

## **D.II.02 Olympiad Pairing Rules**

Approved by the 1994 and 1998 Executive Councils, amended by the 2006 Presidential Board and the 2007 and 2009 Executive Council.

### **A. Basic Pairing System**

1. The basic pairing system shall be the Controlled Swiss System Pairings using Match Points for both Pairing and Scoring.

### **B. Odd Number of Participating Teams**

2. The organizing federation shall be entitled to enter a second team ("B" team). If there is an odd number of participating teams the organizing federation has the right to enter a third team ("C" team).
3. If the "C" team is paired and plays round 1 it shall remain in the tournament to the conclusion even though a team or teams dropping out or a new team or teams arriving subsequently results in an odd number of teams still in competition.

### **C. Ranking of Teams for Pairing Purposes**

4. The teams in the open championship are composed by four players, the teams in the women's championship are composed by four women players. One reserve player may be nominated per team.
5. Obtain a list of all teams participating and full names of all players of each team, including their board order, one month before the start of the Olympiad. The list of names and the order of the players can be changed only with the approval of the President of FIDE.
6. Record the FIDE rating of each team member having such a rating.
7. Assign an arbitrary rating equal to the minimum FIDE rating to team members who have no FIDE rating.
8. At the start of the championship all the teams are ranked in order of the average of their four highest FIDE-rated players. The team with the highest average rating shall be assigned Pairing Number 1, the second highest, Pairing Number 2, etc.
9. If two or more teams have the same average rating, they are ranked according to
  - a. the rating of the fifth player
  - b. alphabetically.

10. For pairing of all rounds the teams are ranked in the following order:

- a. Match points
- b. Game points
- c. Ranking number according to article 9.

#### **D. Number of Rounds**

11. The number of rounds in the Open and the Women`s Olympiad shall be 11.

#### **E. Byes**

12. If there is an odd number of teams a bye should be given to one team which arbitrarily would be credited with 1 match point and two game points.

The team given the bye in the first round would be that team ranked last. For example: If there are 85 teams, then the team ranked as No. 85 would receive the bye in the first round.

The team given the bye in subsequent rounds would be the last ranked team of the group with the lowest total number of match points.  
No team shall receive more than one bye.

#### **F. Scoring unfinished games for pairing purposes**

13. Unfinished games shall be considered as draws for pairing purposes.

#### **G. Tie Breaking**

14. The position of teams that finish with the same number of match points shall be determined by application of the following tie-breaking procedures in sequence, proceeding from (a) to (b) to (c) to the extent required:

- a) the sum of Sonneborn-Berger points, which are calculated as follows:  
match points of each opponent, excluding the opponent who scored the lowest number of match points, multiplied by the number of game points achieved against this opponent;
- b) by the number of the game points scored;
- c) by the sum of the match points of all the teams opponents, excluding the lowest one.

For tie-break purposes a bye or an unplayed match - if the opponent team does not appear on time – are counted as a drawn match against the team itself.

## H. General Pairing Regulations

15. A pairing number is assigned to each team as per Section C.
16.
  - a) No team shall play the same opponent more than once.
  - b) A team having scored without playing will not receive a bye in subsequent rounds. This is the case when a team has received a bye due to an odd number of teams or when one of the opponent teams did not appear on time.
17. The difference of the match points of two teams paired against each other should be 0 or, if this is not possible, as small as possible.
18. A score group is defined as a group of teams having the same number of match points.
19. Pairings shall be made from the top group down to, but not including, the middle group; then from the bottom group up to, but not including, the middle group, and finally the middle group. The middle group shall be defined as that group in which the median team in the standings is located. If there is an even number of teams being paired, the lower ranked of the two middle teams shall be considered as the median team.

Example: Suppose there are 88 teams:

	place	match points
	...	
	43	11 points
	44	11 points
Median team	⇒ 45	10 points
	46	10 points

Therefore the 10 match point group is the median group.

## I. Colour allocation

20. Team pairings are made without regard of colour.
21. In the first round the colour assigned to board 1 of the team ranked number 1 shall be selected by lot. All other odd numbered teams in the top half of the pairing group shall receive the same colour in the first round on board 1 as the team ranked number 1.
22.
  - a) No team's board 1 colour difference will become  $>+2$  or  $<-2$ .
  - b) No team's board 1 will receive the same colour three times in row

23.
  - a) If in a score group a complete pairing is only possible without applying article 22 such a pairing will then be made.
  - b) If in a score group including floaters from higher or lower score groups a complete pairing is only possible by choosing another floater, another floater will be chosen.
24. After the team pairings have been made, colours shall be assigned based on giving priority to:
  - a) equalisation of colours on board 1 (regardless of who has played or is playing board 1 and regardless of what colours the particular player assigned to board 1 has had), and
  - b) alternation of colours on board 1.
25. If both teams have had white the same number of times on board 1 and have had opposite colours on board 1 in the immediately preceding round the colours shall be assigned to board 1 to provide alternation for each team from the colour it had in the previous round.
26. If both teams have had white the same number of times on board 1 the colours shall be assigned to board 1 to provide the lowest sequence of the same colour for both teams.
27. If both teams have had white the same number of times on board 1 and have had exactly the same sequence of colours, then priority shall be given to
  - a) balancing the colour on board 1 of the team with the higher ranked team, or
  - b) alternation of colour on board 1 of the higher ranked team from the last round.
28. If both teams have had white the same number of times on board 1 and have had exactly the same sequence of colours, and each team has had the same number of whites and blacks on board 1, then the colour on board 1 of the higher ranked team shall be alternated from the last round.
29. The teams ranked first in the pairing list will have the white pieces on the odd-numbered boards, the black pieces on the even-numbered boards.

#### **J. Detailed Pairings Procedure**

30.
  - a) If there is an uneven number of teams in a score group above the median group, the lowest ranked team shall be floated down to the score group immediately below and paired against the highest ranked team in that group, which it has not already played.

- b) If the score group from which the lowest ranked team has been floated down is such that a complete pairing of all remaining teams in the group cannot be made, then - instead of floating the lowest ranked team - the second lowest ranked team in the group shall be floated down, etc.
31. If the lowest ranked team floated down to the group immediately below has already played every team in that group, then it shall be moved back to its original group and the second lowest ranked team shall be floated, etc.
  32. If every team in a score above the median group has played every team in the group immediately below, then the lowest ranked team is floated down to next score group and the same procedure is followed as per articles 30 and 31.
  33. a) If there is an uneven number of teams in a score group below the median group, the highest ranked team shall be floated up to the score group immediately above and paired against the lowest ranked team in that group, which it has not already played.  
  
b) If the score group from which the highest ranked team has been floated up is such that a complete pairing of all remaining teams in the group cannot be made, then - instead of floating the highest ranked team - the second highest ranked team in the group shall be floated up, etc.
  34. If the highest ranked team floated up to the group immediately above has already played every team in that group, then it shall be moved back to its original group and the second highest ranked team shall be floated, etc.
  35. If every team in a score below the median group has played every team in the group immediately above, then the highest ranked team is floated up to next score group and the same procedure is followed as per articles 33 and 34.
  36. To the extent possible, teams in the top half of any score group shall be paired in sequence against the teams in the bottom half of the same score group.
  37. For teams in the median group and higher, priority shall be given to find first the correct pairing for the highest ranked team in that score group, etc.
  38. For teams below the median group, priority shall be given to find first the correct pairing for the lowest ranked team in that score group, etc.
  39. Assuming  $2N$  teams in a group, it is first attempted to pair the first team in the group with the  $N + 1$  team. If that is possible, we are left with a subgroup of  $2N - 2$  teams. The same procedure is now applied to the subgroup. Wherever a match is not possible because the teams have already played each other, or the subgroup is unsolvable, the first team in the group (or subgroup) is matched with  $N + 2$  (instead of  $N + 1$ ), then  $N + 3$ , until  $2N$ , and if still unsuccessful, against  $N-1$ ,  $N-2$ , etc.

40. In order to illustrate this procedure, suppose there are six teams in a group, 1 through 6. There will be 15 combinations of pairing within the group, in the following descending order of priority:

- (1) 1 x 4, 2 x 5, 3 x 6
- (2) 1 x 4, 2 x 6, 3 x 5
- (3) 1 x 4, 2 x 3, 5 x 6
- (4) 1 x 5, 2 x 4, 3 x 6
- (5) 1 x 5, 2 x 6, 3 x 4
- (6) 1 x 5, 2 x 3, 4 x 6
- (7) 1 x 6, 2 x 4, 3 x 5
- (8) 1 x 6, 2 x 5, 3 x 4
- (9) 1 x 6, 2 x 3, 4 x 5
- (10) 1 x 3, 2 x 5, 4 x 6
- (11) 1 x 3, 2 x 6, 4 x 5
- (12) 1 x 3, 2 x 4, 5 x 6
- (13) 1 x 2, 3 x 5, 4 x 6
- (14) 1 x 2, 3 x 6, 4 x 5
- (15) 1 x 2, 3 x 4, 5 x 6

41. If any team in a score group has already played against all the other team of the score group it has to be floated down (for all score groups above the median group) or up (for all score groups below the median group).

42. Priority shall be given to making as many pairings as possible of the teams in a given score group before floating a team to the score group below (or above). In all such cases the same general logic as detailed described above shall be followed.

#### **K. Miscellaneous**

43. The pairings are to be made by the Technical Administration Panel (TAP) as outlined in article 6.3.7 of the Chess Olympiad Regulations.

44. Only those teams who have at least three players present at 19.00 the day before the start of round 1 (and the TAP has been notified of their presence) plus those teams who have given notification of their time of arrival and travel arrangements (and the TAP has been informed) shall be paired for the first round with the added provision that the travel arrangements must be such that the absent team or teams shall be able to be in the tournament room before start of the first round.

45. Those teams who do not show up on time for the start of any round shall lose the match and get zero points. The opponent of such a team will get two (2) match points and one (1) game point for each board where its player showed up on time.

46. After the team pairings are officially published they shall not be changed, except if article 22 of these regulations has been violated. In case of any change of published team pairings or individual pairings the Chief Arbiter has to inform all team captains concerned. To have enough time for new preparations the start of one or more games may be postponed by the Chief Arbiter, if necessary.

47. Articles 44 or 45 may be overruled by decision of the FIDE President.

48. No changes in published pairings are allowed, unless the FIDE President confirms it.

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