

OFFICIAL RULES OF THE ALL SERVICE POSTAL CHESS CLUB (ASPCC)

October 1998

CLUB STRUCTURE

1) **CLUB DIRECTOR:** a) The Club Director (CD) is responsible for the overall management of the Club. S/he will maintain the Club Membership rolls, deposit incoming funds into the Club's operational account (which is to be a separate bank account), and will pay all moneys properly due and payable, except where other arrangements have been made. The CD is responsible to publish an annual financial report, preferably in the January issue of King's Korner (KK).

b) He may appoint staff members as necessary to assist in the performance of the following: <1> Editing and publishing KK, <2> Collecting and spending dues and donations, <3> Arranging the Club's tournament schedule, <4> Handling complaints, <5> Calculating the ratings, <6> Adjudication of unfinished games, etc. All staff serve without pay, and their names shall be published in each issue of KK. If a situation arises that may involve dismissal of a key volunteer, the CD will consult with the Executive Committee (EC) before making a final decision.

2. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** a) The Executive Committee (EC) guides policy and provides continuity within the scope of the Club Constitution and By-Laws. It appoints the CD and provides him with policy advice. Its approval is necessary for changes in dues, changes of rules, and for new appointments to the EC. It is the board of final appeal from any decision/s of the CD and the Administrative Staff. It receives annual financial reports from the CD. The EC establishes its procedures and has the powers necessary to carry out its functions.

b) The EC shall consist of nine Club members. The Chairperson and two members not holding specific administrative positions in the Club shall be permanent members of the EC. The other six positions will be those holding the positions of: Club Director, Editor of KK, Tournament Coordinator (TC), Time Control Monitor (TCM), Ratings Statistician (RS), and another member who is selected by the CD. Whenever a vacancy occurs on the EC the CD will submit a nominee from among the Club's membership for approval and appointment by the EC. A non-voting "Chairman Emeritus" position also exists.

PLAYING RULES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

3. **PAIRINGS AND SECTION ASSIGNMENTS:** a) A player's opponents, the number of games, and the colors assigned for each game are normally determined by the Tournament Secretary (TS). This information is sent directly to the players, or for Challenge Matches may be published in KK. In other words, a person cannot join the Club and set conditions as to whom s/he will or will not play in a given tournament. When you join and apply for a section, you thereby accept opponents as assigned by the TS.

b) TSs may or may not replace "drop-outs" or withdrawals as necessary to enhance a section or event.

4. **CHALLENGE MATCHES:** A challenge match of two, four, or six games may be initiated by the players themselves, one of whom contacts the Challenge Match Coordinator (CMC), and then a match number is assigned and published in KK. See Rule 23 for E-MAIL procedures.

5. **MOVES OF THE GAME:** A correspondence chess game begins when one of the players, usually the player with the WHITE pieces – sends the first move, along with other required data =

a) Full, clear, legible and correct names and addresses, including zip codes as appropriate, of both players.

b) The section or match identification which was assigned by the CMC or TS. Thereafter, also include:

- c) Consecutively numbered “move pairs,” meaning: the opponent’s previous move, and the responding player’s reply, and,
 d) Date of receipt and the date of reply. Postmarks take precedence over written dates should a conflict arise [See examples.]

EXAMPLES:

(W)	(X)	(Y)	(Z)
12CCP1	15/17 October 12	1. e4	Nf6
(W)	(X)	(Z)	(Y)
12CH42	21/22 October 12	10	Bg5
		11. Nd5	(W) = Section or CH Match #, (X) = Dates
received/sent	(Y) = Last move of opponent	(Z) = Your reply.	

6. All games shall be conducted by using correspondence, which mean postcards or first class letters, but may also include telegrams and electronic mail.

7. **CHESS NOTATION:** The algebraic system is the official ASPCC notation; however, you may mutually agree to use another standard/accepted system, such as English Descriptive or International Numeric. When descriptive or algebraic is used, use the English language, single letter abbreviation for the pieces: K (King), Q (Queen), B (Bishop), N (Knight), and P (Pawn). Once play begins the form of notation should be consistent throughout the game.

8. **DIAGRAMS:** Diagrams and/or word pictures of a position are used as unofficial information. They are convenient forms of verifying a position, however, they do not replace actual game score moves. If a difference between the game score and a diagram occurs it is a courtesy to point out the discrepancy before further play.

9. **CONDITIONAL MOVE:** A conditional or “if-then” move is often an attempt to save time and postage by offering a plausible continuation beyond the required one move response. It is permissible to propose to your opponent one or more conditional move. Once you transmit such conditional moves they are binding upon you until your opponent makes his/her response. Conditional moves may be declined, partially accepted, or accepted in full. The moves which are accepted must be repeated/used in the exact sequence as offered, and this acceptance must be reflected on the VERY NEXT written communication to your opponent. It is important to note that should an “if-then” pair be accepted you are to respond to the complete pair, including the “then” portion. See rule 15 for time extended per each accepted move pair.

10. **MOVES SENT ARE BINDING:** Valid move/s, including conditional ones which have been placed in the mail system or otherwise properly dispatched are binding and cannot be withdrawn, retracted, or altered by the sending player, even though s/he uses a faster means of communication. Clerical errors, even though they may be quite illogical, are binding if they are otherwise legal moves. If duplicate moves are transmitted for the same turn of play, the earliest postmark/time stamp shall determine the official game continuation. In the case of an outright BLUNDER, an opponent may allow a “take back” or substitution of another move.... . There is absolutely no obligation for him or her to allow a retraction.

11. **ILLEGAL AND AMBIGUOUS MOVES:** a) The use or omission of the terms “check” and “en passant” does not affect the legality of a move except when the use of such a term (but not the omission) eliminates ambiguity. B) An ambiguous move is one which can be interpreted in more than one way. It is incumbent upon the receiver of such a move to seek clarification before continuing the game. Also, if a player incorrectly acknowledges an opponent’s ambiguous move, his/her reply is considered illegal. Either player, upon recognizing an ambiguous move must

take action to clarify the situation. If play should continue and an ambiguity or illegality be discovered before seven whole moves are made, then the position is restored to that position which existed immediately prior to the erroneous move/s. After seven moves the position stands. Illegal moves are: (1) Moves which have been erased or otherwise altered, unless the correction is clear and initialed by the sender. (2) A move of a piece or pawn to an impossible square. (3) A move which leaves the King in check. (4) Other violations of commonly accepted chess moves. Once a game has been reported, results stand regardless of possible illegalities and/or ambiguities.

12. **WITHDRAWAL FROM PLAY AND/OR MEMBERSHIP LAPSE:** a) When a player finds s/he cannot continue in a club-sponsored event or match, the withdrawing player must notify all remaining active opponents and the TS. "Selective withdrawal," which means to discontinue play with certain opponents while continuing play with others in the same section is **PROHIBITED**. Ratings for withdrawal may or may not be affected and the TS should evaluate this possibility carefully. If games have progressed far enough to be adjudicated then the secretary may call for game scores which in turn can be used for adjudication. When the TS is in doubt about rating gains or losses s/he should consult with the TC or CD.

b) Membership lapses of 1-60 days duration (a grace period) do not adversely affect assigned events or matches. Lapses of over 60 days constitute expiration of membership and all Club benefits cease. The CD may reinstate a player upon receipt of dues; however, ratings and other benefits may or may not be adjusted based upon the CD's evaluation of the situation. c) In cases of emergency withdrawal, notify the TC or CD who will take action as necessary; i.e., suspend play, notify opponents, contact TS, etc. Dropping out without such notice will have a bearing upon any possible future resumption of play or awarding of results. d) Completed games will be reflected in the crosstables and will be rated. Incomplete games (forfeits and withdrawals) will be recorded in the crosstables as wins (except as provided in Rule 3 for replacements). Rating points will accrue only where TS's follow adjudication procedures.

13. **REPORTING RESULTS:** Within two weeks following completion of a game the winner (White in case of a draw) reports to the TS or Challenge Match Controller (CMC). Delays in reporting game results can cause them to be ruled null and void. Deliberate falsification of game results is grounds for dismissal from ASPCC.

14. **ADJUDICATION:** a) All adjudications are routed through the pertinent secretary who will determine if a game requires further action. A secretary may review a game, decide that it is a clear win or draw **AND** whether rating points apply. The secretary may forward scores to the Adjudication Administrator (AA) for adjudication. b) Where time limits have been preset it may be necessary for the TS to call for adjudication in order to establish qualifiers for Semi-final or Final rounds. In such case the TS will cause games to cease and call for game scores, player's evaluation of the position, and so forth. Games may be adjudicated when a player withdraws, terminates, or otherwise is no longer able to negotiate the game. Rating points (may or may not) accrue to the adjudged "winner" of a game. Games submitted for adjudication should include a diagram of the closing position, a complete and legible game score, along with any pertinent analysis.

15. **TIME LIMIT:** Three days (inclusive, counting both receipt and sending out of reply) is the expected time limit. **REPEATED VIOLATION OF THIS RULE WITHOUT GOOD REASON WILL CAUSE TIME COMPLAINTS TO BE INSTITUTED** (see rule 17b). A seven day period is the maximum where duties or circumstances warrant for consideration of a one-move reply, excluding weekends, national and state holidays, and the sacred days of one's religious preference (the latter not to exceed four consecutive days). Each conditional "if-then" pair

extends the time limit one additional day, up to a maximum of ten consecutive days, weekends and holidays notwithstanding. Only the RECIPIENT of conditional moves has this option. The time limit may be extended for leave/furlough, vacation, illness, duty assignments, changes of duty or work station, or other contingencies of the military, BUT you are expected to notify your opponents, the TS, whenever possible – and at the very least contact the Club Director if you want him to contact those affected by your time out. ONLY THE CLUB DIRECTOR GRANTS TIME OUTS.

16. REPEAT NOTICE: A repeat notice should be sent by post card or letter to a tardy opponent after three weeks from the date of your last dispatch, regardless of the means of the initial means of transmission. Such notice should have the same information as the original transmission, but with the added word “REPEAT” so that the opponent will be alerted for the necessity of a quick reply. One should reply to a repeat notice within 48 hours. Repeat notices are intended to keep games moving orderly – not as a means to harass an opponent. Unanswered repeat moves call for initiating TIME COMPLAINTS.

17. TIME COMPLAINT: a) A complaint citing an opponent for lateness should be sent to the Time Control Monitor (TCM). Such complaint should not be sent until three weeks after a repeat notice has been dispatched and there has been no response. Upon receipt of a time complaint from more than one opponent, the TCM is authorized to consolidate the complaints and to take immediate follow-up action. To make a complaint to the TCM, report the following: (1) Dates of receipt/dispatch of the last three moves. (2) Date of the repeat. (3) The opponent’s full name and last known address. [This is especially important], because a large number of complaints hinge on the change of address for one or both players.

b) A complaint citing an opponent for slow play should be sent to the TCM. This complaint may be filed anytime an opponent exceeds the time limit (Rule 15) 2 or more times in the last 10 moves. To make a complaint to the TCM, report the following: (1) Dates of receipt/dispatch of the last ten moves for BOTH players (provided ten or more moves have been made), (2) The opponent’s full name and address.

c) The TCM will ask the person complained against for his comment and determine whether a violation has occurred. He may give a warning or declare the game forfeited. While a first time complaint is being processed, the game will continue pending a decision by the TCM. Upon a second complaint against the same player in the same game, the game will be suspended pending verification and confirmation by the TCM. In such verification the TCM will give the player complained against a last chance to comment upon the facts and on the proposed action. Upon verification and confirmation of a valid second complaint, the TCM may declare the game/s forfeited and will notify both parties. The claimant will then notify the TS or CMC of his win/s. Note that failure to respond to any official inquiry from the TCM at any stage of a complaint may result in an automatic forfeit decision with no further action.

d) Repeated multiple rules violations: The TCM may recommend to the TC or CD any of the following: 1) Publishing a general warning in King’s Korner CITING THE SPECIFIC VIOLATION

2) Issuing an individual warning

3) Forfeit of all games in that section or match, which may follow forfeiture of games to two opponents in that event

4) Recommend other action to the TC or CD, which in extreme cases may result in dismissal from the Club.

18. OTHER GAME-RELATED VIOLATIONS will be reviewed by the TS and his recommendations forwarded to the TC. The TC may take corrective action according to stipulations herein, or he may forward his findings and recommendations to the CD for necessary action. The TC is authorized to act on referrals from the TCM, Challenge Match Coordinator, or other secretaries. He may also act in cases that encompass the following rules governing ethical questions.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

19. **NO OUTSIDE HELP:** A player is not permitted to obtain help from any other person or move-generating device. Players are free to consult published or private written sources, books, publications, opening analyses, etc. **HOWEVER, A PLAYER IS NOT ALLOWED TO USE A COMPUTER OR CHESS PLAYING MACHINE TO ACTUALLY DECIDE UPON A MOVE.**

20. **DISCOURTESIES:** There are many forms of discourtesy, such as the deliberate stalling or failing to resign a clearly lost game, or sending outlandish "if" moves. Please refrain!

21. **HARASSMENT AND POOR HUMOR:** What is considered humor by one person may be insulting to another. Do not make unkind remarks about one's cultural background, race, military assignment, etc. When it becomes obvious that your opponent is taking exception to a line of conversation, it is best to cease talk and just play.

APPEALS PROCEDURES

22. A club member who feels that s/he has been wronged by any decision of the administrative staff may appeal to the Club Director. If the member is not satisfied with the CD's ruling or action then he may appeal to the Executive Committee (EE), who makes a FINAL decision. During an appeal process, the appellant and any others concerned in the dispute must respond to requests for facts and information. Please NOTE that appeals are time consuming and can be very demanding of the staff's time and energy, and thus should be filed sparingly. We also expect good sporting behavior on the part of the appellant whether or not the appeal goes in his favor.

23. **E-MAIL PROCEDURES:** E-mail procedures will follow general playing rules as defined above. Players will keep a hard-copy of game scores. Assignment numbers will be made available by the CMC or TS.

REVISED: January 2004 (Rules 5 and 7) by the Club Director in consultation with the Executive Committee. Signed: Haskel Sikes, Club Director.

Ratings Formulas (for established players)

$$R(n) = R(o) + 16 (W-L) + 0.04 (SD)$$

R(n) is the new rating

R(o) is the old rating

W is the number of wins reported

L is the number of losses reported

SD is the sum of the difference in ratings

Draws > 0.04 of the difference goes to the lower of the rated players.

Senior Master	2400+
Master	2200 - 2399
Expert	2000 - 2199
Class A	1800 - 1999
Class B	1600 - 1799
Class C	1400 - 1599
Class D	1200 - 1399
Class E	0 - 1199