

2025 Grand Chess Tour Regulations

The 2025 Grand Chess Tour (GCT) is a series of elite tournaments in which the participating players are eligible to earn Tour Points in accordance with their final rank in each event.

1. Preamble

The 2025 Grand Chess Tour regular season will consist of two 10-player Round Robin Tournaments played at a Classical time control and three 10-player Round Robin Tournaments played at both Rapid & Blitz time controls.

The 2025 Grand Chess Tour Finals will be a 4-player Match format tournament played at Classical, Rapid & Blitz time controls.

A total of nine full Tour participants will be selected for the 2025 GCT season with each full Tour participant required to participate in both Classical events as well as in two of the available three Rapid & Blitz events. Full Tour players will earn Tour Points in all events and the results of every event will count towards the final GCT standings at the end of the regular season.

2. Tour Points

Tour Points shall be awarded to full Tour players in each regular season event as set out in the table below. Event wildcard players are included in the final rankings of an event but are not eligible to receive Tour Points. The same point allocations shall apply to both the Classical and Rapid & Blitz events. Tour Points shall be shared equally between tied players and shall not be impacted by the result of any playoff or tiebreaks that may take place.

| Place | Tour Points | Place | Tour Points |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1 st | 12 / 13* | 6 th | 5 |
| 2 nd | 10 | 7 th | 4 |
| 3 rd | 8 | 8 th | 3 |
| 4 th | 7 | 9 th | 2 |
| 5 th | 6 | 10 th | 1 |

** Any player who wins an Event outright (without the need for a playoff) shall earn a bonus Tour Point for the outright victory.*

3. Grand Chess Tour Grand Finals

The top four players with the most Tour Points at the end of the regular 2025 GCT will qualify to participate in the 2025 GCT Grand Finals where they will play for a further prize fund of USD \$350,000.

The top 3 finishers in the 2025 GCT Grand Finals will receive invitations to participate in the 2026 GCT.

4. Tiebreaks

Tiebreak regulations for players tied for first in an individual event and for players who tie for fourth and fifth in the final standings of the 2025 GCT are addressed in the “2025 GCT Tiebreak Regulations”, which are incorporated as part of these 2025 GCT Regulations.

5. Rating of Games Played

All games except Armageddon games, including all games played as part of the GCT Grand Finals regardless of whether a match winner has already been determined, shall be submitted for the appropriate category of FIDE rating and will also be submitted for rating within the Universal Rating System (URS™). The GCT shall seek any necessary permission from FIDE and national federations to ensure that all games played are rated.

6. Appeals

Any player wishing to appeal a decision made by an Event Arbiter must notify the Event Chief Arbiter of their intention to appeal no later than 15 minutes after the end of their game impacted by the decision and before the start of any subsequent rounds scheduled for the same day. A written appeal must then be submitted no later than 30 minutes after the end of the last game of the final round on the day of the decision. There shall be no fee unless the Appeals Committee considers the appeal to have been frivolous or vexatious.

A GCT Appeals Committee shall consist of 3 persons out of 6 of the GCT Appeals Panel, which comprises Joy Bray, Michael Khodarkovsky, Alex Onischuk, IA Chris Bird, IA Ignatius Leong and IA Richard Pointer. No member of the Appeals Committee shall serve in respect of an appeal in which they have been involved in the original decision. In such circumstances the GCT shall appoint a substitute.

In the event of an appeal, a GCT Appeals Committee will convene a meeting to address the appeal at the end of the day's play. A decision regarding any appeals received will be made before the start of play on the next day. The decision of the GCT Appeals Committee shall be final and binding for both player and GCT.

Where there is no International Arbiter on the Appeals Committee, the Committee shall endeavour to consult one before reaching their decision.

7. Official Information

The information document circulated to players and their representatives should be regarded as definitive. Every effort will be made to keep the GCT website accurate and up to date. If updates become necessary, these will be distributed to players and representatives immediately.

2025 Grand Chess Tour Event Regulations

1. Preamble

The following Event Regulations shall apply to the 2025 Grand Chess Tour (GCT) events.

2. Laws of Chess

Unless otherwise specified below, all GCT events shall be governed by the FIDE Laws of Chess. For Rapid & Blitz events, and playoff games at rapid or blitz time controls, Articles A.5 and B.3 of the FIDE Laws of Chess will apply respectively.

2.1. Default Times

If a player is more than ten (10) minutes late for a Classical round, the player shall forfeit such round. If a player is more than three (3) minutes late for a Rapid or Blitz round, the player shall forfeit such round.

2.2. Competitive Play

To promote competitive play during all GCT events, it will not be permitted for players to offer or agree to a draw in any game, including playoff games. In the event of a claim for a draw under Article 9.2 of the Laws (three-fold repetition) or under Article 9.3 of the Laws (50 move rule), one of the Event Arbiters must be asked by the players to verify the claim.

2.3. Displaced Pieces

Where a player accidentally displaces one or more pieces on the chessboard during a game and does not replace them in their own time, the other player may stop the clock and call for an arbiter (who shall stop the clock if this has not been done).

Where arbiter intervention is necessary, the following penalties shall apply. The same penalties shall apply in subsequent rounds.

- First occurrence: The arbiter shall warn the offending player that on the next occurrence it will be treated as an illegal move.
- Second occurrence: This is now treated as an illegal move and action shall be taken by the arbiter according to the number of illegal moves already done by the offending player in the same game.
- Third occurrence: This is treated as a second illegal move, so the penalty will be a loss of the game for the offending player.

3. Pairings

A drawing of lots will be held prior to the first Classical event, and separately for both the Rapid & Blitz portions prior to each Rapid & Blitz event.

For the first Classical event, if there are three or more full Tour players from the same federation, the drawing of lots shall be "restricted" using the FIDE Varma Table. The pairings for the second Classical event shall be the same as for the first Classical event, but with colours reversed.

4. Rapid & Blitz Event Regulations

4.1. Prize Fund

The total prize fund for each Rapid & Blitz event shall be One Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$175,000) which shall be distributed as follows:

| 2025 Grand Chess Tour - Rapid & Blitz Events Prize Fund Distribution | | | |
|--|----------|------------------|----------|
| Place | Prize | Place | Prize |
| 1 st | \$40,000 | 6 th | \$11,000 |
| 2 nd | \$30,000 | 7 th | \$10,000 |
| 3 rd | \$25,000 | 8 th | \$9,000 |
| 4 th | \$20,000 | 9 th | \$8,000 |
| 5 th | \$15,000 | 10 th | \$7,000 |
| Total Prize Fund: \$175,000 | | | |

4.2. Rapid Chess Format and Time Limit

- **Format:** 10-player Round Robin
- **Time Limit:** Game in 25 minutes, with a 10 second increment from move 1.

4.3. Blitz Chess Format and Time Limit

- **Format:** 10-player Double Round Robin
- **Time Limit:** Game in 5 minutes, with a 2 second increment from move 1.

4.4. Scoring

In the Rapid & Blitz events the standings shall be determined by the allocation of:

- 2 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss in a Rapid game; and
- 1 point for a win, ½ point for a draw and 0 points for a loss in a Blitz game.

4.5. Event Schedules

The schedules for the three Rapid & Blitz events are as follows:

| 2025 Superbet Poland Rapid & Blitz | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Date | Event | Date | Event |
| April 24 | Player Arrival | April 28 | Rapid Day 3 |
| April 25 | Player Photos, Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony | April 29 | Blitz Day 1 |
| April 26 | Rapid Day 1 | April 30 | Blitz Day 2, Playoffs & Closing Ceremony |
| April 27 | Rapid Day 2 | May 1 | Player Departure |

| 2025 SuperUnited Croatia Rapid & Blitz | | | |
|--|---|--------|--|
| Date | Event | Date | Event |
| June 30 | Player Arrival | July 4 | Rapid Day 3 |
| July 1 | Player Photos, Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony | July 5 | Blitz Day 1 |
| July 2 | Rapid Day 1 | July 6 | Blitz Day 2, Playoffs & Closing Ceremony |
| July 3 | Rapid Day 2 | July 7 | Player Departure |

| 2025 Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------|--|
| Date | Event | Date | Event |
| August 9 | Player Arrival | August 13 | Rapid Day 3 |
| August 10 | Player Photos, Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony | August 14 | Blitz Day 1 |
| August 11 | Rapid Day 1 | August 15 | Blitz Day 2, Playoffs & Closing Ceremony |
| August 12 | Rapid Day 2 | August 16 | Player Departure |

5. Classical Event Regulations

5.1. Prize Fund

The total prize fund for each of the Classical Events shall be Three Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$350,000) which shall be distributed as follows:

| 2025 Grand Chess Tour – Classical Events Prize Fund Distribution | | | |
|--|-----------|------------------|----------|
| Place | Prize | Place | Prize |
| 1 st | \$100,000 | 6 th | \$21,000 |
| 2 nd | \$65,000 | 7 th | \$18,500 |
| 3 rd | \$48,000 | 8 th | \$16,000 |
| 4 th | \$32,000 | 9 th | \$13,000 |
| 5 th | \$26,000 | 10 th | \$10,500 |
| Total Prize Fund: \$350,000 | | | |

5.2. Format and Time Limit

- **Format:** 10-player Round Robin
- **Time Limit:** 90 minutes for 40 moves and 30 minutes for the rest of the game with a 30 second increment from move 1.

5.3. Scoring

In the Classical events, the standings shall be determined by the allocation of:

- 1 point for a win, ½ point for a draw and 0 points for a loss in all games.

5.4. Event Schedules

The schedules for the two Classical events are as follows:

| 2025 Superbet Romania Chess Classic | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------|--------------------------------------|
| Date | Event | Date | Event |
| May 5 | Player Arrival | May 12 | Rest Day |
| May 6 | Player Photos, Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony | May 13 | Round 6 |
| May 7 | Round 1 | May 14 | Round 7 |
| May 8 | Round 2 | May 15 | Round 8 |
| May 9 | Round 3 | May 16 | Round 9, Playoffs & Closing Ceremony |
| May 10 | Round 4 | May 17 | Player Departure |
| May 11 | Round 5 | | |

| 2025 Sinquefield Cup | | | |
|----------------------|---|-----------|--|
| Date | Event | Date | Event |
| August 16 | Player Arrival | August 23 | Rest Day |
| August 17 | Player Photos, Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony | August 24 | Round 6 |
| August 18 | Round 1 | August 25 | Round 7 |
| August 19 | Round 2 | August 26 | Round 8 |
| August 20 | Round 3 | August 27 | Round 9 & Sinquefield Cup Playoffs |
| August 21 | Round 4 | August 28 | GCT Playoffs, Sinquefield Cup & GCT Closing Ceremonies |
| August 22 | Round 5 | August 29 | Player Departure |

6. Grand Finals Regulations

6.1. Prize Fund

The total prize fund for the Grand Finals shall be Three Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$350,000) which shall be distributed as follows:

| 2025 Grand Chess Tour – Grand Finals Prize Fund Distribution | |
|--|-----------|
| Place | Prize |
| 1 st | \$150,000 |
| 2 nd | \$100,000 |
| 3 rd | \$60,000 |
| 4 th | \$40,000 |
| Total Prize Fund: \$350,000 | |

6.2. Format and Time Limits

- **Format:** 2-player matches consisting of two Classical games, two Rapid games and four Blitz games. All games in each match must be completed, even when a match is already decided.
- **Time Limits:** The following time controls will be used for all matches:
 - Classical games: 90 minutes for 40 moves and 30 minutes for the rest of the game with a 30 second increment from move 1.
 - Rapid games: Game in 25 minutes, with a 10 second increment from move 1.
 - Blitz games: Game in 5 minutes, with a 2 second increment from move 1.

6.3. Seedings and Pairings

Players will be seeded one through four according to the following order:

- Total Tour Points
- Total Tour Points obtained in the two Classical events
- Total prize money won in the GCT regular season
- Total prize money won in the two Classical events

The pairings for the semi-finals will be as follows:

- Semi-Final Match 1: Seed #1 vs Seed #4
- Semi-Final Match 2: Seed #2 vs Seed #3

The winners of each Semi-Final match shall then contest a Final Match, and the losers shall then contest a 3rd and 4th place Playoff Match.

6.4. Colours

Colours for the Classical games shall be decided by the drawing of lots. The player who has White in Classical game 1 shall have Black in Rapid game 1 and in Blitz games 1 and 3.

6.5. Scoring

Points will be allocated to each game within the respective matches as follows:

- Classical Games: 6 points for a win, 3 points for a draw and 0 points for a loss
- Rapid Games: 4 points for a win, 2 points for a draw and 0 points for a loss
- Blitz Games: 2 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss

Each match will therefore be scored out of a total of 28 possible points, with a total of at least 15 points being required to win each match.

6.6. Event Schedule

The schedule for the GCT Grand Finals is as follows:

| 2025 Grand Chess Tour Grand Finals | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Date | Event | Date | Event |
| September 26 | Player Arrival | October 1 | Finals Classical Game 1 |
| September 27 | Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony | October 2 | Finals Classical Game 2 |
| September 28 | Semi-Finals Classical Game 1 | October 3 | Finals Rapid, Blitz, Playoffs & Closing Ceremony |
| September 29 | Semi-Finals Classical Game 2 | October 4 | Player Departure |
| September 30 | Semi-Finals Rapid, Blitz & Playoffs | | |

7. Full Tour Player Unable to Participate in Event

The player will be allowed to play in the remaining events in which they are scheduled to take part, and to earn prize money and Tour Points accordingly. If an alternate is available, they will replace the absent player. Otherwise, the event will proceed with 9 players and the prize money and the Tour Points for the first 9 places will be earned.

8. Player Arrives Late for Event

Players are asked to allow for the likelihood of travel problems and make their arrangements accordingly. If a player has a legitimate reason for arriving late, the following regulations will apply.

In a Classical event:

- A player who misses Round 1 will be allowed to play their Round 1 game on the rest day.
- A player who misses Round 1 and misses Round 2, or declares their intention to miss Round 2, will be excluded and may be replaced by a substitute player if one is available. The substitute will play their Round 2 game as soon as possible on the day of Round 2 and play their Round 1 game on the rest day.

In a Rapid & Blitz event:

- A player who does not arrive in time to play will not be permitted to play in the Rapid portion and may be replaced by a substitute if one is available. The original player may play in the Blitz portion if they arrive in time to do so.
- The prize money will be split equally between the two players and the Tour player will be awarded half of the Tour points for the combined score.

9. Player Taken Ill During Event

If a player is taken ill during an event and cannot complete it, their results will stand if they have completed half the games, but shall otherwise be annulled. For this purpose, the Rapid & Blitz portions of a Rapid & Blitz event will be treated separately, and the Player's Blitz results will only stand if they have completed the first cycle of that event.

If a player is taken ill during the Rapid portion of an event, a substitute may be introduced for the Blitz portion. In that situation the prize money will be split equally between the two players and the Tour player will be awarded half of the Tour points for the combined score.

2025 Grand Chess Tour Tiebreak Regulations

1. Preamble

This document specifies the regulations for tiebreaks and playoffs for all 2025 Grand Chess Tour (GCT) events as well as for circumstances where there is a need to break a tie in Tour Points at the end of the 2025 GCT regular season.

2. Rapid & Blitz Events

- 2.1.** In the event of a tie for first place in any of the 2025 GCT Rapid & Blitz Events, there shall be a playoff amongst all the players involved in the tie.
- 2.2.** The playoff shall take place on the same day and shall commence not less than fifteen minutes after the end of the last game of the final round.
- 2.3.** The players involved in the tie shall initially contest a Rapid match or Blitz Round Robin, with the pairing numbers determined in the following tie-break order, with the player having the best tie-breaks assigned pairing number 1: Most wins, most blacks, direct encounter, drawing of lots.
 - 2.3.1.** Where there are two players in the tie, they shall contest a 2-game Rapid mini-match where the time limit shall be game in 8 minutes with a 3 second increment per move from move 1.
 - 2.3.2.** Where there are three or more players involved in the tie, they shall contest a Blitz Round Robin where the time limit shall be game in 5 minutes with a 2 second increment per move from move 1.
- 2.4.** If there is still a tie for first place after step 2.3.1 or 2.3.2 is completed, the players that remain tied for first place shall contest single "Armageddon" games on a knockout basis as required to split the tie.
 - 2.4.1.** Where the number of players in the remaining tie is not 2, 4 or 8, some players shall receive byes as necessary to reduce the number to 2, 4 or 8 in the next round. The pairings and the byes shall be determined per regulation 2.3.
- 2.5.** In each Armageddon game:
 - 2.5.1.** White shall have 5 minutes, and Black shall have 4 minutes, with a 2 second increment from move 61.
 - 2.5.2.** In the event of a draw Black shall be declared the winner.
 - 2.5.3.** Colours shall be determined by the toss of a coin, conducted by the Event Chief Arbiter. The winner of the toss shall have choice of colour.
- 2.6.** The playoff shall determine the winner of the Rapid & Blitz event.

\$5,000 of the prize money for first place shall be awarded to the winner. The balance of the prize money for first place as well as the prize money for all the other places of players involved in the original tie shall be shared equally amongst all those players, including the winner.

- 2.7.** The playoff shall not affect the distribution of event Tour Points, which shall be divided evenly amongst all players involved in the tie for first place.
- 2.8.** Where there is a tie for any position other than first place in an event, both the event prize money and the event Tour Points shall be divided equally amongst all the tied players.

3. Classical Events

- 3.1.** In the event of a tie for first place in any of the 2025 GCT Classical event, there shall be a playoff amongst all the players involved in the tie.
- 3.2.** The playoff shall take place on the same day and shall commence not less than fifteen minutes after the end of the last game of the final round.
- 3.3.** The players in the tie shall initially contest a Rapid match or Blitz Round Robin, with the pairing numbers determined in the following tie-break order, with the player having the best tie-breaks assigned pairing number 1: Most wins, most blacks, direct encounter, Sonneborn-Berger, drawing of lots.
 - 3.3.1.** Where there are two players in the tie, they shall contest a 2-game Rapid mini-match where the time limit shall be game in 10 minutes with a 5 second increment per move from move 1.
 - 3.3.2.** Where there are three or more players involved in the tie, they shall contest a Blitz Round Robin where the time limit shall be game in 5 minutes with a 2 second increment per move from move 1.
- 3.4.** If there is still a tie for first place after step 3.3.1 or 3.3.2 is completed, the players that remain tied for first place shall contest single "Armageddon" games on a knockout basis as required to split the tie.
 - 3.4.1.** Where the number of players in the remaining tie is not 2, 4 or 8, some players shall receive byes as necessary to reduce the number to 2, 4 or 8 in the next round. The pairings and the byes shall be determined per regulation 3.3.
- 3.5.** In each Armageddon game:
 - 3.5.1.** White shall have 5 minutes, and Black shall have 4 minutes, with a 2 second increment from move 61.
 - 3.5.2.** In the event of a draw Black shall be declared the winner.
 - 3.5.3.** Colours shall be determined by the toss of a coin, conducted by the Event Chief Arbiter. The winner of the toss shall have the choice of colour.
- 3.6.** The playoff shall determine the winner of the Classical Event.

\$10,000 of the prize money for first place shall be awarded to the winner. The balance of the prize money for first place as well as the prize money for all the other places of players involved in the original tie shall be shared equally amongst all those players, including the winner.

- 3.7.** The playoff shall not affect the distribution of event Tour Points, which shall be divided evenly amongst all players involved in the tie for first place.
- 3.8.** Where there is a tie for any position other than first place in an event, both the event prize money and the event Tour Points shall be divided equally amongst all the tied players.

4. Grand Chess Tour Standings

- 4.1.** If there is a tie for fourth and fifth places in the overall standings at the end of the 2025 GCT regular season, the tie shall be broken by the playoff procedure described below involving everyone in the tie.
- 4.2.** The playoff shall determine the players in the first four places for qualification to the 2025 GCT Finals. If at any point in the playoffs the first four places are determined without the possibility of change, then the playoffs will end.
- 4.3.** The playoff shall be conducted on the day immediately following the end of the last scheduled round, which day shall be held as a dedicated reserve day to cater for the possibility of playoffs.
- 4.4.** If at any stage there are only two players in a remaining tie, they shall contest a 2-game mini-match at the relevant time limit specified below.
- 4.5.** The players in the tie shall initially contest a Rapid Round Robin, with the pairing numbers determined by drawing of lots. The time limit shall be game in 15 minutes with a 10 second increment per move from move 1.
- 4.6.** If there is still a tie or ties after the Rapid Round Robin is completed, the players in the remaining tie shall contest a further Rapid Round Robin at the above time limit.
 - 4.6.1.** If all the players in the second Round Robin are the same as in the first Round Robin, then the second Round Robin shall take place with colours reversed. Otherwise, new pairing numbers determined by drawing of lots will be used.
- 4.7.** If there is still a tie or ties after the second Round Robin is completed, the players in the remaining tie shall contest a Blitz Round Robin, with the pairing numbers determined by drawing of lots. The time limit shall be game in 5 minutes with a 2 second increment per move from move 1.
- 4.8.** If there is still a tie after the Blitz Round Robin is completed, further Blitz Round Robins shall take place with the players still in the remaining tie(s), subject to the provisions of Regulation 4.9 below.
 - 4.8.1.** Where there have been an odd number of Round Robins and all the players are the same as in the previous Round Robin, the next Round Robin shall take place with colours reversed. Otherwise, new pairing numbers determined by lot will be used.

- 4.9.** If any tie remains unresolved after four Round Robins have been held (two Rapid and two Blitz), the GCT Chief Arbiter (or in their absence the GCT Deputy Chief Arbiter) shall be empowered, after consulting with the players, to direct that the tie be resolved by other means.

5. Grand Finals Matches

- 5.1.** In the event of a tie in any of the matches, there shall be a playoff, which shall take place according to the schedule.
- 5.2.** The players shall contest a 2-game Rapid mini-match as follows:
- 5.2.1.** Colours for game 1 shall be determined by the drawing of lots and reversed for game 2.
 - 5.2.2.** The time control shall be game in 8 minutes with a 3 second increment per move from move 1.
- 5.3.** If there is still a tie after the 2-game Rapid mini-match, the players shall contest a single Armageddon game as follows:
- 5.3.1.** White shall have 5 minutes, and Black shall have 4 minutes, with a 2 second increment from move 61.
 - 5.3.2.** In the event of a draw Black shall be declared the winner.
 - 5.3.3.** Colours shall be determined by the toss of a coin, conducted by the Event Chief Arbiter. The winner of the toss shall have the choice of colour.