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A few thoughts on how to implement the health protocol



With the over-the-board activities gradually resuming organisers and arbiters are taking on new duties and responsibilities.

Cleaning, sanitising, keeping distances are just a few of them.

We would like to share some thoughts from our recent experiences:

- ≡ Before the start of the tournament it is necessary to make a safety and health protocol based on the FIDE- and ECU Protocols, as well as on the local health legislation. You can send a copy of this health protocol to each participant of the tournament before the start of the first round. One person should be responsible for everything which has to do with this protocol. The contact details of a medical doctor must be available.

- ≡ The first thing to remember is that players don't only need to be safe but also to feel safe. If necessary you can post the health protocol in a place where everyone can see it, for example, near the entrance or next to the results' table. However try to prevent that too much players gather together around this place to read the protocol!

- ≡ The temperature of each player has to be checked before entering the playing venue. A player with fever cannot enter the playing venue. A thermal camera can be used. Ask them to write down their names in case this is required by local authorities.

- ≡ Before the start of the first round, announce the most important measures you are going to follow.

- ≡ Before and after each round the chessboards, pieces, clocks, tables and chairs should be cleaned and sanitized. Choose carefully the product you are going to use based on the material that they are made from. Take special care if there are electronic boards.

- ≡ Urge the players to wear their masks at all time, also covering their noses. Remind them constantly to create a good habit. Needless to say that arbiters should pose as an example! Ask everyone to bring their own masks but also have some extra in case they are needed.

- ≡ Cloth masks can be used. Additional benefit of a cloth mask is that it can be washed and used repetitively. If players are using disposable masks, advice them to use another one every day.

- ≡ Place antiseptics solutions in every playing hall preferably near the entrance/exit. Encourage the players to use them as often as possible. Make sure that there is hand soap and disposable towels in the toilets.

- ≡ Gloves should be avoided because they are not washed and can transfer bacteria. They can also give a false sense of security. However, if a player has an allergy or intolerance in the cleaning products and would prefer to not touch the pieces directly you should allow him to do so.

- ≡ Should a player complain of a health issue, try to persuade him/her to see a doctor. Players, especially young ones, may underestimate the symptoms and the situation. If they are not feeling well or have a fever, they cannot be allowed to play and should seek medical help.



The ECU report on how to restart chess can be found on the ECU Website.

Once again this article reflects our personal recommendations on implementing the protocol in a practical way. Also make sure to read carefully the FIDE medical security policy and protocol which can be found on the FIDE Website.

≡ No visitors should be allowed in the playing halls in order to avoid crowding. Politely ask the players to leave when they finish their games. If there are more than one playing halls you should explain to them that they are not allowed to move from one hall to another.

≡ Walking between the tables during the rounds is not allowed. Only necessary displacements are allowed: going to the toilet, fetch drinks. Providing clear direction guides and signs to and from the toilet, exits, bar etc...

≡ An analysing room cannot be used. Analysing should not be allowed.

≡ Regarding food and beverages you can provide packed snacks and bottled water or soda for the players. The use of disposable materials is highly recommended.

≡ When preparing the playing hall remember that the tables should be at a certain distance from each other (minimum one and a half meter). The playing halls should be very well ventilated preferably with windows in opposite sides. In case there are air-conditions make sure that their filters have been cleaned.

≡ The players should be reminded before each round to not shake hands. It is counter-intuitive so chances are that they will forget and you need to remind them often.

≡ After a few rounds players will most probably get tired of the masks and will want to take them off. Make sure to thank them for cooperating and congratulate them for understanding the severity of the matter. It will make them feel good and willing to continue on the same track!

The competition for Arbiters riddle is extended till 31st of August. All the details on ECU Arbiters Council page.