

Guidelines for Members

Welcome to Croydon Chess!

If you are a visitor or a new member we want you to feel welcome here ... and we hope that you will make this your new chess home!

The club meets at Croydon RSL, 1 Civic Place, Croydon (near the bottom of Main Street) on most Thursday nights (refer to the club calendar: www.croydonchess.com). The premises are spacious, air conditioned, and well lit.

We have organised a number of rated tournaments that can be played throughout the year. For larger tournaments, we may sometimes use the nearby "EV" hall.

Tea, coffee and other refreshments are usually available in the RSL kitchen area. When using these facilities, please remember to clean up after yourself and keep the area tidy (e.g. wash your own cups and spoons!).

Since we are meeting in another organisation's premises, please show respect at all times towards their facilities, equipment and other belongings. Everyone should note that the pool table and military displays are totally out of bounds and should not be touched under any circumstances!

We are committed to the development of junior chess through the coaching program, provided through Chess Kids. Lessons are supervised by a former Singapore national junior team coach, FIDE Trainer **N.Y. Wong**.

We try to keep membership and tournament fees low and are supported in this by a number of corporate sponsorships (e.g. Bendigo Bank).

Croydon Chess is affiliated with Chess Victoria and we actively support their efforts to further develop chess within our state. We also encourage and support the activities of the Australian Chess Federation at the national level.

Further information about Croydon Chess can be obtained from the following sources:

Club Website: www.croydonchess.com

Postal Address: 36 The Gateway, Lilydale VIC 3140

President: Richard Goldsmith richard.goldsmith@croydonchess.com
0407 348 172

Vice-President: Douglas Stones douglas.stones@croydonchess.com
0413 423 659

Treasurer: Stephen Frost stephen.frost@croydonchess.com
0466 413 468

Secretary:	Jean Watson	jean.watson@croydonchess.com
Head Coach:	N.Y. Wong	ny.wong@croydonchess.com
Director Of Play:	Ian Birchall 9723 7213	ian.birchall@croydonchess.com
Webmaster:	Stephen Frost	stephen.frost@croydonchess.com

Membership

Newcomers often like to "try" the club for a while. For this reason the club does not ask for a visitor's fee for the first two weeks ... but after this you may be asked to pay a contribution of \$5.00 per night

When you are ready to apply for membership, please speak to one of the committee members (readily identifiable by their name tags!). If you apply for membership part-way through our financial year then your subscription may be reduced pro-rata.

Some of the tournaments held at the club are subject to an entry fee to cover rating fees (usually \$10/tournament).

Your First Few Weeks

It will not always be possible for you to enter straight into a tournament on your first night at the club, as a tournament may be well on the way, but the organisers try and make sure that newcomers are made to feel welcome and are matched to play club member or visitors of comparable strength.

Advice For Beginners

You know the way the pieces move, you know the rules and sometimes you beat your friends, but you don't always know why and how things happen. You are about to join Croydon Chess and you know you will need to get better quickly. So what to do? Here are some suggestions:

- Buy a chess guide ... '*Chess Made Easy*' by Purdy & Koschnitsky (around \$5.00) is by far the best chess primer, as it provides a wealth of information and down to earth advice
- Participate in as many of the club competitions as you can and ask your opponent to go over the game with you afterwards; win, lose or draw
- Study the games in Chris Depasquale's weekly chess column in the Saturday Extra section of Saturday's "Age" and Gary Wastell's weekly chess column in the Entertainment section of the Sunday Herald-Sun"
- Borrow chess books from your local library

- Consider the coaching options available at the club. Sessions provided by club champion **N.Y. Wong** start at 6:30pm during school terms ... refer to the club's website for calendar information

Above all ... PERSEVERE ... it may be a while before you win your first competition game but it will be a great feeling when you do because you are then a competitive chess player, with an understanding of the game and a say in what is going on the board.

That is the true test of your improvement; when you no longer react to what your opponent dictates but when you have a say in the shape of the game. You will of course still lose many a game! We all do.

How Our Chess Club Works

Introduction

To participate in and enjoy the activities of the chess club and the wider field of organised chess you need to become familiar with the mechanics of the competitive game and how a chess club operates.

Administration of Tournaments

All competitive games in the club are played under the control of an arbiter (or "director of play" – the D.O.P.) who selects opponents and generally sees that the rules of the games are adhered to.

Players in tournaments keep a score of their game and use chess clocks to ensure that time controls are kept.

Playing conditions (type of tournament, playing dates and times, time controls, etc) are always set prior to the start of the tournament and players who enter are expected to be available to play at the times on the dates set.

The D.O.P. is the person in charge of the tournament. He checks the time controls, makes the draw for the tournament, and ensures that players abide by the laws of chess and the rules of the competition.

Players are required to abide by the laws of chess and tournament rules. New players unsure of these rules should seek information from the D.O.P. as he is there to help.

Chess Clocks

Clocks for club tournaments are made available by the Club. After you make your move you press your clock ... this stops your time from decreasing and starts your opponent's time decreasing. It's a good idea to spend some time familiarising yourself with how clocks work and practice using them.

Keeping Score

Players must keep a score (i.e. record their moves) as they play tournament games (except in certain specific circumstances).

The score sheet contains a wealth of information about the game. Modern players use the algebraic notation method. The squares of the board are numbered **1** to **8** from the white side to the black side and from **a** to **h** from white's left hand to white's right hand. Thus square **a1** is the first square on white's left hand and square **h8** is the first square on black's left hand.

The move on the score sheet indicates the square the pawn or piece moves to and the pieces are indicated by their first letter: **R** for rook, **N** for knight **B** for bishop, **Q** for queen and **K** for king.

Captures are indicated with a cross. Castling is indicated by writing **0—0** (for king-side castling) or **0—0—0** (for queen side castling).

Pawn moves are indicated by simply writing the destination square that the pawn is moving to (e.g. **e4** indicates moving the pawn to the e4 square)

Attendance

Try and attend tournaments at all scheduled dates. Once you have entered a tournament you are an important player in the club. **No matter how low your score is you must play all the games in the tournament.**

Sometimes it may become necessary to seek a postponement due to reasons beyond your control because you cannot attend a game for a good reason:

- being too ill to come
- having an engagement entered into prior to the start of the tournament
- having to work

If this happens you need to contact the D.O.P. to ask for a postponement as early as possible, but no later than 24 hours before the start of the game. If the D.O.P. agrees to your request, you must also ask your opponent. If he or she agrees to an alternative date, it should be no later than the Wednesday following. If your opponent does not agree to your request, and you still cannot play, you will have to stand out of the draw for that round.

Whatever happens *you must inform the D.O.P.* of your arrangement and inform them of the result of your game once completed.

Other Rules

- A player cannot postpone a final round game

- A player who forfeits 2 games may be withdrawn from the tournament (at the sole discretion of the D.O.P.)
- A player arriving more than 1 hour after the scheduled start of play forfeits the game

Player Conduct

Despite an air of calm concentration, chess can be a game charged with tension and it is important to remember that there is less stress when you are at ease with your surroundings, you are familiar with the rules, you show respect for your opponent, and you have the respect of your fellow players and the arbiter.

Here are some important do's and don't's:

Before The Game

- Before the start of the games players are free to socialise and play friendly games on any of the free boards and use the clocks provided
- However when the call comes for players to move to their allocated boards, play must stop immediately and set up the board and reset the clocks to the correct time control
- When the call is made players should make their way to their allocated board at once and sit down at least until the games have started
- This will enable the arbiter to check who is there and will allow you to listen to any important announcements the officials might make. You may miss valuable information if you are not present!

Prior to Starting the Game

- Check that your mobile phone is turned off (completely off!). If your phone rings during a game this means an immediate loss of game for you. If there are exceptional circumstances which require you to keep your phone on (e.g. an impending birth of a child), you must speak to the D.O.P. about this before you start
- Check that the clock is set correctly and works
- Check the board (a1 square on white's left, Queen on its own colour)
- Check to see if the arbiter has given the all-clear to start
- If your opponent is at the board, shake hands and start. If not, start the clock if you are black. If you have white, make your move, then start the clock

During the Game

- Respect your opponent and in turn you will receive respect
- Pay attention to the game (e.g. don't read a book or do a crossword!)

- Don't wander away from the board for long periods
- Try to keep as good a score as you can ... a good tip is to always write down your opponents move before you make your own move
- You must play your move on the board and press your clock BEFORE writing down the move on the scoresheet (it is illegal to write down the move first!)
- Don't discuss your game or your friends' games (it is illegal to do so)
- Don't belittle your opponent's moves by facial expression, sighs, or by constantly checking your watch
- When you lose, resign gracefully, shake hands, and think of your next game
- Unless you have the prior approval of the arbiter, don't eat a meal at the table ... a cup of water and a biscuit should be more than adequate. Please note that coffee, tea and soft drinks are not permitted in the auditorium (they are permitted in the café area only)
- Do not disturb your opponent (it is illegal to do so)
- Don't engage in conversations
- Don't hang over the board or stand behind your opponent
- Don't make aggressive noises when you punch the clock or move the pieces
- Always abide by the rules (ref: FIDE Laws Of Chess)
- If you touch a piece you must move it (your opponent should not have to point it out!)
- If you know that you have lost on time, resign, don't wait to have it pointed out
- Offer draws in the correct manner: Make your move, offer the draw, then press your clock (remember the offer remains open until your opponent makes their move)

When the Game is Finished

- Don't talk loudly or start analysing the game!
- Quietly set the board up to its starting position
- Take empty drink containers, cups, wrappings, etc, and put them in a bin
- Hand in a copy of your *completed* score sheet (this must include all the relevant details such as: player names, the result, signatures of both players, etc)
- Optionally adjourn to the analysis area to review your game or play friendly games

Spectators

Players, visitors and parents are welcome to watch the games, but they need to observe the following rules:

- Don't engage in conversation near the boards
- Don't stand too close to the players and crowd them out ... allow space for the arbiter to observe the game (he is obliged to do so)
- As a parent or a coach, don't stand behind your child or pupil ... it will make the players and/or other spectators nervous

General Advice

Good standards of conduct should be observed at all times and will help to ensure a quiet and relaxed atmosphere.

- As a player, keep conversations to a minimum and conduct them in whispers
- As a visitor or parent, if you wish to talk, go to an area outside the playing area and converse in a quiet voice

Special Advice For Juniors

Croydon Chess has a policy for the promotion of junior players into senior tournaments and treats the large number of junior players at the club as equal to all. There are however some aspects of behaviour that junior players in particular need to remember:

- You are not at school ... you come to the club because you want to come
- Playground behaviour is out of the question
- If you finish your game and become bored, telephone home and organise to be picked up ... if that is not an option, bring a book and read, or study

In Conclusion

Try and enjoy playing, whether you win, lose or draw.

Richard Goldsmith

Club President

Croydon Chess wishes to thank **Box Hill Chess Club** for providing most of the content in this document!