



2016 Metro Atlanta K-8 Team State Qualifier FAQ

Are there any major changes to the K-8 Team Qualifier from last year? Yes! This year the tournament will be **four rounds** instead of five for all sections. Because the purpose of this tournament is to qualify teams for the State Championship in March, and not to determine individual winners, the GCA determined that four rounds would be sufficient for this purpose. The Qualifier is a large tournament that presents logistical challenges. Reducing it to a four round tournament will help to get everyone home at a reasonable hour.

REGISTRATION QUESTIONS:

Does my child need a rating or USCF membership to participate? No. This is an unrated tournament and your child does not have to be a USCF member to play. We do use USCF ratings for initial pairings. Parents are obligated to notify us if their child has a USCF rating. If your child does not have a USCF ID, please mark the checkbox that your child does **NOT** have a USCF ID number.

How will I know that the GCA has received my registration and payment? Families will be able to check the website to verify if a player has been properly registered, noting the section, school, and any byes that were requested. Registrations are updated periodically and do not automatically update upon entry. It is the responsibility of all registrant families to ensure that they are registered properly **before** the tournament! Registration problems brought up too late may not be able to be changed. If you notice an error, please email statequalifier@georgiachess.org with name, section, school, and requested change.

When can I make changes to my registration? No day of bye changes or section changes will be allowed. Due to the size and time constraints of this tournament, changes must be submitted by 8:00 pm on Friday, Feb 5th, to statequalifier@georgiachess.org. If your child is sick on the day of tournament, or you need to cancel for any

reason, please email the above address by 7:00 a.m., and you will receive a refund of the entry fee. No refunds will be given in cases where we are not notified in advance. The only changes allowed the day of the tournament will be withdrawals or section changes for those in an “illegal” section (i.e. a player in 4th grade but registered in the K-3 section).

Why does GCA need my personal contact information? What does GCA do with it? GCA does not release your personal information under any circumstances. We may have a need to contact you for an issue that comes up during the tournament.

Is this a knockout tournament? Do I go home if I lose a game? No! This is not an elimination tournament! All players are scheduled to play in all four rounds, unless requesting a bye.

What section should my child play in? This is primarily a team tournament, so your child will probably want to play in a section with teammates from school. The sections are K-1, K-3, K-5, and Middle School. So, for instance, some kindergarten or 1st graders may elect to play in the K-3 section with other 2nd and 3rd graders from their school to play as a team. Individuals are welcome to play without a team, but no individual trophies are given. Some younger students elect to play in a lower section for experience rather than playing with their teammates, especially when their team has at least 5 players already.

The Elementary section is listed as K-5, but my child is in sixth grade at a school having only grades 4-6. May my child play in the Elementary section? If your child is in 6th grade then he/she must play in the Middle School section. For a school having only grades 4-6, the entire team may elect to play in the Middle School section. It is also possible for some of the 4th and 5th graders to play in the Middle School section and others to play in the Elementary section. K-6 Elementary schools will have the same options for their 4th and 5th graders as the grade 4-6 schools. However, students in grades K-3 at these schools may not play in the Middle School section under any circumstances.

How many players can be on a team? The top five scores count for all sections except K1 in which the top four scores count. There is

no limit to the team size.

My school doesn't have a chess club, so I go to a chess club at a different school. May I represent them at this tournament? No. You may only represent the school at which you study your core academic subjects.

I am homeschooled. Can I play in this tournament? Home-schooled students may form a team if they study at least two core academic subjects through their home school group or cooperative. An all-star aggregation of chess players will not be allowed to constitute a team. Homeschooled students may compete individually, but no individual awards are given.

What is a "bye"? Do I need one? A **bye** is a round in which a player entered in the tournament does not play. There are two kinds of byes: requested byes and unrequested byes. A **requested bye** is where the player voluntarily asks not to be paired because of a conflict with another scheduled event, such as a basketball game or a piano recital. A requested bye counts as zero points toward the player's individual point total, and toward the team total. A maximum of one requested bye is allowed in the tournament. We strongly recommend **not** to request any byes unless absolutely necessary. The zero point given for such a bye will hurt the player's individual score and may also hurt the team's total score. Any player who cannot commit to play at least three rounds should not enter the tournament. An **unrequested bye** happens if there are an odd number of players in a section for a particular round. The player with an unrequested bye will receive a full point for the round. No player will receive more than one unrequested bye in the tournament.

Do I need to check in with the tournament staff when I arrive to play? No. We will have a list of registrations posted by 8:30 a.m. These will show the players, sections, schools, and byes (if any). If all the information for you is correct, you need do nothing further. If anything is not correct, or if you are not listed on this sheet, then you need to contact the tournament staff immediately. *We intend to pair round 1 at 9:00 a.m. sharp and it is your responsibility to arrive early enough to get any problems corrected before we have to pair the first round, or preferably to get any problems solved by checking the registration list online and emailing on Thursday or Friday.*

What if I need to leave the tournament early and unexpectedly?

In the event that you decide to leave the tournament early, please notify Chess Control that your child will need **to withdraw**. Go to Chess Control and fill out a slip stating the child's name, section, and request to withdraw. If a player leaves without notice, he or she will receive a forfeit loss, which may hurt the player's team's score. It is also discourteous to the other player who will not have an opponent for that round.

VENUE QUESTIONS:

Will Wi-Fi be available? Yes! The GCA is providing free Wi-fi. The network name and password will be available at Chess Control. Pairings will be posted online at <http://www.georgiachess.org>. Please do not allow children to download video games or movies, which slows down the network immensely. Wi-fi is for parents to work and look up pairings. We will use **Twitter** to notify parents when pairings are posted and to communicate important tournament information. Our Twitter handle is @georgiachess where you can find direct links to standings and pairings. Paper pairings will also be posted on boards at the venue.

Are charging stations available? No, you need to come with your electronics fully charged. The venue is strictly prohibiting any extension cords in the skittles (waiting) areas.

Should I bring food? Will any be sold there? There will be a concession stand, which will have hot dogs, salads, veggie wraps, pizza and sandwiches. There are also other restaurants inside the Galleria. No outside food is allowed to be brought into the exhibit halls (this is part of our contract with the facility). Galleria states that if they see outside food or beverages they will collect them and discard them.

Is there a waiting area for parents? Yes! Parents and coaches are assigned seating in the "skittles" area just next to the tournament hall.

Are there team rooms available? Some schools in the past have reserved team rooms directly from the Galleria at an additional cost. Please contact Eleanor Davis to enquire about this option:
EDavis@CobbGalleria.com.

Can I drop my child off at the tournament? No! Parents are required to supervise their children throughout the tournament. Parents must be available because some children finish their games very quickly. Children are not allowed on the loading dock area or in the parking lots between rounds. Please ensure your child's safety by providing direct supervision.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TOURNAMENT PLAY:

How do you pair players? What is meant by "Swiss System pairings"? The Swiss System is the pairing system used almost exclusively to pair large chess tournaments where the number of players per section is much greater than the number of rounds. In general, it attempts to pair players with equal scores when possible, and also to equalize color allocations. The precise rules are complicated, but those interested can consult the "US Chess Federation's Official Rules of Chess, Sixth Edition."

Is there a chance that I may have to play someone from my own school? No, you will not have to play anyone from your own school. Please double-check your registration online to be sure that your school is listed correctly. If by chance you do get paired against someone from your own school due to an error in your registration, please inform a Tournament Director immediately so that we can revise the pairings before play begins.

This is not a USCF rated tournament. Will you be enforcing USCF rules? Although the tournament is not rated, USCF rules will be enforced including touch move and touch capture. This means that if a player touches one of that player's own pieces in a manner that can reasonably be interpreted as the beginning of a move, then the player will be required to move that piece, if that piece has a legal move. If a player touches an opponent's piece in a like manner, then the player will be required to capture that piece, if there is a legal way to do so. Note that an accidental touching of a piece, such as brushing it with your shirtsleeve when reaching for another piece, does not constitute a violation of this rule. TD discretion will be used for appropriate enforcement of USCF rules.

How do I make a claim? Players must assert their own rights in chess. TDs will not interfere in a game unless one of the players

raises his/her hand. A player with a touch move claim, draw claim, checkmate claim, or question should raise his/her hand to summon a TD. All final positions should be verified by the TD before the board is reset. The TD must also sign the result slip after each player has signed at the board to verify the result.

What fundamental rules of chess should I know before participating? You should know how the pieces move, including the details associated with castling, checking the King, promoting a pawn, and capturing “en passant.” You should be able to recognize an illegal move, as well as checkmate and stalemate.

What if my opponent does not show up for the game? This happens occasionally, as some people fail to notify the Chess Control that their child won't be participating or will be leaving early. The game will be declared a forfeit win for the player who is at the board if the opponent has not shown 25 minutes after the start of the round. The player who did not appear is then withdrawn from the rest of the tournament. Please encourage players to raise their hand to ask a TD for help in this situation or any situation where there is a question.

Am I going to be required to keep score (take notation)? Scorekeeping will not be required, and we will not be furnishing score sheets, pens or pencils. Players will need to bring their own scorekeeping equipment in order to take notation. Players are encouraged to keep score (and by doing so retain rights such as claiming a draw by threefold repetition of position). No time adjustment will be made if one player is keeping score and the other is not.

Will I have to use a clock for my game? If either player has a clock, then that clock will be used even if the opponent would prefer not to. If neither player has a clock, then the game will begin without one. Players may not request to borrow a GCA clock to start the game, however, the GCA reserves the right to place a clock on any game that is proceeding too slowly, or in which one player is using an inordinate amount of the time. In such a case, the directors will attempt to leave each player with 10 minutes for the remainder of the game.

What is the time control? The time control is G/25;d5. This means

that each player has 25 minutes on their clock with a five second delay.

What should I do if I have a problem, or I don't understand something? *If you have a problem or a question about anything during the game, you should raise your hand to summon a tournament director. This cannot be stressed strongly enough.* Do not take your opponent's word for anything. Your opponent does not necessarily know the rules any more than do you, and your opponent does not necessarily have your best interests at heart. The tournament directors are here to answer questions and to solve problems, so please don't hesitate to get them involved. Once a game is over then the result is going to stand, and it is too late for the tournament directors to do anything. Questions and concerns between rounds should be brought to Chess Control.

****Please note that cell phones are not allowed to be turned on during active rounds in the tournament hall. If a player has a cell phone in his/her possession, it must be powered off (not on vibrate). Penalties for cell phone violations may be assessed.**

QUESTIONS ABOUT AWARDS:

How are the scores determined? A player gets one point for every game won, half a point for every game drawn, and zero points for every game lost. In addition a player gets zero points for a requested bye and one point for an unrequested bye. A player's point total for the tournament is found by summing that player's total points from the four rounds. The team score is calculated by adding the points of the top five players on a team. (K-1 team score is top four players.)

When will the awards be announced and handed out? We will post results online so you can find out if your team receives a trophy before the ceremony begins. The awards ceremony will begin as soon as possible after the last game of the fifth round is complete and results are tabulated.

How does my team win a trophy? All teams with plus scores (10.5 or more points for K3, K5, and MS; 8.5 points for K-1) will receive trophies. Place trophies will be given to the top finisher in each section. The top team from each metro-county in each section will

also receive a County Championship trophy. Tie-breaks will be used for teams with equal scores in order to award trophies. Tie-break order will be Modified Median, Solkoff, Cumulative, Cumulative of Opposition.

**Note that winning a trophy does NOT guarantee that the team will advance to the State Championship.

Are there any individual awards? This tournament is strictly a team event, and no individual trophies will be given out. All participants will receive a ribbon.