrolled in the same school and entered in the same section. (*Sections details follows*)
- Homeschooled students are eligible to participate as part of the public school team they would attend based upon their residence.
  - Remote learning students are eligible to participate with the school team where they are earning credits.
- B. Teams are not required to register jointly. Individually registered students from the same school will automatically be placed in the same team.
- C. Club teams are **not permitted** in the Missouri State Scholastic Championship Tournament. i.e., chess clubs, chess academies, Parish League teams, multi-school after-school enrichment programs, etc.

### **Must I have a team to participate?**

No. All K-12 students are eligible to compete regardless of team status.

### **How do I choose a Section?**

Students must register in a Section to participate and the Missouri State Scholastic Championship has grade specified Sections. **Students must participate in a Section that includes their current grade level and is not higher than the highest grade of their school.**

**HS Section:** Student in grades 9-12 are eligible for this Section. *(In some cases a District may have a 9th grade separate from their High School, in this case a 9th grade student may compete with the High School Team to which their school will matriculate.)*

**K-9 Section:** Students in grades K-9 who attend a school with a 9th grade are eligible for this section. (i.e., 9th grade and under)

**K-8 Section:** Students in grades K-8 who attend a school with an 8th grade are eligible for this section. (i.e., 8th grade and under)

**K-6 Section:** Students in grades K-6 who attend a school with a 6th grade are eligible for this section. (i.e., 6th grade and under)

**K-5 Section:** Students in grades K-5 who attend a school with a 5th grade are eligible for this section. (i.e., 5th grade and under)

**K-3 Section:** Students in grades K-3 who attend a school with a 3rd grade are eligible for this section. (i.e., 3rd grade and under)

**Schools that are eligible for multiple sections may enter teams in multiple sections.**

## **Tournament Expectations**

### **Do I need to bring my own equipment?**

Players are encouraged to bring their own equipment (chess sets and clocks.) Chess sets will be provided in the Under Sections (K-3, K-5, K-6, K-8, and K-9). HS Section players must compete with their own sets. A limited number of sets and clocks will be available to check out. Notation sheets and pens will be provided for all Sections.

### **Can parents/coaches watch the games?**

No. In fairness to all players participating, only competing students and officials may be in the tournament hall once the rounds are in play. This minimizes the risk of distractions and interference. *Parents/coaches are encouraged to help players find their boards at the beginning of each round.*

### **What happens if a player loses a game? Are they eliminated from the competition?**

Students will play every round in the tournament. If a student loses a round, at any point, they continue to play all rounds.

### **Is notation required at this Tournament?**

- Taking notation is recommended in all sections and is **required** in K-8, K-9, and High School Sections.
- If less than 5 minutes remain on either player's clock, notation *is not required for either player*.
- While notation is optional in the K-3, K-5, and K-6 Sections, the Officials remind you that, in the event of a dispute, if you have no record of the moves that have been played, the Officials are only able to make decisions with the available information.

### **What are the time controls and what does that mean?**

You will see the time controls for this tournament listed as G/25;d5 and G/55;d5 - this is read as "game in 25 minutes with a 5 second delay" and "game in 55 minutes with a 5 second delay."

- Players in the **K-3, K-5, K-6, K-8, and K-9 Sections will have 25 minutes** on their clocks each round with which to complete the game. The 5 second time delay means that, with each move, the clock will not start counting down for 5 seconds.
- Similarly, players in the **HS Section will have 55 minutes** on their clock each round with which to complete the game; and will have a 5 second time delay between moves.
- If a player's time expires, *and* is called by the opponent, that player loses, assuming the opponent has mating material. If not, the result is a draw.

### **What happens if I need to miss a round, or more?**

Inform the tournament staff at the operations tables **before** the missed round and the student will receive a 0-point bye for missed rounds. Upon returning to the Tournament, you must check back in with the tournament staff to be included in the next round's pairings.

## **Tournament Play**

### **How do I know who I am playing or where to sit for the round?**

- Pairings will be posted in the playing hall (gymnasium).
- All Under Section players (K-3, K-5, K-6, K-8, and K-9 Sections) will be listed alphabetically by last name in a combined list.
- High School Section players will be listed alphabetically by Board Section (i.e., Board One, Board Two, Board Three, or Board Four.)

Example:

Player Name	Board Number	Color	Opponent Name
Bush, Rose	305	B	Wrench, Allen
Buchanan, James	415	W	Jefferson, Thomas

Rose will play with the Black pieces on board 305 against Allen.

### How do pairings work?

- Each Section is paired using the Swiss System.
- Players are assigned a pairing number based on their USCF Rating (highest to lowest; unrated players at the bottom)
- In the First Round, players in the top half will play against players in the bottom half. (i.e. if 32 players in a section, Round 1 pairings would be: Player #1 vs. Player #17, Player #2 vs. Player #18, ... Player #16 vs. Player #32.) If the section is large enough, players will be paired with an Accelerated Swiss System, where sections are divided in quarters instead of halves. Details of which may be found online.
- As the tournament progresses, players are separated into groups based on their score (i.e. players with same/similar score will be paired using the method above.)

### What does it mean to go to the Penalty Box?

Don't worry—you haven't done anything wrong! This is the term we use for the area to sort out pairing issues: odd number of players, missing players, late additions, wrong section assigned, etc.

- If a player sees "Go to the Penalty Box" on the pairing sheet, it means there is an odd-number of players in the section and they are the odd one out. We will first try to match the player with another player missing an opponent; however, if none is available, the player will receive a full point (as if they won their game) for that round.

### **What do I do when I am finished with my game?**

1. Leave the pieces on the board in the final position. Do NOT reset the pieces!
2. Circle the result of the game on your Results Sheet, "Blue Sheet."
3. Raise your hand to signal a referee.
4. Once a referee has verified the result, both players will sign the Blue Sheet. The referee will then collect the sheet and dismiss you from the playing hall.
5. At this point, please quietly reset the board to the starting position and exit the playing hall.

### **How does the scoring work?**

Players receive: 1 point for a win, a half point (.5) for a draw, and 0 points for a loss.

### **How does the High School Section work?**

- A. The High School Section is divided into four separate tournaments called: Board One, Board Two, Board Three, and Board Four.
- B. High School Teams **must** place their best four players (by USCF rating) on Boards One through Four, respectively. Additional players may be placed in Boards at the coach's discretion.
- C. Board orders that differ from USCF rating must be approved by the tournament director.
- D. The team score is the sum of the best score from each of the four boards.
- E. Teams tied for first place will be considered co-champions. Trophies will be awarded based on tiebreaks.

### **How do Teams in Under Sections work?**

- A. Each section is its own separate tournament. (Some Sections may be combined by the tournament director if needed to provide enough players to pair.)
- B. The team score is the sum of four highest scoring team members.
- C. Teams tied for first place will be considered co-champions. Trophies will be awarded based on tiebreaks.

### **What are tiebreaks? How do they work?**

Tiebreaks are algorithms used, when necessary, to determine final standings for awards. Most simply, tiebreaks go deeper into the nuances of the pairings and are based on how well your opponents scored (i.e., a win against a player with 4 points is more valuable than a win against a player with 1 point.)

### **How many points are required for a medal?**

- 3 points in HS Section

- 4 points in all Under Sections

### **How do I check the results of the tournament after it is over?**

Results and standings of the tournament will be posted to [www.mochess.org](http://www.mochess.org) and [www.gatewaychess.org](http://www.gatewaychess.org).

Individual ratings changes and official tournament report can be found through USCF by using the search features on their website: <https://new.uschess.org/civicrm/player-search> and/or <https://www.uschess.org/datapage/event-search.php>

## Site Questions

### **What are team rooms? Do I need one? Will I have a place to sit between rounds?**

- Battle High School offers classrooms for teams who wish to have a reserved space; they charge \$200.00 for these rooms and they hold about 20-25 people. Please make checks out to Missouri Chess Association.
- There is ample open seating for players, coaches, parents, etc. throughout the school. Tables and chairs in the cafeteria and hallways are for general use and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **Will there be food and drinks available?**

- A concession stand will be open throughout the competition and located between the HS and Under Section competition halls (the two gymnasiums) with food and drinks available for purchase. Please bring cash for these purchases.
- No food or drink is allowed in the playing halls.