

FIDE Qualification Commission

Council Meeting Minutes, 14-15 March 2020

In attendance: Nick Faulks (BER), Werner Stubenvoll (AUT), Alex Holowczak (ENG), Walter Brown (USA), Ilya Filippov (RUS), Casto Abundo (PHI) periodically (via the Internet); Sabrina de San Vicente (URU) periodically (via the Internet)

Apologies: Gunther van den Bergh (RSA)

1. Coronavirus Issues

The meeting discussed the various emails received regarding the ongoing coronavirus, and the issues this has caused with regard to tournaments around the world. A draft statement written in advance was approved by the meeting for publication on the FIDE website, and to be sent to all FIDE Federations.

2. Chairman's Report from the FIDE Congress at Abu Dhabi

Nick Faulks gave a brief summary of the recent congress at the FIDE Congress in Abu Dhabi.

3. Review of QC Regulations

QC considered various sets of regulations and made amendments to them, to be reported for Council. In addition, it considered other submissions received, which are commented on below.

(a) Rating

<https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B022017>

- Results of the QC Survey and amendments to the 1600/2200 rule
The results of the survey were presented to the QC Council meeting. AH and NF to send the results to QC Council, and the full Council will have a free vote on the option they prefer. This will then be included in the proposed regulations.
- Limiting the use of the 400-point rule
There are reported abuses of players playing very weak players to manipulate their rating positively. QC will propose that the 400-point rule can only be applied once per tournament, in order to be consistent with the equivalent rule in the title regulations.
- Writing guidelines for matches (including limiting their length)
There have been reports of private matches being rating abuses to get a rating over a threshold for a title application. AH to ask Elista for a list of matches that were rated in 2019, to decide what to do about this.
- Time control at move 40
QC agreed with a proposal that this should be removed, and it has been included in the regulations.
- Rounding away from zero

QC received comments about the regulations saying that 0.5 should be rounded up, when what it should say to reflect current practice is that 0.5 should be rounded away from zero, to cater for negative rating changes. QC made this amendment in its regulations.

(b) Rapid and Blitz Rating <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B02RBRegulations>

- Rapid and Blitz ratings for players with low activity
QC has received a number of comments and suggested fixes for this. The two suggestions received were that: (1) A player's Rapid or Blitz rating should be raised to their Standard rating less an arbitrary number of rating points, e.g. 300 (2) A player loses their Rapid and/or Blitz rating after they become inactive, and then have to earn their rating again as if they were a new player. This will use their Standard rating as the basis for the calculation of their new rating. QC preferred the second approach, albeit only applied to players who were juniors the last time they played Rapid or Blitz (as defined in the k-factor rules) given junior players tend to display the problem. In addition, it will only apply to players who have a Standard rating. QC acknowledged that in the short-term, this will lead to some strange practices, but going forward it will help to solve the problem.
- K-factors for Rapid and Blitz to be changed from 20
QC will ask Jeff Sonas to recommend k-values for Rapid and Blitz.
- Limiting the use of the 735-point rule
QC thinks this is unnecessary given there is meant to be a 735-point rule rather than a 400-point rule as in Standard chess.
- Requiring players above a certain rating/ranking to play in a National, Continental or World Championship to retain active status
QC believes that this is unnecessary given the 735-point rule, which has hitherto not been enforced
- Chess960
QC had received no reports of tournaments being submitted, and there is limited anecdotal evidence that much Chess960 is being played; in contrast to Rapid and Blitz where there was significant activity before the lists were launched. However, the games that have been played have normally been Rapid games. QC will launch a new Chess960 rating list to generate result submission. Players will start with their Rapid ratings, and then their Standard ratings if they have no Rapid rating.

(c) Titles <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B01Regulations2017>

Including Direct Titles <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B01DirectTitles2017>

- Explicit inclusion of Schiller Tournaments
NF has approved a lot of Schiller Tournaments where he has given permission for them to be organised for title norms. The wider question of Scheveningen tournaments was considered; a Schiller being a Scheveningen with more than two teams. QC will add Scheveningen and Schiller tournaments to the regulations.
- National Championship exemptions

The wider issue of why foreigners are required for title norms was considered, but even though QC was sceptical that this was necessary in the modern world, it was felt that changing this would be too radical. There is significant difficulty in identifying a "National Championship", particularly with team tournaments where the lower divisions become increasingly regionalised. QC feels it requires more information regarding National Leagues, and will produce a form requesting Federations to tell us the format of their national league to aid any future regulations.

- The 20 foreign player rule
QC received a number of questions about this rule. QC is minded to add to the existing rule to make this less open for abuse, the player does not count as one of the 20 players unless the player plays in every round except one, except for an exemption for winning by forfeit or getting a pairing-allocated bye. This will also apply to the corresponding 10 titled players and 3 different foreign federations.
- Explicitly requiring one individual Swiss system tournament
QC agrees with this proposal, and will add it to its regulations.
- Expansion of Direct Titles
WB was asked to provide a list of information that Chief Arbiters are required to submit for the purpose of Direct Titles.
QC received a submission from the Management Board about expansion of Direct Titles to all affiliated organisations. This proposal was discussed, and NF will respond.
- Requirement for IT3 form and cross-table to be submitted
QC thinks we do not need these forms, but we don't think we need them because we can get the information from other FIDE sources. AH to ask the Arbiters Commission if they need the IT3 form.
- Permitting 3 rounds per day with a 3-hour playing session
QC received this independent submission, and does not think it is appropriate to do that at this stage until the review of changing the rating limits for 2 and 3 hour games is complete.
- Old title norms before 2005
QC had significant difficulty in finding out the regulations and verifying the tournament existed. QC is minded to keep this restriction. This notwithstanding, QC will permit old title applications based on direct titles from the Olympiad.
- Meeting rating thresholds before 2005
The FIDE Presidential Board added this to the title norms before 2005, but QC is minded to recommend that the current Council changes this rule.
- 7-round norms
The proposal was received as an independent submission, based on the European Senior Team Championship not counting as a Continental Team Championship. There was a feeling that rather than have exemptions for 7-round norms and 9-round norms normally, the exemptions should be removed and the number of rounds for a norm lowered from 9 rounds to 7 rounds. QC would like to keep the current arrangements.

- Women's Titles
The London Chess Conference on the topic of women's chess discussed the continued existence of women's titles. NF will consult with the Women's Commission about the issue in general. The regulations do not say that women's titles are for women only, and QC will add this to the regulations.
- Mandating PGN files for all norm tournaments
QC received this submission from the Fair Play Commission. QC does not think this is viable for large Swiss or Team tournaments. QC does think this is viable for Individual Round Robins, Schiller and Scheveningen tournaments, and so will add this to the regulations. QC will make the existing regulation 1.93 apply to Swiss and Team tournaments.
- Mandating retention of scoresheets for 36 months
QC received this submission from the Fair Play Commission. QC thinks that this would be better-placed in the Anti-Cheating Regulations.
- Mandating photographs, or requesting video submissions from Round Robins and video submission
QC does not think that these things would be practical to be added to a title application, and that it would need to take legal advice on whether or not this can be done. In addition, it was felt that if these are required to aid potential future Anti-Cheating investigations, then this would be better if it were part of the Anti-Cheating Regulations.

(d) Transfer <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B042018>

QC made amendments to these regulations in 2019 and had no other amendments to make. No submissions for changes to these regulations were received.

4. Other Regulations impacting on QC

(a) Licensing <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B032015>

QC reaffirms its view that it should have authority over the Licensing Regulations, given that they are closely aligned with the Transfer Regulations.

(b) Financial <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/FinancialRegulations>

It was noted that QC title applications have a surcharge for title applications submitted at less than 30 days notice, but the financial regulations do the same at 60 days notice. QC was of the opinion that the Financial Regulations should be amended to 30 days.

(c) Regulations for Competitions https://handbook.fide.com/files/handbook/Competition_Rules.pdf

QC went through these regulations to search for inconsistencies between these regulations and its own regulations in order to bring the regulations into line. AH will advise the Rules Commission about the way it is handling 6.7(4), and ask about how it expects QC to enforce all of the regulations in this document.

(d) Technical Commission <https://handbook.fide.com/files/handbook/C02Standards.pdf>

AH to speak to Technical Commission about Article 11, which purports to apply to FIDE-rated events, but is not enforced by QC because it is unenforceable.

5. Other Business

(a) QC website

QC has a draft website, and created a list of things to be added to the website. AH will send this to Elista for actioning.

(b) FIDE rating server improvements for national rating officers

QC had been invited to provide a list of changes that it would like to see to the FRS, and other suggestions we'd received, and provided a list.

(c) Players not being prepared to play players from other Federations

QC discussed the different treatment of tournaments where players refuse to play players from different Federations, and the different way that arbiters have treated this around the world in different Open and FIDE tournaments and how the handling of this complies with 1.42g of the title norm regulations. QC requests that Council provides guidance or a statement as to how arbiters and organisers should handle these cases in future.