



THE ECU ANNEX FOR ONLINE TOURNAMENTS

Online chess tournaments in Corona-virus times have become immensely popular in the chess community since they enabled us all to keep going with our sport while most of other disciplines were completely stuck along 2020.

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he importance of online chess has grown up so fast and impetuously that FIDE felt as necessary to create a specific set of Regulations aiming to give a proper framework for future FIDE online official competitions. Just one year ago, nobody would have really ever predicted that a set of Regulations for tournament played at the computer would ever be created, but the times compelled us all to new challenges and unprecedented events need unprecedented answers.

FIDE Online Chess Regulations are so now a reality, and ECU wasn't unprepared in this field. ECU board hence approved, in its Jan. 16th session, a specific annex to these Regulations was passed. In general, the philosophy basing the ECU annex is that European Official competitions will apply FIDE Online Regulations (which are binding for FIDE official tournaments, but only recommended for any other online chess competition), with some adjustment required by the need of our events.

This is exactly the content of art. 1 that states: "ECU online competitions apply FIDE Online Chess Regulations except for what is provided in the following articles".

In general, European Championships will hence be regulated by FIDE Online Chess Regulations amended by the annex.

It is very important to mention that art. 10 states "the arbiters shall ensure that the ECU online regulations are observed" in the European online championships so we strongly suggest every arbiter to take a look to them and learn the most important differences. Don't forget that the ECU annex is a part of the Online Arbiter certification programme!

Another crucial point is that ECU online competitions will be played only in the format of "Online Chess with supervision" or "Hybrid chess", while unsupervised chess is not considered valid to this purpose.

About the other points, ECU regulations will be, in general, stricter than FIDE ones, and will prevent the use of specific online tools (auto-promotion, pre-moves, automatic draws...) which are not compliant to FIDE regular Laws of Chess. Although, the Regulations are enough flexible to allow this tool, if really required.

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In summary, the main differences are:

- = The hosting internet platform (the virtual “playing zone”) will be always determined by the ECU board.
- Smart-moves, pre-moves or auto promotion, in general, will not be allowed.
- Idle time for the players, to start the game or to make the move, after which the game is forfeited, will not be allowed.
- Automatic award of threefold repetitions or 50 moves can be prohibited.
- For online supervised games, the default time of a game is equal to the total allotted time.
- In case of a disconnection, the CA has the right to stop the clock or adjust the clock of the player
- Players are not allowed to play from a tablet or a mobile.



- For Hybrid events, the On-site Arbiters will not be appointed by the local organisers but approved by the Chief Organiser and the Chief Arbiter. Furthermore, they will not be allowed to be at the same time On-site Arbiters and representatives of their team/Federation at the playing venue. Their role will also be different since they will not be allowed to impose penalties unless this is approved by the Chief Arbiter.
- The players shall immediately leave the venue once their game is finished.

The Annex also provides specific definitions of cheating and the conditions to pursue it as well as the consequences for violations, specifically in terms of the score, that is described at Art.7:

“The Chief Arbiter shall take fair play decisions as soon as it is possible, to avoid controversies with score revisions. In an individual Swiss tournament, the offender shall be excluded from the final ranking. Each of the offender’s games shall be considered a loss. All games shall be reported as unplayed (excepting the game where the breach was assessed). The opponent’s score will be determined according to the tournament regulations. In the team championships the Chief Arbiter shall take a decision in the best interest of the competition upon consultations with the Organisers. The team of the offending player shall be excluded from the final rankings”.

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While the general Regulations are significantly similar to FIDE ones, and the amendments are just slightly different, the situation changes radically about Fair Play.

ECU annex is consistently different from FIDE Online Regulations, in a stricter way, and, in general, Appendices to FIDE Online Regulations are not applicable to ECU tournaments because they provide procedures and internal working rules of the Commissions which are not consistent to ECU structure.

Going into details, in online supervised chess, ECU provides that the arbiters may always require a player to provide a second viewpoint of their venues (side camera) and that this may happen as mandatory from the beginning and not only in case of a specific request.

As a final remark, we believe that ECU and FIDE competitions will not be that much different since the top-level FIDE tournaments will probably be played according to high standards, comparable to ECU’s ones.

We strongly recommend every arbiter to take a look and read the official regulations available here:
https://arbiters.europechess.org/wp-content/uploads/Documents/Legislation/ECU_online.pdf