



ACT JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE

Interschool Finals & Playoffs

Information for Schools



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Who qualifies for the Finals?

For the **Secondary Open** and **Girls' Primary** events (2 zones each) approximately 15 teams from each Zone will progress to the Final. Only three teams from any one school can qualify for the Secondary Open or Girls' Primary final.

For the **Primary Open** event (6 zones) between 4 and 8 teams will progress from each Zone to the Final. A minimum of 4 places are automatically awarded with the balance of places at the discretion of the ACTJCL coordinator. The discretionary places recognise the fluctuations in numbers from zone to zone and significant differences in the overall playing strength. Only two teams from any one school can qualify for the Open Primary final.

The **Girls' Secondary** event is conducted as a one-day final, without zones, and unlimited entries are encouraged from all schools. Our hope is to eventually develop a competition where demand for places will require a Zone & Final format in line with the other events.

What happens on the day?

Girls' & Open Primary, and Open Secondary

The finals are conducted in exactly the same way as the Zone events however teams are "seeded" at the start of the day based on the score achieved in their zone.

Girls' Secondary

Participants in the Girls' Secondary event play as individuals and not in the traditional team format. Prizes are awarded to the 1st and 2nd ranked player from each year level, 7-12.

At the conclusion of the Girls' Secondary event, those schools with a minimum of **four players** have their **top four results** added together to come up with a **team score**.

Only schools with a minimum of four players in the Secondary Girls final are eligible for the team prizes and may be considered for entry into the playoffs.



Can we make changes to our team?

Yes. You do not have to field the same four players, or play them in the same order, as in the team that contested the Zone event. You may also bring reserves to the event and they may be used in the same way as reserves are used in Zone events.

However, remember that your strongest player on any team must play on Board 1 and your weakest player on Board 4. ***Deliberately*** playing children out of order can distort results and is **against the rules of the competition**. Any “reserves” are expected to be weaker than the selected Board 1-4 players so using reserves is rarely an advantage for your team.

Some changes to your team are forced, for example by illness, other excursions, or absences. However, some changes are optional and made to give your team the best opportunity for a successful day of competition. A few words of warning before you make any changes -

Do not change players around in your team based on the scores they achieved in the Zone event. A player’s “raw score” is not the best indicator of their ability. For example, your qualifying team may have scored (in board order) 3, 3, 4 & 7 points and some players & parents will see that as an indicator that the Board 4 player (scoring 7/7) is better than the other players in the team. However, the Board 4 player will have played the *weakest player* in each opposing team whilst your Board 1 player played all the strongest opponents.

It is also possible that players from lower ranking teams may have (individually) outscored players in your qualifying team. Again, the lower a team is ranked on the day of competition, the easier their games will have been and many perfect score prizes are awarded to children who have not played any difficult games at all.

The best way to select your team is to have all candidates play one another to determine their relative strength or to base rankings on performances over multiple tournaments.

Does it cost money?

Girls’ & Open Primary, and Open Secondary

No. Entry fees are only payable at the Zone events. Please make sure you finalise payment for your participation in the Zone at, or before, the final to help our volunteers avoid all the extra chasing-up!

Girls’ Secondary

Yes. A \$10 entry fee per player is payable on, or before, the day of competition.

Supervision

ACTJCL volunteers are not teachers and can accept *no responsibility* for the care of your students at events. We subscribe to the ACT School Sport model and ask schools to comply with the advised ratio of 1:20 (one teacher to twenty students).

Teachers must be in charge of the students/teams and not parents. Parents may act as officials but it is the responsibility of the teacher to supervise the children.

We understand that this may create difficulties for a small school, or for schools with small player contingents. ***The last thing we want to do is discourage participation!*** Schools are encouraged to approach others to share the supervisory role. Perhaps caring for children for half a day each or just building up credit (you look after the chess competition, and we'll look after the cross-country, for example). If your students are in the care of a teacher from another school it is important that our coordinator is informed and that the children know who to report to if they have any problems.



Playoffs

About the Australian Schools Teams Championship.

The Australian School Teams Championship (ASTC) is contested each year. It is the official, Australian Chess Federation sanctioned, national schools' championship. It takes place over a single weekend in November or early December.

Schools have the opportunity to qualify a team (or teams) in Open Primary, Girls Primary, Open Secondary and Girls Secondary divisions. Successful teams compete against the top schools from other participating states in a round-robin format. Games are played using long time controls and players are required to record moves.

Why do we have playoffs?

It is because the games are played under different conditions to our own School Championships that a playoff is used to determine the team most able to represent the ACT under the ASTC playing conditions. Many children will perform significantly better under long time controls than they do under the 15 minute time control used in our events.

The Australian cricket team has different squads for 20/20, one-day, and for test cricket, with some players selected in all. The differences are similar for chess players with short and longer time controls. Some will perform equally well under both sets of conditions, but others have the experience and training to make them stronger performers under the ASTC playing conditions.

It is worth noting that ACT teams have performed significantly better at the ASTC (including winning 5 national titles and several places) since the playoff system was introduced.

Who can participate?

Teams who wish to apply for inclusion in the Playoff series must nominate their team prior to the commencement of play in the relevant final. Entry documents and information for parents and participants can be found in the attachments to this document.

Please remember that it is perfectly reasonable for the selection process to end with the Final itself. The Playoff is not about an "extra chance." It is about providing an opportunity for teams who are demonstrably better at long time controls to prove that under the ASTC playing conditions. If no team can claim significantly greater skill (through over-the-board

experience) at long time controls then the final itself has provided a fair opportunity to qualify.

We ask all teams to be **fully committed** to participation on the playoff weekend and, if successful, to competing at the ASTC before they lodge an application. Like any representative sport, an extra level of commitment, sacrifice & effort is expected from anyone putting themselves forward.

Conditions for inclusion in the Playoff are -

Teams must have lodged a nomination prior to the commencement of play in the final.

A maximum of **FOUR** teams may be included in a playoff to determine the team to represent the ACT in any one division.

Teams finishing between **FIRST** place and **SIXTH** place in the appropriate ACT Final *may* be included. Teams finishing below sixth place *will not* be included.

FIRST through **SIXTH** place is determined as ranked “down the list” on the final standings for the event, by total score and then by the default tiebreaks of Swiss Perfect (Buch. M-Buch. & Prog.)

However, if two or more teams are tied for **FIRST** place overall the first place trophies and first place ranking will be determined by the result of the head-to-head result of the **FIRST** and **SECOND** ranked team. In the event that match was drawn, or no such game occurred, **FIRST** is as determined by the Swiss Perfect tiebreaks.

The team finishing in **FIRST** place (as described above) and having lodged a nomination will qualify for inclusion in the playoff provided at least **THREE** of the original four players are able to compete, one of whom **MUST** be the Board 1 player.

Teams finishing in **FIRST** place and **UNABLE** to field at least **THREE** of their original four players, or unable to field the original Board 1 player, may be included in the playoff provided they have at least **TWO** players on their *revised* team with ACF **NORMAL*** ratings.

Teams finishing between **SECOND** and **SIXTH** place may be included in the playoff provided they have lodged a nomination and have at least **TWO** players with ACF **NORMAL*** ratings. Again, rankings are only maintained where at least **THREE** of their original four players, including the original Board 1 player, are to participate.

The total “normal” rating of any *revised* team will be used to rank them against other teams nominating for the Playoff. If the *revised* team is lower rated than at least four other nominating teams they will lose their right to be included.

In the event more than four teams seek inclusion in the playoff, priority will go to those teams finishing highest in the **FINAL**.

**ACF NORMAL ratings are achieved by playing in long time control events (ie events conducted under the ASTC conditions or similar). Most children will know if they have such a rating. Some will have ACF RAPID ratings which are achieved through short time control events and these do not count for playoff qualification. A list of ACT juniors with ACF NORMAL ratings can be found @ <http://ianandjan.com/ian/> (follow the link from the left of the page to the “=ACT Rating List”)*

*Players must have **achieved** an actual rating. If a player has partially met the requirements (ie is listed as 5g or 3g etc - requiring that many more games to achieve a rating) they may only be “counted” as a rated player if they have already completed sufficient additional rated games in the current quarter for the ACTJCL committee to consider them very likely to achieve a rating by the next list. Their inclusion is not automatic and is at the discretion of the committee.*

What happens if *no teams* have met the criteria for the Playoff process?

This will happen **very rarely** - and has not ever occurred to date (2010 events inclusive).

This can only occur if the **first placed team has not nominated** and **no nominating teams can satisfy the rating criteria.**

The Interschool Coordinator will approach the top six placed teams (as ranked down the list by the default rankings of Swiss Perfect). All of the top six teams are approached, irrespective of having already nominated or having failed to nominate. Each team will be invited to submit a nomination and up to four teams, or the highest ranked four of six, will contest the playoff.

If none of the teams to be ranked in the top six accept the invitation to compete, all competing schools will be approached and the ACTJCL Committee will determine which, if any, schools will contest the playoff or directly represent the ACT at the ASTC. It is extremely unlikely that teams to finish outside of the top 6 (Girls’) or top 10 (Open) in the rankings will be able to participate competitively.

Appeals.

The general expectation is that the Final gives all teams a fair chance to qualify and **most appeals are likely to be unsuccessful.** An appeal is only a safety net in the process - *not a second chance!*

Please remember that the playoffs are limited to only FOUR teams in each division. A successful appeal may be at the expense of another group of children who are also eager for this opportunity. For this reason, appeals will only be considered in **exceptional** circumstances and where **clear disadvantage** can be demonstrated.

Even if fewer than four teams (or even only one team) have already qualified for the playoff it will not follow that non-qualifying teams *can* or *should* be included to “make up numbers.” Any team wishing to participate in a playoff must meet the same qualifying standard.

Teams who DO NOT qualify for the playoff, either because they finished outside of first to sixth place, or because they were outranked by four other teams entering the playoff, may appeal to the ACTJCL committee for a review and inclusion in the playoff.

Any team lodging an appeal must have contested the final itself. In the Secondary Girls’ event, they must have contested the final with a minimum of four players and been eligible for the team prizes.

Appeals **will not be considered** because a team does not perform as well as was expected. They will also not be considered if stronger team members *chose* not to compete in the final in favour of attending school, or other optional activities at school, on the same day.

It is anticipated that any team making an appeal will have finished *close to qualifying*. It is unlikely that any team finishing below 10th overall (or equal 10th) will be successful on appeal.

An appeal is *more likely* to be successful if the team lodging the appeal incorporates **3 or more players** who have a **very high level of activity** in ACTJCL or ACTCA activities as this provides the committee with a range of results and other factors on which to base their decision.

Appeals may be lodged if -

- Illness or whole of school (or year) activities can be demonstrated to have *significantly* weakened your player group on the day of the Final (for example - camps, major examinations etc). It is anticipated that your Board 1 player will be amongst those who were unable to play on the day. **Or**
- A team can demonstrate disadvantage in the draw. For example, some teams perform relatively poorly at the start of the Final and finish with a series of “easy” wins and a relatively high score. Other teams may play at the top of the tournament for the whole day, and play all the best teams, only to finish below the team with the

“easy” run. This will be supported by the round-by-round results and by their tiebreak scores.

Again, as the inclusion of one team is likely to be at the expense of another, appeals should only be lodged (& will only be successful) if the case for inclusion is **compelling**. Disappointment is a terrible thing but can motivate some players to greater efforts the following year!

Expectations for players, schools & parents

Players.

All playoff games must be contested on the appropriate playoff weekend and at the playoff venue. Teams are **encouraged to nominate reserves** to cater for last minute emergencies. **Games are not rescheduled.**

Any player participating in the playoff must be available to compete in the ASTC - even if they are a “reserve.”

All players are expected to make a commitment to train & prepare for the ASTC event by participating in some ACTJCL or ACTCA events which may include junior and/or senior clubs, tournaments and development activities.

If players have no realistic intention of participating in some chess activities between the playoff and the ASTC itself they **should not nominate for the playoff**. Representative selection in any sport comes with an expectation and responsibility to attend training and develop skills.

Schools & Parents.

Nomination forms must be completed **in full** and submitted prior to the commencement of play in the Final.

Before you nominate please ensure all of your players are available and willing to participate on both the Playoff weekend and at the ASTC.

Before you nominate please ensure all of your players have an interest in chess and are willing to participate in competition and development activities in the lead-up to the ASTC.

ACTJCL provides **general supervision** for all participants in the Playoff weekend and we have \$10 000 000 in public liability insurance. We do not require parents or school staff to attend or supervise the Playoffs unless they wish to, or unless medical or other issues make it more appropriate for them to stay.

If you are successful you are asked to support & encourage your team and facilitate their participation in activities in preparation for the ASTC.

When the ASTC is held **interstate**, ACTJCL provides a grant to assist each team. The arrangements of our past representative teams have varied enormously but most children travel in the care of their own or other parents, and only occasionally in the care of a teacher or school representative. Many past events have been held at school venues with boarding house accommodation onsite.

When the ASTC is held **locally**, each team will be expected to provide assistance for a half-day of the weekend event. This may include setting-up, packing-up, canteen, transport or other general duties

Playing conditions

Playing conditions for the playoff mirror those of the ASTC.

- Teams may nominate up to **six players** to contest the Playoff. Any four of those six players may play in a Playoff round but the team must always play in order of playing strength.
- **Time Control** - all moves in 60 minutes plus 10 seconds increment per move from move 1
- All moves must be recorded

Teams will play each other twice, reversing colours for the second round

Games will take place at 10am, 1pm and 4pm each day of the Playoff weekend. In the event only 2 teams nominate for a Playoff, all games will be contested on a single day (either Saturday *or* Sunday) at the convenience of both the participants and the coordinator.

Limited flexibility is available to vary the commencement times of games to cater to special requests or other sports. This is a representative trial and the expectation is that players are committed to qualification to play for our state. Requests will be considered but the final decision rests with the ACTJCL committee, not with the players or schools involved.

Dual Representation (Girls' & Open Success)

It is possible that one or more girls from the same school may be included in **both** a successful Girls' team and a successful Open team. It is **not possible** for a player to participate in the ASTC in more than one team, even allowing for reserves (it is precluded by ACF by-law no. 4).

Playoffs for the Girls' events are completed first. If a girl has qualified for the ASTC in a Girls' team she may still compete in an Open playoff provided she would (if successful) choose to play in the Open event ahead of the Girls' event.

A girl **may not** compete in the Open playoff *under any circumstances* if her intention is to play in the Girls' team at the ASTC.

If part of a successful Open team in the playoff, a girl must withdraw from the Girls' team at which stage the ACTJCL committee will determine if further playoffs are required or if her school will retain dual honours.

Playoff Tiebreak Rules

Each Playoff shall be won by the team having the highest team points being the sum of points scored by all individual members of the team.

If more than one team in a Playoff has the same number of team points, the following tie-break principles apply in the order listed:

- (i) match points - 2 for a win, 1 for a draw, 0 for a loss;
- (ii) team points scored in matches between the tied teams - eg if 3 teams in a tie each team would have a score out of 24;
- (iii) as in (ii) but with preference given to wins on the highest board.

If, after applying (i) to (iii), any teams are still tied, representative honours are awarded to the team ranked highest at the Final, in accordance with the ACTJCL rules for awarding first place.

Attachments

Entry Form (Girls' Secondary)	14
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please complete and return prior to the closing date. You do not need an entry form if you qualified through the Girls' Primary, Open Primary or Open Secondary Zone events.	
Invoice (not required if you paid at your Zone)	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please insert your school details. Cheque payments at, or before, the competition are preferred. We are often unable to take the time to count & receipt large amounts of coin at the competitions.	
ASTC Playoff Nomination Form	16-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be submitted prior to the commencement of play in the FINAL.	
ASTC & Playoff Information for Parents	18
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A general information sheet to send home with your players.	
Team Scoresheets (large)	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please print sufficient copies for each of your school teams. We will have a small number of spare copies available at the event. These can be completed in advance, listing each team member in playing order. This copy will be retained and completed by the team captain on the day.	
Team Scoresheets (small)	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please print sufficient copies for each of your school teams. We will have a small number of spare copies available at the event. These can be completed in advance, listing each team member in playing order. This copy will be retained at the score table as the ACTJCL record of the team's performance.	
Sample Scoresheet for Playoffs	21
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Practice, practice, practice!</i>	



ACT JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE Interschool Championships Entry Form



PO Box 1403
Belconnen ACT 2616

ABN 97-191-323-562

Event Secondary Girls

School _____ Date of event ____/____/____

Contact Person _____

Phone _____ email _____

Player's full name <i>please print clearly</i>	Date of Birth	School Year

*Please copy the form if you have additional entries. Players will compete as individuals for year group prizes but those schools with a **minimum of four entrants** are also eligible for team prizes and can qualify for the ASTC playoffs.*



ACT JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE



PO Box 1403
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

ABN 97-191-323-562

TAX INVOICE

Name of School _____

Primary/Secondary Competition

Open/Girls

Zone _____

Date ___/___/___

_____ players @ \$10 per player = \$ _____

Please note -

The ACT Junior Chess League is an organisation run by volunteers to foster chess in the ACT. Any surplus made on our competitions is used to buy equipment and develop junior chess in Canberra. We are not a tax paying commercial organisation.

We are not registered for GST and as such do not collect GST, or claim any input credits.

Each team will only pay one entry fee. If your school paid at, or before, the Zone competition there is no additional fee for entry to the FINAL.



ACT JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE Interschool Championships Nomination for ASTC Playoff



PO Box 1403
Belconnen ACT 2616

ABN 97-191-323-562

Event Secondary Open/Girls Primary Open/Girls

School _____

Coordinator _____

Phone _____ Email _____

This form **must** be submitted **prior** to the commencement of play in the FINAL.

As Coordinator you certify that those players named overleaf are -

- Bona-fide students of your school
- Ranked in order of playing strength
- Available, if required, to compete at the Australian Schools Teams Championship (ASTC)

The ACTJCL Interschool Coordinator will supply a draw to all *successful* teams following the Final. If your team is *unsuccessful* in gaining entry to the Playoff please read the information contained in the Finals & Playoff Pack about lodging appeals. Teams must notify the ACTJCL Coordinator of their intention to appeal by 5pm on the day following the Final.

As Coordinator, you are required to inform your team of their playing times and arrangements. You must also advise both the ACTJCL Coordinator, and opposing teams, in the event the playing line-up changes from that listed overleaf. Please note that only those players listed overleaf can play for your school in the playoff and we encourage you to list reserves.



ACT JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE

Australian Schools Teams

Chess Championship - Playoff Information



The Australian School Teams Championship (ASTC) is contested each year. Schools have the opportunity to qualify a team (or teams) in Open Primary, Girls Primary, Open Secondary and Girls Secondary divisions. Successful teams compete against the top schools from other participating states in a round-robin format. Games are played using long time controls and players are required to record moves. It is because the games are played under different conditions to our own School Championships that a playoff is used to determine the team most able to represent the ACT under the ASTC playing conditions. ACT teams have achieved significantly better results since the playoff process was introduced.

ACTJCL provides a grant to assist successful schools with the costs associated in travelling to the ASTC. ACTJCL does not make travel or accommodation arrangements, or supervise the competing teams. No grant is provided if the event is held in the ACT and hosting the event locally comes with an expectation on all representative teams to assist with the running of the ASTC.

Can we compete in the playoff?

Teams that wish to compete in the Playoff series must lodge a nomination form with ACTJCL prior to the commencement of play in the FINAL. Any team may lodge a nomination - and is encouraged to do so. The playoff is limited to a maximum of four teams and subject to a set of qualifying criteria based on your ranking in the FINAL. More details can be found on the schools' webpage http://www.actjcl.org.au/actjcl/school_chess.php

When & Where is the Playoff?

The Playoff will require a 1-2 day commitment from all participants and is set down for a single weekend following the FINAL. You can find the exact dates for this year on the website. Playoff games are only played on that weekend and may not be played at other times or at other venues. It is no different to a selection trial or meet for similar representative activities. Teams should nominate reserves to cope with emergencies.

Games are played at the ACT Junior Chess Centre, Campbell High School, Treloar Crescent.

Should we compete in the playoff?

Teams should only nominate for the Playoff series if they have a firm commitment from all players to attend the ASTC if successful. And, more than just playing in the ASTC, they should only nominate if *all members* have the motivation, interest & ability to work on their chess in the lead up to the event. ACTJCL and the ACTCA offer many clubs and development activities to assist participants to prepare for the event.

How complicated is the Playoff?

Not complicated at all. We use digital clocks (as they will at the ASTC) and longer time controls but most players will find the time control and increments used will rarely result in a loss on time and inexperienced players have nothing to fear.

Participants in the Playoff **must** know how to record moves. This is mandatory but players will not be penalised for mistakes - we only expect them to try their best! Many chess books explain abbreviated algebraic notation or you can find some details @ <http://www.chesscorner.com/tutorial/basic/notation/notate.htm>

Team Name							KEY 1 = WIN $\frac{1}{2}$ = DRAW 0 = LOSS		
Name of Opposing Team									Total Per Player
Round							1	2	
Is Player on Board 1 Black (B) or White (W)? Please circle							B W	B W	B W
N A M E S	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								
	6								
Total for Round									
Cumulative Total									

Team Name							KEY 1 = WIN $\frac{1}{2}$ = DRAW 0 = LOSS		
Name of Opposing Team									Total Per Player
Round							1	2	
Is Player on Board 1 Black (B) or White (W)? Please circle							B W	B W	B W
N A M E S	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								
	6								
Total for Round									
Cumulative Total									

Event _____ Date _____

White _____ Rating _____

Black _____ Rating _____

Round _____ Board _____ Opening _____

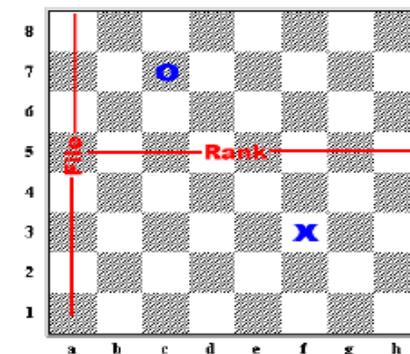
1		26	
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63		78	
64		79	
65		80	

The rows of squares on the chessboard are called ranks and the columns of squares are called files. The ranks are labelled from 1 to 8 and the files are labelled from a - h. We use these numbers and letters to describe where pieces are on the chessboard. In the diagram the cross is on the square named f3 and the circle is on c7. Notice how the letter always comes first and the number follows it.

Symbols to Understand are -

- K** King
- Q** Queen
- R** Rook
- N** Knight
- B** Bishop
- +** Check
- x** Captures
- ++ or #** Checkmate
- 0-0** Castle Kingside
- 0-0-0** Castle Queenside



Pawns do not have a "symbol." You just indicate the square they have moved to.