

Proposal for a New Format & Rules for WCCI

By Marco Guida

After discussions on the topic of the future of WCCI that took place in the past couple of years among WCCI Committee members and national Delegates, during the last WFCC Meeting in Alba Iulia the following resolution has been voted:

“Do you agree to change the format and rules of WCCI starting with the next 2025-27 cycle?”

As the vast majority of Delegates voted “YES”, myself as the WCCI Spokesman, Narayan Shankar Ram and Harry Fougiaxis, with the support of the WCCI and Album Committees, have devised and examined various alternatives. Two joint meetings of the WCCI and Album Committees, with the participation of the WFCC President, were held last November 12th, 2025 and April 15th, 2026, finally identifying two options as the most viable ones and agreeing, for each of them, on a draft set of General Rules

Around these two options the attached complete written proposal have been prepared, aiming to a final vote and decision by Delegates during the next WCCC in Magdeburg, on time to start the next cycle (2025-27) according to a new format and new general rules.

These two options are named in the following as:

- Option 1: WCCI by product of FIDE Album
- Option 2: WCCI / FIDE Album Dual Track

In the following:

- The two options are briefly described in their most important elements, highlighting for each of them the main Pros and Cons.
- A Comparison Table summarizes the main common features and differences of the two options.
- For each of the two options, a draft of detailed General Rules have been compiled.

Option 1: WCCI by product of FIDE Album

Assign the WCCI title once every 3 years based on the outcome of the FIDE Album evaluation process for the same 3-years period.

Main pillars of the proposal:

- ✓ **Timeline.** The same as FIDE Album process, with WCCI titles for a given 3-years period (e.g. 2025-27) assigned once the FIDE Album process is completed (i.e. Dec 2029). **NOTE:** the first run of the new WCCI process (WCCI 2025-27) will assign the titles with approx. 4.5 years gap vs. last WCCI (WCCI 2022-24 titles have been assigned in July 2025; WCCI titles for 2025-27 will be assigned Dec-2029); however, next WCCI titles will be assigned with a regular 3-years gaps vs. previous ones.
- ✓ **Sections.** The same as the FIDE Album, at **Section-level** only (i.e. one title for Helpmates; one title for Fairies). If a Composer have submitted entries in more than one Sub-section, all his entries will be taken into account together to calculate his score / ranking.
- ✓ **Human Resources.** Completely shared with FIDE Album process (the same set of Judges and Directors).
- ✓ **Composers.** We are aware that some composers do not like the idea itself of WCCI titles; while submitting entries for FIDE Album, each Composer NOT willing to compete for WCCI titles shall state that explicitly. Participation of deceased Composers is allowed according to the same rules as per today (currently the same rules apply to both WCCI and FIDE Album).
- ✓ **Entries.** The rules for assigning entries to the relevant 3-years period will remain the same as per today (currently the same rules apply to both WCCI and FIDE Album). Additionally, however, for the WCCI ranking only entries satisfying the following **additional requirements** will be considered: only single-author compositions are considered; a minimum of 4 entries should be submitted to participate in the WCCI.
- ✓ **Criteria.** The sum of the scores of the top 4 entries as they result from the FIDE Album evaluation. In case of Tie the current rules of WCCI will apply.

Main Pros are:

- ✓ Every 3 years, as it currently is.
- ✓ Aligned to the same set of Sections as per FIDE Album
- ✓ Efficient in terms of human resources: no different groups of judges; no different director(s).
- ✓ It does not force composers to select their supposedly best 6 entries (something that adds a certain degree of randomness on top of the process).
- ✓ Very easy to execute.
- ✓ As in the current WCCI process, it considers only the top-4 entries: easy for Composers to accept the new rules.
- ✓ A very little additional workload for Sections' Directors to calculate and report the results of WCCI for their respective Sections.

Main Cons are:

- ✓ The title for a given 3-years period will be assigned with greater delay vs. the end of the period, if compared with current process (approx. 2 years after the end of the relevant period instead of 6-8 months).
- ✓ WCCI titles will be assigned with assessment by 3 judges only (currently they are 5 in each Section).

Option 2: WCCI / FIDE Album Dual-Track

Keep WCCI as a separate competition, but integrate it into the FIDE Album process:

Composers shall send their **6 entries for WCCI** and the other entries for FIDE Album in two separate files, at the same time. WCCI entries will be evaluated first (Fast-track) and then judges will continue evaluating the remaining entries for FIDE Album purposes with the usual timing.

Main pillars of the proposal:

- ✓ **Timeline.** The same as today, with WCCI titles for a given 3-years period (e.g. 2025-27) assigned approx. 6-8 months after the end of the period (e.g. July 2028).
- ✓ **Sections.** The same as today and as for the FIDE Album, at **Section-level** only (i.e. one title for Helpmates; one title for Fairies). If a Composer submits entries in more than one Sub-section, all his entries will be taken into account together to calculate his score / ranking.
- ✓ **Human Resources.** Shared with FIDE Album process: **1 Director** per Section and **3 Judges** (the same 3 judges in charge of FIDE Album); the Director will act as 3rd judge (or will be in charge of finding a 3rd judge) to evaluate entries by the judges themselves. **NOTE:** the recruitment of judges will be undertaken jointly by FIDE Album and WCCI Spokesman, with obligation for Judges and Directors to run both WCCI and FIDE Album processes for the respective Sections.
- ✓ **Composers.** There will be almost no change vs. current practice for Composers participating to WCCI. Participation of deceased Composers is allowed according to the same rules as per today (currently the same rules apply to both WCCI and FIDE Album).
- ✓ **Entries.** The rules for assigning entries to the relevant 3-years period will remain the same as per today (currently the same rules apply to both WCCI and FIDE Album). For WCCI only single-author entries will be allowed; at least 4 entries should be submitted to participate in WCCI.
- ✓ **Criteria.** The sum of the scores of the top 4 entries as they result from the sum of the scores by the 3 judges. In case of Tie current WCCI rules will apply.

Main Pros are:

- ✓ WCCI results will be available early (6-8 months after the end of the period)
- ✓ Aligned to the same set of Sections as per FIDE Album
- ✓ Efficient in terms of human resources: no different groups of judges; no different director(s).
- ✓ The Task of the single WCCI Director in the current format will be taken over (and distributed) to 8 Section Directors, making the WCCI-related workload manageable.
- ✓ Very little changes for Composers vs. current WCCI process
- ✓ Problems scoring less than 8 points in the WCCI Fast-track will not be evaluated again (same set of judges).

Main Cons are:

- ✓ WCCI titles will be assigned with assessment by 3 judges only.
- ✓ Risk to make recruitment of Judges for the FIDE Album more difficult:
 - Candidate FIDE Album judges might not be open to evaluate also for WCCI (they do not like the competition)
 - Candidate judges might be open to evaluate a limited set of problems in just 3 months, but not to evaluate a much larger set of entries as for FIDE Album.
 - Candidate judges might be open to evaluate the full set of FIDE Album over a long period of time, but not to work under strong time pressure to evaluate WCCI entries.
- ✓ Directors will have additional duties and tasks to meet WCCI needs (eg. to merge and number entries in two different files for each author, to prepare the Tables with WCCI ranking and the final WCCI report).

Summary of Main similarities and differences of the two Options

OPTIONS COMPARISON	WCCI by-product of FA	Dual Track WCCI/FA
Sections	8 Sections; the same as FA	
Directors	8 Directors, one for each Section; the same as FA	
Judges	Reduced Judging Panel: 3 Judges for each Section (the same as FA)	
Submission of Entries	A minimum of 4 single-author entries required	
FA Album points	No 2nd chance to get FA points for WCCI entries with score <8	
Announcement & Submission Timeline (ex. 2025-27)	Every 3 Years; WCCI and FA shall have the same timeline (e.g. Announcement Fall 2027; Submission Deadline Feb-March 2028)	
World Champion Timeline (ex. 2025-27)	WC Title assigned later, 2 yrs after 3-yrs period (e.g. end of 2029)	WC announcement earlier, 6-8 months after (e.g. Summer 2028)
Submission of Entries	Single file (all FA entries; no pre-selection) Composers NOT willing to compete for WCCI shall state that	2 files (6 pre-selected for WCCI; all others for FA)
Ranking criteria	Sum of total scores of top-4 entries (across all FA entries)	Sum of total scores of top-4 entries (among the 6 pre-selected)
Composers' Viewpoint	No need to pre-select 6 WCCI entries More changes vs. current WCCI practice No change vs. current FA practice	Pre-section + earlier submission of the FA set No Changes vs. current WCCI practice More changes vs. current FA practice
Human Resources - FA Directors	Minimum extra-effort	More extra-effort (e.g. indexing from 2 files)
Human Resources - FA Judges	No Overhead	Time pressure for Fast Track WCCI eval.
Overall execution	Very easy to execute; max. process efficiency	Time pressure on both Composers & Judges; more workload for Directors

WCCI – DRAFT GENERAL RULES

Option 1: WCCI by product of FIDE Album

1. The WCCI is organized with the authority of the WFCC and in close coordination with the FIDE Album. The championship should be announced in advance and it is open to all composers from all Countries.
2. The WCCI includes the following sections: a) Twomovers, b) Threemovers, c) Moremovers, d) Endgame studies, e) Helpmates, f) Selfmates, g) Fairies and h) Retro problems.
3. In each Section the WCCI Spokesman and the FIDE Album Spokesman jointly select 3 judges among eminent composers with judging experience adequate to ensure a sound and fair assessment of the entries submitted, with the restriction that in each Section the judges should be from different Countries. In the case of WCCI Sections that in the FIDE Album are further split into Sub-sections, 3 Judges for each Sub-sections will be selected. Best efforts are applied to select different Judges across Sections, to maximize the number of Countries providing Judges and to achieve a good turnover of Judges across WCCI and FIDE Album cycles, with the restriction that the same person can be selected in a given Section for up to two consecutive cycles. Selected composers will have to agree in writing that they are willing to act as Judges.
4. In each Section the WCCI Spokesman and the FIDE Album Spokesman jointly select one Director that is in charge of coordinating the judging activities and of undertaking all relevant tasks for both WCCI and FIDE Album.
5. All composers with at least 4 entries submitted to and accepted for FIDE Album (with the exclusion of joint compositions and versions created in collaboration with other composer(s)) will automatically participate in WCCI. No separate submission of entries for WCCI is required. If a composer sends entries in more than one FIDE Album Sub-sections, his entries will be evaluated by the respective 3 Judges.
6. All entries will automatically participate in both the WCCI and FIDE Album, unless the composer explicitly declares that his entries should be considered for either WCCI or the FIDE Album only.
7. At the end of the FIDE Album evaluation process, each Section's Director calculates the sum of a composer's 4 best compositions in each Section; if a composer has submitted entries in more than one FIDE Album Sub-sections, his entries across all Sub-sections will contribute to his ranking in the corresponding higher-level WCCI Section. WCCI final results shall be in any case at Section level only. The champion in each Section is the composer with the highest sum of his 4 best compositions. In case of a tie, the highest-ranked composition decides. If they are still the same, the second highest-ranked composition decides, etc. If all 4 best compositions have the same score, composers share places.
8. In his WCCI report, each Section's Director includes a) tables with full results of all participants (total score for each of the 4 best compositions for each composer and individual scores by each judge), b) the four highest-ranked compositions, with eventual comments, of the three winners in each Section, c) the three compositions with the highest scores in each Section, even if they do not belong to the three winners. Official documents (announcement, award and reports) should be written in at least one of the official languages of the FIDE.
9. The Sections' Directors, with the support of the WCCI Spokesman and of the WCCI Supervising Panel as deemed appropriate, decide about any claims and the results are declared final when approved by the WFCC President and published on the WFCC site.
10. The three winners in each Section will be awarded with official Certificates.

WCCI – DRAFT GENERAL RULES

Option 2: WCCI / FIDE Album Dual-Track

1. The WCCI is organized with the authority of the WFCC and in close coordination with the FIDE Album. The championship should be announced in advance and it is open to all composers from all Countries.
2. The WCCI includes the following sections: a) Twomovers, b) Threemovers, c) Moremovers, d) Endgame studies, e) Helpmates, f) Selfmates, g) Fairies and h) Retro problems.
3. In each Section the WCCI Spokesman and the FIDE Album Spokesman jointly select 3 Judges among eminent composers with judging experience adequate to ensure a sound and fair assessment of the entries submitted, with the restriction that in each Section the judges should be from different Countries. In the case of WCCI Sections that in the FIDE Album are further split into Sub-sections, 3 Judges for each Sub-sections will be selected. Each 3-Judges team so selected is in charge of evaluating entries for both WCCI and FIDE Album. Best efforts are applied to select different Judges across Sections, to maximize the number of Countries providing Judges and to achieve a good turnover of Judges across WCCI and FIDE Album cycles, with the restriction that the same person can be selected in a given Section for up to two consecutive cycles. Selected composers will have to agree in writing that they are willing to act as Judges.
4. In each Section the WCCI Spokesman and the FIDE Album Spokesman jointly select one Director that is in charge of coordinating the judging activities and of undertaking all relevant tasks for both WCCI and FIDE Album.
5. Composers send the entries they wish to submit to compete in WCCI (that shall be evaluated with priority by the Judges) at the same time as the remaining entries that they wish to submit to FIDE Album (that shall be evaluated by Judges later), in two separate files. Composers shall NOT include in the FIDE Album file those entries that have already been included in the WCCI file. Schedule and deadlines (for both composers and Judges) for each WCCI and FIDE Album cycle will be defined in the respective official Announcements that will be published in due course.
6. A composer may submit to each WCCI Section no more than 6 and no less than 4 compositions published in the defined 3-years period. For informal tourneys the date of publication of the issue containing the composition is decisive; for formal tourneys the date of appearance of the award is decisive (NB: not the closing date of the tourney). Later corrections or versions could be accepted if they are submitted before the deadline. If the date of publication is in doubt, each Section's Director should ask the composer for evidence. Joint compositions and versions created in collaboration with other composer(s) are not allowed. It is not allowed to submit compositions on behalf of someone else without explicit statement of the other person's consent.
7. Entries must be sent to the respective Section's Directors by email and in PDF format only. In each Section composers have to submit one PDF file, which includes ALL their 4-6 entries to this Section with one composition per page. Composers must have already marked their entries with No. 1 to 6. The compositions should be in diagrams of a uniform size, with the author's name, publication data, any award, stipulation, full solution and a comment if desired. Algebraic notation is to be used. In section D (endgame studies) composers may alternatively submit a PGN file of their entries or both. In section G (Fairies) composers must provide the definitions for the less common fairy elements. Each Section's Director forwards the PDF/PGN files (one PDF/PGN file per composer) to the relevant 3-Judges team, as well as a spreadsheet where they will enter their scores.
8. In the case of WCCI Sections that in FIDE Album are further split in Sub-sections, if the 4-6 entries submitted by a composer belong to more than one Sub-section the Section's Director shall distribute the entries to the relevant Sub-section's judging teams. WCCI final results shall be in any case at Section level only.

9. Using a scale of 0 to 4 including half-points, each Judge will allocate points to all compositions in the Section(s) which he has agreed to judge, except for his own entries and entries that were excluded from the competition on technicalities. Compositions which are sound and not anticipated should receive at least 0.5 points. The Judges must explain their reason(s) for giving a score of 0 points to any composition. In section D, if a study arrives, during the solution, to a position of 7 pieces or less; and especially if it starts with 7 pieces or less, the Judge is advised to base his score on his assessment of the human contribution to the EGTB position, and on the amount of comprehensibility of the study to humans. After completing his work, each Judge will send the spreadsheet with his scores to the respective Section's Director, along with comments regarding errors, very close anticipations, thematic flaws, etc. The Director should distribute these comments to the other Judges together with his own notes on anticipations, cooks, duals, etc. However, no comments regarding constructional weaknesses or possible technical improvements are to be sent to the Judges. Judges may wish to change some of their scores as a result of discussion with their colleagues, but their individual scores should always reflect the true value of the compositions in the view of each Judge. Until results will be published and made final, Judges shall avoid any comments or discussions of the entries with the concerned composers as well as on any public forums.
10. If a composition belongs to a Judge, the Sections' Director shall act as Judge in the evaluation of his entries or, alternatively, find a suitable reserve Judge to evaluate it.
11. If a composition has received zero points from at least one Judge, the Director should inform the other Judges about the reasons for such a decision. In such a case adjustment of points by all Judges is necessary.
12. Each Section's Director is responsible for reviewing the scores received by the Judges and, if he feels it is necessary, he will point out and try to resolve any potential irregularities (e.g. the average score of any one Judge is much higher or much lower than that of the others; or cases where there is a wide disparity - e.g. more than 1.5 - between the Judges' points allocated to a given composition). The Director decides about remarks concerning complete anticipation, legitimate publication data, legality and soundness. Each Section's Director will then send the tables with the results to the WCCI Spokesman and to the 3 members of the Supervising Panel who cannot be participating or judging in any section. The WCCI Spokesman and the members of the Supervising Panel should also point out irregularities and ask the Directors for a resolution.
13. Each Section's Director will calculate the total points gained by each composition. The sum of a composer's 4 best compositions is calculated for his final result. The champion in each section is the composer with the highest sum of his 4 best compositions. In a case of a tie, the highest-ranked composition decides. If they are still the same, the second-ranked composition decides, etc. If all 4 best compositions have the same scores, composers share places.
14. In his WCCI report, each Section's Director includes a) tables with full results of all participants (total score for each composition and individual scores by each judge), b) the four highest-ranked compositions, with eventual comments, of the three winners in each Section, c) the three compositions with the highest scores in each Section, even if they do not belong to the three winners, d) the set of files with the 6 entries submitted by each composer to WCCI to be published on the official WFCC Web Site. Official documents (announcement, award and reports) should be written in at least one of the official languages of the FIDE.
15. The Sections' Directors, with the support of the WCCI Spokesman and of the WCCI Supervising Panel as deemed appropriate, decide about any claims and the results are declared final when approved by the WFCC President and published on the WFCC site.
16. The three winners in each Section will be awarded with official Certificates

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS FOR THE DUAL-TRACK OPTION

For the sake of better understanding of the timing & synchronisation of the WCCI / FIDE Album judging, the following table outlines the overall step-by-step process of the Dual-Track Option:

Step 1	Selection of Album/WCCI Section Directors and Judges	Album & WCCI spokesmen	
Step 2	Announcement of WCCI	WCCI spokesman	Same closing date as the Album
Step 3	Announcement of FIDE Album	Album spokesman	Same closing date as the WCCI
Step 4	Submission of 4-6 WCCI compositions to the Directors	Composers	Entries already numbered 1-6
Step 5	Submission of Album Compositions to the Directors	Composers	Entries without numbering
Step 6	Creation of Global (WCCI + Album) PDF file with global numbering for Judges	Directors	
Step 7	Creation of global spreadsheet(s) (WCCI + Album)	Directors	WCCI entries highlighted
Step 8	Forward of the global PDF files to the section judges	Directors	
Step 9	Judges review / score first the WCCI entries (highlighted)	Judges	Enter scores in the global sheet
Step 10	Directors fill in the scores in the WCCI spreadsheet	Directors	
Step 11	Directors calculate the WCCI results and create reports	Directors	
Step 12	Directors send the WCCI results to the WCCI spokesman	Directors	
Step 13	WCCI spokesman forwards the results to the Panel	WCCI spokesman	
Step 14	WCCI spokesman issues the WCCI results	WCCI spokesman	
Step 15	Judges start reviewing now the remaining Album entries	Judges	
Step 16	Directors fill in the scores in the Album spreadsheet	Directors	
Step 17	Directors send the spreadsheet to the Album spokesman	Directors	
Step 18	Album spokesman issues the Album results	Album spokesman	

Notes

- Steps 4 and 5: Separate files for WCCI and Album. Composers send the PDF files of WCCI and Album simultaneously. Composers are allowed to submit to each Album section a total of (including WCCI entries) 30 compositions or 3 times the number of selected compositions for the album in that section of any prior Album (as per current Album rules).
- Step 5: In Helpmates and Fairies, composers send separate Album files for each Sub-section.
- Step 6: Directors shall produce an integrated PDF file merging WCCI and FIDE Album files received by Composers, with a global numbering of all entries in the merged file (same as current FIDE Album practice). In Helpmates and Fairies, Directors create separate files for each sub-section.
- Step 7: Directors create a global spreadsheet for each Section (in Helpmates and Fairies, separate spreadsheets for each Sub-section) making reference to the global numbering created for each global PDF file. Entries taking part in WCCI will be included in the same order as per numbering given by composers, and clearly highlighted so that judges can easily identify the entries to be evaluated with priority (WCCI fast track).
- Step 14: The WCCI spokesman forward the WCCI spreadsheets to the Album spokesman when the results are declared final.
- Step 18: Album spokesman includes in the album results also the WCCI compositions scoring 8+ points.