

# **CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION**

## **League, Fenland and Team 550 rule changes, 2016**

This is an explanatory note on the extensive rule changes agreed by the 2016 AGM. It is ten years since the rules were last reviewed: much has changed since then and we need also to consider whether our rules meet our current needs. The Fenland competitions have been revamped in order to revitalise them. The main changes are summarised below.

### **Bi-annual gradings**

We have used the summer grades for all purposes during the season, both to decide eligibility (in meeting the 550 grading limit for the Team 550, for example) and playing in order of strength. The new rule 20 provides for the January gradings to be used for playing in order of strength (subject to a 15 point tolerance) one week after publication of the January list.

For the purposes of eligibility (Team 550 and Fenland 550 grading limits) the summer grades will continue to be used throughout the year, to avoid the possibility of breaking up a team whose grades have increased.

### **Fischer time controls**

Where digital clocks are available the Fischer time limit of 70 moves plus a 15 second increment from move 1 will be used. This is for the whole game: there is no intermediate time control.

This applies to all competitions. You will soon get used to it. It avoids the problems and disputes when players are down to the last few minutes of the final time control. Where digital clocks are not available analogue clocks will be used with the old time control of 36 moves in 75 minutes and 15 minutes to finish. In both cases players do not need to keep score if they have less than five minutes left.

### **Eligibility**

The rule on allowing players to play for a higher team on other than the bottom two boards without affecting their eligibility for their usual team has been slightly relaxed. Three occasions are now allowed.

However this rule will be strictly enforced, rather than waived if the opposition agree. This is because whilst the opposition may be content, other teams' League placings could be affected.

### **Fenland Knockout**

With just six entries (the first division clubs) last year it is clear that the competition has lost its appeal for lower-graded sides. We now have two competitions: an Open and a 550Plate, which operates like the Team 550 in terms of grading limit.

Players may play for both an Open team and a 550 team (but not for two Open teams or two 550 teams).

The old Plate competition for first round losers has been discontinued. We will probably use the old Plate trophy for the Fenland 550 competition, hence the (slightly clumsy) 550Plate designation.

### **Re-arranged matches**

To avoid postponed matches not being rearranged and sometimes defaulted at the end of the season, clubs should re-arrange the fixture within two weeks and make every effort to play it within six weeks of the postponement. This may on occasion require some players to play more than one match in a particular week, but this is usually better than having a fixture backlog at the end of the season.