

The FIDE Albums: Duties of Directors and Judges

Efficient and smooth conduct of the evaluation phase depends on accurate and punctual work by all concerned, to ensure that each album is ready for publication at the appropriate time.

Please note that no deviation from the instructions below should take place. Exceptions (in rare or extreme cases) should not be implemented without consulting the president of the WFCC or the spokesman of the album committee and getting their approval.

Initial work by the director

In each section composers send via email one PDF file with their entries, in accordance with the instructions published in chess composition magazines and on the WFCC website. In section D (endgame studies) composers may alternatively submit a PGN file or both. The director has to confirm to the composers the safe receipt of their entries. The director must check if the composers have followed the criteria established in the announcement, in terms of proper presentation of their works and maximum number of submitted entries.

The director does not have to print the PDF files that he received. He numbers all the entries by marking the composers' PDF files and he lists them in the spreadsheet that he had received from the spokesman of the album committee. The composers must have already included in their PDF files the WCCI entries qualifying for the album (see next section for details) and of course these compositions count for the composers' quota. The director has to list in the spreadsheet the compositions qualifying from WCCI, even if they will not be evaluated by the album judges.

The director should indicate in the list any duplicate entries, any which appeared in an earlier album, and any which, to his knowledge, were not published within the relevant 3-year 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 should normally be accepted. If the date of publication is in doubt, the director should ask the composer for evidence.

The director will send the composers' PDF files and the spreadsheet to each of the nominated judges via email (or upload to the cloud). He should also send the spreadsheet to the spokesman of the album committee advising the date of the distribution of the entries to the judges.

Judging and selection

Using a scale of 0 to 4 including half-points, each judge will allocate points to the entries in accordance with the guidelines shown in Annex 1. The whole scale should be used, but the very highest scores should not occur too often. The normal score for a composition good enough for publication in a magazine but without any point of real interest is 1 or 1.5 points. A composition known by the judge to be totally anticipated will attract a score of 0. A composition believed to be unsound but not computer-testable should be given a score nonetheless, since it may turn out to be sound after all. A judge who considers a composition to be incorrect should send his claim and analysis to the director together with his score.

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 evaluation of the human

contribution to the EGTB position, and on the amount of comprehensibility of the study to humans.

The judges are not required to print the PDF files. They have to input their scores (and any comments) on the spreadsheet they received. They do not have to mark their comments and scores on the PDF files. Nevertheless they may do so, if they wish.

The director acts as a substitute judge in the case of a composition by one of the judges. If more than one replacement judge is required, the director should consult the spokesman of the album committee or the president of the WFCC, and a suitable judge will be nominated.

WCCT section-winners qualify automatically for the album. Any such composition entered by the composer is judged in the normal way but is included anyway even if the points score falls below the required threshold. No points score is shown in the published album in the case of a WCCT section-winner not submitted by the composer.

The entries to the WCCI with a score of 8 or higher will automatically qualify for the FIDE album, however they must also be submitted by the composers to the Album in order to be published in it and count for points. The WCCI director will advise the director of each album section and the album directors will inform the judges accordingly, who should not give marks to these compositions. Of course the judges may study and enjoy these compositions for their own pleasure if they wish. Album entries that received less than 8 points in the WCCI will be judged like any other entries, whether or not they participated in the WCCI.

After completing his work, each judge will return the spreadsheet with his scores to the director along with comments regarding errors, anticipations, thematic flaws, etc. The director should distribute these comments to the other judges together with his own notes on anticipations, cooks, duals, etc.

It is highly desirable for the director to arrange for an exchange of opinions to take place among the judges, so as to allow for reconsideration of scores by individual judges, particularly in cases where there is a wide disparity (e.g. more than 1.5 points) between the scores allocated to a given composition, or where a single judge's score disproportionately affects the total in comparison with those of the other two judges (e.g. 4+2+2, 1.5+3+3, etc.). The director should identify such cases and ask the judge(s), whose score is not in proportion with that of the others, to provide a clarification. The director should not have already revealed the scores to the judges. After this clarification round, the director should make the scores known to all judges and compositions whose total score would place them just below the threshold for inclusion should be reconsidered. Such discussion may take place in person at a meeting, by post, by email, by means of teleconferencing, or by any other available method.

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.

If the average score of any one judge is much higher or much lower than that of the other two, the director may suggest that the judge in question should adjust his scores accordingly. However, each judge alone decides on his final scores.

It is suggested that the director, in agreement with the judges, should draft a time schedule to be followed during the evaluation phase, and that there should be periodical monitoring of the progress achieved. If a judge does not complete his work by the date prescribed in the schedule, the director should ask the president of the WFCC or the spokesman of the album committee to find a substitute. In the case of any other great difficulties or irregularities in the judging process, the director should also consult the president or the spokesman.

Once the director has received the final scores from all judges, he will sum the points for each composition. Normally all compositions with a total score of 8 points or more are selected for the album. If the number of selected entries in a section is less than 14% of the entries with a total score of 4.5 points or more, the threshold is lowered so that all compositions with 7.5 points or more are selected for the album. In the above calculation, the WCCI compositions automatically qualifying for the album are of course taken into account.

The director should arrange for computer testing of the selected entries where possible. If a dual or similar flaw is found, the judges must be asked to reconsider their scores. The director may contact the composer of an unsound composition in the hope that a quick correction may be possible.

If the director is unsure about the eligibility of a certain composition for the album, he should consult the spokesman of the album committee.

Final work by the director

The director is not required to mark any scores on the PDF-pages of the selected compositions, as the points are already listed in the spreadsheet. The director will extract from the composers' PDF files the pages with the selected compositions and then he will merge them in a single PDF file. The director will send the PDF file with the selected compositions to the spokesman of the album committee (cf. Annex 2 for the email addresses), as well as the relevant list including judges' scores. The PDF file with the selected compositions is not allowed to be presented in public (e.g. on the Internet) before the publication of the album.

For sections D (endgame studies) and H (retros), the list should ideally be accompanied by a computer-file or document with the solutions in album format (see the most recent album for details), but it is recognised that some directors will be unable to produce this. In section G (fairies), definitions of unusual fairy pieces and conditions should also be sent.

In parallel, the director will send to the spokesman of the album committee a list of the selected entries, including the points thereby earned for each composer (1 point for a problem, $5/3 (=1.67)$ points for an endgame study), the points for joint compositions being divided equally between the composers.

Indexes

The editor of the album, in consultation with the president of the WFCC committee, will appoint persons to compile the indexes. If the director or one of the judges is willing to undertake one of these tasks, he should make his offer known to the editor or to the president.

Questions

Questions concerning these instructions or any related matter should be addressed to the spokesman of the album committee or to the president of the WFCC.

Questions concerning the publication of the selected compositions in the album (e.g. about the layout of solutions, definitions of fairy forms, indexing, etc.) should be addressed to the editor.

Suggestions

Anyone with suggestions for ways in which the production of the albums might be improved should get in touch with the editor in the first instance.

Conclusion

It is recognised that the album requires a great deal of work by all the people involved. But the result will be worth it: a fine collection of wonderful chess compositions. Thank you for all your efforts.

ANNEX 1: MEANING OF THE POINTS SCALE

- 4 Outstanding: must be in the Album (I request that the composition is included)
- 3.5 I am sure that the composition should be included
- 3 Very good: ought to be in the Album (I want the composition to be included)
- 2.5 I abstain (I am not sure, but will accept the opinion of other judges)
- 2 Good: could be in the Album (I am not in favor, but will accept the opposite opinion)
- 1.5 I am strongly against the inclusion of this composition
- 1 Mediocre: ought not to be in the Album
- 0.5 I am totally opposed to the inclusion of this composition
- 0 Worthless or completely anticipated: must not be in the Album

ANNEX 2: EMAIL ADDRESSES

President of the WFCC and spokesman of the album committee

Harry Fougiaxis, loyaldragon@gmail.com

Editor

Peter Gvozdjak, peter.gvozdjak@gmail.com

ANNEX 3: TIMETABLE OF THE 2016-2018 ALBUM

Closing date: June 1st, 2019

Submission of entries to the judges: September 1st, 2019

Reports by the directors and announcement of results: April 1st, 2021

Submission of selected entries to the editor: June 1st, 2021

Indexing, typesetting and printing: December 1st, 2022