

6. Rapid and Blitz Ratings

The PB decided in Al Ain meeting that rapid and blitz ratings will be started from 1.1.2012.

The

details have to be decided: Starting rating (normal rating or normal rating only for a restricted period) Rating calculation rules, Elo (K factor), Glicko or something else.

A. How will the list get started?

It was agreed that games played in events commencing on or before 31st December 2011 should not be rated. The players in games played before any decision taken in Krakow would

not have been aware that their results were to be rated, and it would be quite unfair to do so retrospectively. After that, it will take some time to make federations aware of the need to register rapid and blitz tournaments.

It was also agreed that the first list should be published on 1st July 2012. Any list before then would contain too few games to be of much interest. Subsequent lists will be published on the

first of each month, in line with the main rating list. NF wondered whether lists should be produced on 1st March and 1st May, to look as if we are doing something, even though they might be of little value. The consensus was that we should not follow that course.

AF reminded the meeting that there had been a previous rapid list in the 1990s, which collapsed

from lack of interest. Final ratings from that list could be used, where available, as initial ratings

for this one. The consensus was that these ratings were too old to be of relevance.

There are also various national rapid lists, but it was agreed that there are inevitably too many

problems with trying to use such data.

B. Rating system to be used.

It was agreed that there is no case for launching the new list using anything but the standard Elo system. SR suggested that rapid and blitz ratings should be three digits only, so 275 instead of 2750, to avoid confusion between the two. There was support for this idea, but WS

pointed out that commercially available software requires a four digit number, so it was abandoned.

Colour coding in the lists might be helpful, black for standard, red for rapid, blue for blitz.

C. Initial rating.

This should be the player's established FIDE rating at the start of the first period during which

he plays a rated rapid game. For players without a prior rating, initial ratings will be calculated

using the existing framework.

D. K factor.

This was discussed at length. It is possible to make a case for a wide variety of parameters.

The councillors' recommendation is that there should initially be only one factor for all rating levels, and that it should be 20. This is considered quite high, and will allow speedy adjustment

for players whose rapid and slow play strengths are significantly different. It will also lead to large fluctuations, a single tournament could move a player's rating by over 100 points. The QC

need not express a view on whether this is desirable, but FIDE must understand the point.

With a greater number of games possible in a given period, the problem of a rating "turning over" within one period needs to be addressed. The solution in cases where more than 35 (or

some other number) games are played is for the new rating to be the rating performance (suitably defined) in that period.

It was stressed that the value selected for the K factor is not set in stone, and may be subject to change in the light of results. In particular, it may be too low for new players. WS has the full results of the 2011 European rapid championships, a large event, and will analyse how the proposed system would have turned out in that case.

E. General regulations.

The definition of a rapid game should be that found in the FIDE Laws of Chess, and these must be followed in all rated games.

Tournaments should be registered at least two days in advance, we shall see how this works.

The question of titles specific to rapid chess was not considered, this is for the future.

It was felt strongly that the success of this venture will depend heavily upon the level of fees being low or zero. It is understood that FIDE will be amenable to this for a period of time.

We would welcome comments from any players, and particularly professionals, either directly or

through their associations.

F. Blitz Ratings

The list can be constructed in a manner identical to the rapid list, until the data suggests the need for amendment.

It was agreed that there must be a minimum length of games – ie “bullet games” will not be rated. Article 1 of Appendix B to the FIDE Laws of Chess reads

“A ‘blitz game’ is one where all the moves must be made in a fixed time of less than 15 minutes

for each player; or the time allotted plus 60 times any increment is less than 15 minutes.

For the purpose of the Blitz rating list this will in each case be taken to read “less than 15 minutes but no less than 5 minutes”.

For clarity, games where the players have unequal times, such as Armageddon, will not be rated.