

Guidelines for directors of rated solving tournaments

Although the rules for rated solving tournaments are clear and easy accessible at the website of WFCC, a lot of tournament directors still violate some rules. Sometimes these mistakes are small and unimportant, but other times they can be very important. Some examples: incorrect studies although already known as incorrect in the database of Harold van der Heijden; too many solutions in H#; points for first moves of orthodox problems other than #2 and endgame studies, sometimes even for problems with a threat; many local and recently published problems, etc. To ensure that all rated tournaments are run under the same conditions, the WFCC solving committee has produced this text with the most essential guidelines. There are no so far unpublished new rules in this text. These guidelines are also to the benefit of the solvers, who can refer to them when they notice an irregularity.

1. Stick to the rules

For starters: take a good look at the latest rules on the website of WFCC (<https://www.wfcc.ch/>). In fact, everything is published there!

2. Announcement

The tournament should be announced and reported to the responsible persons of the WFCC Solving Committee **at least two months beforehand but not at all later than 7 days** before the day of the tournament takes place. This announcement includes all details: dates, venue, program, name of the director, information about the used fairy problems, etc. If no information about the solving tournament is sent at least a week before the tournament starts, the tournament will not be rated and no solving norms will be possible for solvers.

All information about the criteria for acceptability of tournaments at which ratings can be gained and the criteria for gaining norms and titles are covered in the document "Solvers' rating" (<https://www.wfcc.ch/competitions/solving/rating/>).

3. Preparation work of the director

The director is responsible for the selection of the problems: he can do it himself, or let it done by someone else, or he can work in cooperation with other persons. In any case, he has the final responsibility for the selection. For more details about the selection, see number 6.

The director must decide the points' distribution for every problem. For more details, see number 7.

The director must prepare all necessary documents for the solvers: solving sheets, diagrams, solutions, etc.

The use of the Solving Tournament Manager (STM) is highly recommended. In case the director can't use the STM (no computer, no experience with the software, etc.), he should inform the responsible persons of the WFCC Solving Committee in advance.

In case the director would like to experiment (selection of problems, tournament system, number of problems, etc.) he must inform the spokesman of the WFCC Solving Committee in advance. The solving committee will advise as soon as possible if the suggested experiments are acceptable

Recommendations for diagrams and solutions:

Diagrams should show the stipulation in a common form (H#2, S#3, +, = etc.), with the number of white and black pieces and they should be numbered with Arabic numbers (e.g. 1-18 for WCSC type tournaments, not A-R).

Solution sheets should be provided with the sources of the problems (examples: composer, publication, year, distinction, dedication, version, "mirror position", etc.) and at least in one version with Latin letters.

An original problem or study used at a solving tournament is eligible to compete in any composing tournament within the next two years (see article 20 of the "Codex for Chess Composition").

4. The tournament

The rules of the tournament are well covered in the rules for the World (European) Chess Solving Championship (WCSC/ECSC) in chapter 7 to 14 (<https://www.wfcc.ch/1999-2012/wcsc/>).

5. After the tournament

All tournament documentation (name of tournament director, diagrams of problems, solutions, complete list with detailed results per problem, possible complaints, etc.) should be sent to the responsible persons of the WFCC Solving Committee within 5 days (10 days for multiple-locations tournaments) after the end of the competition. In addition the solving sheets have to be kept by the tournament director for at least 4 weeks to enable probing possible issues.

The responsible persons will check and publish these documents as soon as possible.

The rating will automatically be calculated by the STM. Also all the information about category, norms, difficulty of problems, etc. will be provided by the STM.

6. Selection of problems

All the problems and studies must be:

originals;

or published problems at least five years old;

or modified published problems (correction, versions, etc.) at least five years old. Mirroring is not recommended as solvers easily recognise them if they know the original problem;

not be used in previous rated solving tournaments (especially WCSC, ECSC and ISC). Check the website of the WFCC and the Solving Tournament Database.

The director must use common sense in his selection and must avoid problems which could be known by the solvers (well known problems from FIDE-Albums, etc.). A good mix of styles, themes, composers, etc. is advisable.

It is recommendable that at least one problem is quite easy to avoid many possibly frustrated solvers with 0 total points; but the majority of problems shouldn't be too easy to enable a good differentiation of the results for the solvers. On the other hand no problem should be so difficult that chances are very high that no solver can solve it.

All the problems must be computer checked. To ensure correct diagrams it is recommended that diagrams are copied electronically to the problem sheets to avoid errors by manually transferring them, e.g. by using the FEN of a problem's database to create them or by copying picture files of correct diagrams directly from reliable sources.

For solutions of a single problem not more than 10 variations should be necessary to write.

The director must take care with the **selection of studies**:

check in the database of Harold van der Heijden if the study is known to be incorrect; if the director does not has licensed the database he must take contact with the spokesman of the solving committee or ask the help of someone who has the licensed database;

check the study with computer engines;

avoid incomprehensible database lines;

the study should have a clear main line, without obscure side lines, and should not be too long.

Helpmates:

In a WCSC-tournament the maximum for total solutions is 9. In an Open tournament the maximum for total solutions is “number of H# × 3”. For example: in an Open tournament with two helpmates, the maximum for total number of solutions is 6.

In a WCSC tournament there must be a H#2, a H#3 and a longer H#.

Remember: H#1,5 is the same as a H#2; H#2,5 is the same as a H#3, etc.

The director should consider the artistic value of helpmates (examples: thematic link between the phases, avoiding cook-like solutions, etc.)

Moremovers:

In a WCSC tournament there must be at least one #4 and at least one moremover longer than #4.

Selfmates:

In a WCSC tournament there must be a S#2, a S#3 and a longer S#. It is advisable to use a S#4 instead of a very difficult longer S#.

Fairy:

In this context, fairies are problems which are not studies, orthodox problems, helpmates or self-mates. If the director uses fairy problems he must announce the elements at least two months in advance. Examples: “Reflexmate”, “Circe”, “Andernach”, “Nightrider”, “Shortest proof game”, etc.

7. Points' distribution

No points for key moves of orthodox problems (except 2#) and selfmates can be given.

Points can only be given to **full length variations and threats** of problems. Example: in a #5 only variations and threats till the 4th move before the mating move can get points. It is not possible to give points “halfway” of the solution.

For studies only points for **White** moves of the **main** line can be given, **no** points for black moves and moves of side lines! It is not advisable to give 5 points for 1 move only.

8. WFCC Solving Committee

The solving committee will monitor all rated tournaments closely. If necessary, it will inform the tournament directors about any inconsistencies, mistakes or irregularities. It will also advise to avoid these problems in the future.

Contacts

WFCC has created two e-mail-addresses for all matters concerning the solving competitions and the rating.

To directly contact the spokesman of the WFCC Solving Committee (Luc Palmans), use:

Solving@wfcc.ch

To directly contact the responsables of World Solving Cup, rated tournaments, rating (Roland Ott, Axel Steinbrink and Miodrag Mladenović), use:

SolvingTournaments@wfcc.ch