

## **Essex Online Blitz Championships 2020/2021 Rules**

### **Section A: The Competition**

A closed Essex individual online competition organised by the Essex Chess Association (“ECA”) and open to all eligible players with an association with Essex as defined below, to compete for the title of Essex Online Blitz Champion.

All entrants must be an ECF member or Supporter and accept the conditions of entry set out in the ECA’s Playing of Online Chess [Policy](#), which applies to the competition.

All games will be submitted for ECF online blitz rating.

The ECF’s Online Fair Play and Anti-Cheating Rules (“[OFPAC Rules](#)”) apply to the competition. For the purposes of those rules, the Essex Online Championship is a Tier 2 event, as defined in OFPAC Rules section 3 Anti-cheating Measures.

All entrants must have a current active lichess.org playing account and are required to join the [Essex Online](#) “team” on lichess.org, where announcements about the competition will be made. Identities and usernames of players will be published.

Essex Online is free to join for members of clubs affiliated to the ECA. Other eligible players must be individual direct members of the ECA. The membership fee is £5 for adults and £2.50 for junior players aged under 18 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

Controller: Mark Murrell [exonline@virginmedia.com](mailto:exonline@virginmedia.com) | on lichess: [manyhats](#)

The competition shall (subject to entry) take the form of either a Swiss Tournament or Round Robin in one or more sections according to entry over a minimum of 7 rounds on dates announced by the Controller at a rate of all moves in 5 minutes plus 4 second increments from the start (G5/4). The Controller may nominate section Controllers to run and oversee any particular section.

***The 2020/21 Championship will take place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021 commencing at 2:30pm on the lichess.org platform.***

### **Section B: Playing Schedule and pairing**

B.1 Entries close at 7pm on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

B.2 Round 1 will commence at 2:30pm on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021 with rounds timetabled every 25 minutes.

B.3 The pairings for the first round shall be published on the ECA website not earlier than 30 minutes before the scheduled start of play. Pairings for subsequent rounds will be published as soon as is practicable.

B.4 Players shall be seeded firstly according to rating (see below) and secondly alphabetically.

B.5 Automated Swiss pairing by VEGA shall be used for pairings. The Controller may at his discretion avoid pairing family members together.

B.6 Results and Pairings for each round will be published on the ECA website as soon as is practicable.

B.7 Record absence of an opponent by reporting straight away to the section Controller. A player who fails to appear in lichess within 5 minutes of the start of any round shall be defaulted and the game scored as a loss. Any player who defaults may be withdrawn from the tournament at the discretion of the section Controller and in any event will not be paired for subsequent rounds until shown as being online in lichess.

### **Section C: Eligibility**

#### **C.1 Grades for Grade Limited sections and for paring**

C.1.1 Rating limits shall be based on the published ECF online blitz ratings published as at 13 March 2021.

C1.2 In the absence of an ECF online blitz rating the next fastest time control ECF online rating shall be used.

C.1.3 In the absence of any ECF online rating a player's fastest time control ECF over-the-board rating as at 13 March 2021 shall be used.

C.1.4 Any other player shall be assigned a competition rating by the Controller for the duration of the competition. Any such player should provide evidence of playing strength.

#### **C.2 Players Eligible to Participate**

C.2.1 A player is eligible to participate if the player:

- (a) is a current ECF member or Supporter; and
- (b) is a current member of the ECA and has been accepted into the Essex Online "team" on lichess.org; and
- (c) has an active lichess.org playing account under the username accepted to the Essex Online "team"; and
- (d) is not banned by the ECF from its online Clubs; and
- (e) is not serving a suspension from ECF online rating; and
- (f) is associated with Essex by virtue of one of the following:
  - (i) a member of an Essex Club
  - (ii) resident in Essex
  - (iii) born in Essex
  - (iv) at school or college in Essex
  - (v) plays County chess for Essex.

For the purposes of this rule Essex includes the London Boroughs north of the River Thames and east of the River Lea.

C.2.2 If during the course of the competition a player no longer satisfies both of conditions (d) and (e) the player will be deemed to be withdrawn from the competition.

C.2.3 If during the course of the competition a player no longer satisfies condition (c) or the account is flagged by lichess.org for a fair play violation the player will be withdrawn from the competition.

## **Section D: Reporting of Results**

D.1 There is no need to report results. Players may report results by lichess message to the section Controller or in any Zoom call, if arranged for the competition.

D.2 Any errors in the published results should be notified immediately to the section Controller. Players should always check their published result before the next round has been paired.

## **Section E: General Rules**

### **E.1 Pre-Match Arrangements**

E.1.1 Players should familiarise themselves with the competition rules, the ECA online policy, the OFPAC Rules and the lichess.org [terms of service](#).

E.1.2 Players should familiarise themselves with the operation of the lichess.org platform for making and accepting Challenges and for playing a game. Be aware that should you make a move out of turn the platform will automatically play that move for you if it is legal to do so (this is what is termed a “pre-move”).

E.1.3 Players should familiarise themselves with the buttons for resigning or offering a draw.

E.1.4 Players should understand about the risks of loss of connection and how to reconnect, see: <https://support.chess.com/article/213-how-do-i-fix-my-disconnect-lag-issues>

E.1.5 Players should be aware that if an onscreen message is displayed during play saying that the opponent has left the game this means that there is no longer a connection between the opponent’s device and the lichess platform. It is not necessarily a resignation. The green “live” dot may no longer be displayed against the opponent’s name. It is for individual players to decide whether they should accept the platform invitation to claim the game bearing in mind that the opponent may be trying to reconnect, the platform may have only allowed a few seconds before raising the invitation, in the meantime the opponent’s clock will still be running down and that the controller has discretion to penalise conduct where time is unreasonably allowed to run down in circumstances appropriate for a resignation.

E.1.6 Players should understand that their games on lichess.org are public and may be viewed by spectators, whose usernames are displayed on screen.

E.1.7 Players should familiarise themselves with the lichess.org guidance about how to report a suspicion of cheating and the reasons for doing so and appeals process: see: <https://lichess.org/report> and <https://lichess.org/contact#help-appeal-cheat>

E.1.8 The ECA has no control over the operation of the lichess.org platform and the decisions made in respect of a player's user account(s). Any issue in respect of the making of such decisions must be taken up with lichess.org direct.

E1.9 Players should familiarise themselves with the tournament pages on the ECA website for the competition. Navigating the pages in one of the completed Blitz Series tournaments is recommended to become accustomed to moving from pairing screen, to username dropdown index to lichess profile page and back again to the tournament pages.

## E.2 Playing arrangements

E.2.1 Pairings including lichess usernames will be published in the event tournament pages of the ECA website. The first named player has white. If time permits the pairings may also appear under the event in the ECA organisation section of the ECF League Management system ("LMS"). In the event of any discrepancy, the tournament pages on the ECA website shall prevail.

E2.2 Usernames displayed in the drop down index of the tournament pages are hyperlinked to the player's lichess profile page. A Challenge should be made from the profile page of the opponent. The profile page can also be reached by typing the username in the lichess search box accessed through the Magnifying Glass icon at the top right of the lichess screen.

E2.3 For each round, the process is look up the pairings via the blue button for the round on the Pairings page of the tournament pages, then use the far left dropdown index to find the username for your opponent and click on that username to go to the profile page in lichess where Challenges can be made and accepted. At the end of the game use the browser back button to back track to the tournament pages and check the result by refreshing the pairings page. Sometimes a hard refresh (refreshing whilst holding down the Ctrl key) is required to see the latest information.

E2.4 Players (whether or not on any Zoom call for the event) should have the Essex Online "team" page open in a separate tab to view any event information from the control team. This is particularly important for protected junior playing accounts.

## E.3 Challenge, Rejection and Acceptance

E.3.1 The player with the white pieces should at the scheduled round time (or as otherwise directed by the section Controller) follow this procedure on lichess.org to make a Challenge:

- (a) go to the profile page of the opponent (see E.2 above) and click on the Crossed Swords icon in the row of 6 icons displayed on the profile page;
- (b) select "standard" and "real time"
- (c) move the time bars to display 5 minutes and 4 seconds increment
- (d) select "rated" (note that casual games may be scored 0-0)
- (e) when ready to send the Challenge and start play click on the White King at the scheduled start time for the round (or otherwise directed)
- (f) be ready for the game to start as this will happen on acceptance of the Challenge by the opponent.

E.3.2 The player with the black pieces should wait in the lichess profile page of the opponent and be ready to receive the Challenge. Notification of the Challenge will be displayed by a red boxed "1" above the Bell icon in the top right of your screen next to your username. Hover over this notification and the details of the Challenge will appear. Make sure it is from the expected opponent and displays Rated Rapid 5 + 4.

E.3.3 An incorrectly constituted Challenge must be rejected. The player of the black pieces should then issue a correctly constituted Challenge following the process in E3.1 but click on the Black King to send the Challenge as Black.

E.3.4 A correctly constituted Challenge can be accepted using the green Tick button.

E.3.5 Acceptance of the Challenge will start the game.

E.3.6 In the event that it is noticed that an incorrectly constituted Challenge has been accepted the game shall:

- (a) be restarted with a correctly constituted Challenge if less than 10 moves have been played by both players; or
- (b) continue if White has played 10 moves or more.

E.3.7 If the opponent is not online at the scheduled start time notify the section controller straight away by lichess message or through any Zoom call in progress. The default time is 5 minutes after the start of the round.

E3.8 Players must remain online in lichess for the duration of the tournament and should not engage in any other lichess games. This is particularly important when waiting for a missing opponent.

E.3.9 If neither player is online the game shall be scored as a loss for both players.

#### E.4 Issues during play

E.4.1 In the event of a timeout loss of the game for failure to make the first move on time and if it is a player's first such failure the players shall restart the game by the player with the white pieces making a further Challenge in accordance with Rule E3.1. The lost game will be rated by lichess.org but will not be submitted for ECF rating.

E.4.2 Other disconnections:

E.4.2.1 In the event of a player being disconnected for any other reason (including other timeouts or issues with their connectivity, their computer hardware or software or player defaults) the game will be lost. See also E.1.5 above. The result shall be reported to the Controller as a timeout win. The lost game will be rated by lichess.org and ECF rated according to the OFPAC rules.

E.4.2.2 The only exception to rule E.4.2.1 shall be in the event of a failure of the lichess.org server during play which both players should report to the Controller. If it is established that one or both players suffered a disconnection as a result of the failure of the lichess.org server the game may, at the direction of the Controller, be rescheduled and played as soon as is reasonably practicable. The lost game will be rated by lichess.org but will not be submitted for ECF rating.

E.4.2.3 If the players are unable to agree upon the circumstances of the disconnection, the Controller or nominee shall make a ruling as to the most likely reason for the disconnection, whose decision shall be final.

E.4.2.4 In the event of deliberate disconnection (e.g. disconnecting rather than using the resign button) or other gamesmanship including deliberate distractions a player may be suspended from the competition.

E.4.2.5 In respect of any other issue or dispute the players should continue the game where possible, failure to do so may result in the game scored 0–0 or the game result being decided in favour of the player willing to continue (N.B. It is not possible to stop the clocks during play). Such disputes should be referred to the Controller by both players, immediately following the conclusion of the game or where the game cannot be continued, as soon as possible; the Controller's ruling shall be final.

E.4.2.6 Suspicions of cheating should be reported by the player concerned to lichess.org having regard to their published guidance (see rule E.1.7) and to the Controller.

## E.5 Scoring

E.5.1 In each game 1 point will be awarded for a win, ½ a point for a draw and 0 for a loss.

E.5.2 Players shall be placed according to total points scored, followed by Sum of Progressive Scores and Sum of Opponents' scores.

E.5.3 The highest placed player in the Open at the end of the tournament shall be declared Champion. For each lower section the highest placed player shall be declared the Champion for that section.

## **Section F: Fair Play, Anti-cheating, ECF sanctions & Appeals**

F.1 Anti-cheating software on the lichess.org platform will be in use. See <https://lichess.org/faq>

F.2 In respect of ECF online rating all matters of fair play, anti-cheating, ECF Tier 2 sanctions and related appeals are governed by the OFPAC Rules: [https://englishchessonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ECF-Online-Fair-Play-and-ACv2\\_2\\_final.pdf](https://englishchessonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ECF-Online-Fair-Play-and-ACv2_2_final.pdf)

F.3 Pursuant to the ECA's online policy, the ECA Fair Play sub-committee may impose additional sanctions with a right of appeal to the ECA Executive.

***Issued on 20 February 2020***