

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL CONSTITUTION**

**Approved by the coaches March 7, 2014**

### **5.3 CHESS ASSOCIATION**

#### **Part 1 – Introduction and Eligibility**

A. The middle school team chess championship shall be determined by a tournament consisting of qualifying middle schools. Except as otherwise noted, a school qualifies for the state tournament based on its performance at its corresponding regional tournament.

B. All members of a team must be properly recognized students in grades 6th through 8th within the boundaries of the middle school being represented. Transfers from other schools are eligible to play in state competition if they are in attendance prior to February 1. Eligibility of a team member shall not be affected by his/her playing in other tournaments. A student from an eligible feeder elementary school may play up, the coach must do this request in writing two weeks before the tournament start date. In the event the player from the feeder school does not attend the participating middle school, all awards and titles will be forfeited.

#### **Part 2 – State and Regional Tournament Rules**

A. The most recent edition of the “U.S. Chess Federation’s Official Rules of Chess” and all official USCF updates apply at the state team tournament and at the regional tournaments for detailed playing rules not covered herein. The State or Regional Director is encouraged to appoint a separate Tournament Director (TD) to pair the teams and to ensure that the tournament complies with USCF rules. TD is not required to be a certified USCF director.

B. All tournaments shall be team tournaments in which players of similar rank play each other. Pairings shall be based on match points and shall follow USCF tournament pairing procedures per USCF Rule 31. Membership in the USCF shall not be required of any participant.

C. Middle teams shall consist of five players and a substitute. Prior to round one, players of each team shall be ranked by their coach in the order of their chess proficiency. The most expert player shall be ranked board one, the next-best shall be board two, etc. The substitute is the lowest ranked player. The TD may override the coach’s board order for good reason. A coach may, at his/her discretion, make one substitution per round with all team members playing in order of proficiency.

D. The TD shall pair using the best available information from previous year results to rank the school teams in order of playing strength. These rankings shall be used as the basis for the pairings. Any team that did not participate in the previous year will be set at the bottom of the pairings in a random order.

E. A match being a contest between two teams, the winner shall be the team with the

most total individual scores for the match. Team(s) with the highest match score(s) shall be declared the winner. Tie breaks shall not in any way affect the match points other than to determine the relative standing of teams.

### **Part 3 – Regional Tournaments and the State Tourney**

#### **A. Regional Tournaments**

1. Each Regional Director shall complete the regional tournament by a date falling between the second week of January and three weeks before the state team tournament. The Regional Director shall make a reasonable effort to invite all middle schools in his/her region.
2. A Regional Director may schedule the style of team tournament that may be best suited to that region (time control, number of rounds, pairings, tie breaks, awards, a maximum registration fee of \$30 per school, etc) as long as the tourney is otherwise consistent with the rules in this constitution.
3. The coaches of the participating teams shall elect the Regional Director at their regional tournaments, one vote per school in the event no one runs for Regional Director, the State Director will appoint one.

#### **B. State Team Tournament**

1. Any school that finishes in the top half of the field at its regional tourney is eligible to participate in the middle state team tournament. If an odd number of teams participate in the regional tourney, the top half plus one is eligible. If a school fails to confirm its attendance to the state tourney at least two weeks in advance of the tourney, the State Director may disqualify the school. The registration fee shall be \$30 per school payable as instructed by the State Director.
2. In cases where there are not representative teams from each region, the State Director in consultation with the Regional Directors, shall invite third-place team(s) and, if necessary, fourth-place team(s).
3. The State Director may invite an additional school based on performance at the regional tournaments so that an even number of teams participate. In addition, the State Director, in consultation with the Regional Directors, may invite a total of two additional middle school competitors in New Mexico to compete for the state championship. Schools that did not participate in a regional tourney are eligible only after the pool of regional participants has been exhausted.
4. The state tourney format shall be as follows:
  - a. If there are four or fewer teams, the championship will be determined by a round robin.
  - b. If there are five or six teams, the championship will be determined by a

three round Swiss-paired tourney.

c. If there are seven or more teams, the championship will be determined by a four round Swiss-paired tourney, unless there is a clear winner after round three and approved by a vote from the present coaches. This allows additional travel time for schools having to travel.

d. The time control at the state tourney shall be G/45 minutes and 5 seconds time delay.

e. Tie-breakers for each state team tournament shall be in sequential order:

a) Total game points

b) Two or more teams tied for first in match points, a 5 minute speed play off will be done between the tying teams. If another tie occurs a 3 minute speed play off will be done. If another tie occurs a 1 minute speed play off will be done. If another tie occurs tying teams will be declared co-champions.

5. The state championships will be held simultaneously at the same location in the greater Albuquerque area.

C. The State Director for the succeeding year shall be elected annually by the coaches of the NMAA qualified teams participating at the current year's state tournament, one vote per school.

D. The State Director shall purchase through the NMAA State Championship trophies. He/she shall purchase other awards as he/she deems appropriate.

E. The state team tournament should be held during the spring semester; however, the state team tournament shall not be held on the same weekend as the National Middle School Championships or Easter. The State Director shall poll prospective schools before setting the tourney date.

#### **Part 4. Procedural Matters**

A. Appeals.

1. Initial Appeal. A decision of a TD, Regional Director, or State Director may be appealed to the Appeals Committee. USCF Rule 21 I, Appeals Committee, shall guide the proceedings of the Appeals Committee. If possible, the Appeals Committee shall be made up of three coaches whose teams are unlikely to be affected by the decision.

2. Secondary Appeal. If aggrieved by the determination of the Appeals Committee, the student and/or school shall have a right to appeal that decision. Non-technical appeals (i.e., eligibility, deportment, etc.) are to be initiated by a simple letter to the NMAA from the aggrieved school. The letter shall request that the decision be reviewed by the Review Board, and such letters must be submitted within five (5) days of the incident in question. If such a letter of request is postmarked within five (5) days after the incident, then it shall be considered timely. Failure to appeal within the time specified constitutes a

waiver of any right of appeal. Technical appeals are made to the USCF in accordance with USCF Rule 21 L, Appeal to USCF.

3. New Evidence. New evidence will not be allowed unless it was not in existence at the time of the decision by the member organization. Due diligence is assumed to be exercised in the discovery process by the contemporaneous tournament appellate committee.

## B. Rules Changes

1. This constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the coaches of the participating NMAA teams at the state team tournament, one vote for each school. The State Director shall guide the procedure and vote only in case of a tie. If the State Director happens to be the sole coach of a given school present at the state event, then the State Director may vote in his/her capacity as the coach of that school. Each Regional Director shall encourage discussion of proposed amendment changes at the regional tournament. The State Director shall provide copies of the amended constitution no later than the end of the corresponding school year.

2. Changes to these rules may be made in the month preceding the state or a regional tournament if there is unanimous consent from those schools that are directly affected. Such changes shall not represent amendments to the constitution. Tournament to be held to "during spring semester" (formerly between last Thursday in March & second Saturday in April.)