

A large crowd of children, mostly boys, are shown from the chest up, with their arms raised in excitement. They are wearing various casual clothing like t-shirts, jackets, and shorts. The background is dark, suggesting an indoor arena or event space at night.

# Welcome!

A Guide  
to Attending  
Your First



National Event

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If you should need more information than can be found in this document or on our website at [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org), please contact our Director of Events, Boyd Reed, at 931.787.1234, ext. 133, or [breed@uschess.org](mailto:breed@uschess.org). You can also contact our Assistant Director of Events, Pete Karagianis, at [pete.karagianis@uschess.org](mailto:pete.karagianis@uschess.org).

## Introduction

If this is the first time that you, your child, or your team is attending a US Chess national event, you should be aware that this can be **an overwhelming experience!** Our scholastic national championships have thousands of competitors, parents, and coaches on site,

spread over a large area. This guide is intended to help you and your child find your bearings at your first event. We want you and your child to have a positive experience to build a foundation for a lifetime of playing chess.



## Behavior and Spectator Guidelines

US Chess will soon have a document available that covers safe play and conduct at our national events. (When it is ready, the link will be in this section.) We also have specific guidelines for spectators that can be viewed [here](#).

The playing halls at scholastic events are only open to the following people while games are in progress:

- Players with games in progress in that room;
- Tournament staff;
- Press and other attendees with badges authorizing their access;
- Other persons directly authorized by the US Chess Director of Events.

Parents, coaches and other attendees who do not fall into the four above categories **must leave the playing hall before the tournament director in charge of the playing**

**hall will begin play.** Closing the floor virtually eliminates accusations of cheating, especially electronic cheating, that are often raised by spectators.

US Chess will designate exits from each playing hall for certain grade levels or sections. Those exits will be clearly marked with signage, both inside and outside the playing hall. Players will be reminded before each round and after reporting their results which exit to take when finished playing for that round. The designated exits will also be reflected before the tournament on the appropriate tournament website. Handouts detailing the exit designations will be available at **Chess Control** for each event.

Please make sure to read the [Spectator Policy](#) for a full understanding.

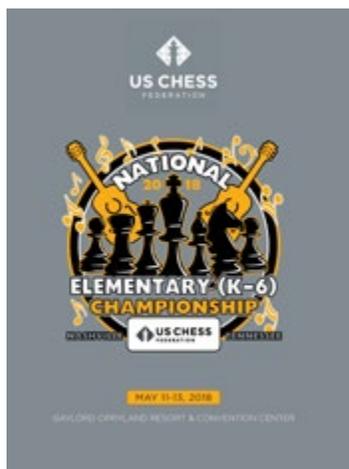


## Chess Control

Chess Control is the nerve center of our operations. Think of it as an information booth. If parents have any questions about the tournament, they should go to Chess Control. Chess Control is the nexus between parents and the tournament staff. If you have a problem, Chess Control can help you get to the bottom of the issue whether that is a solution or an explanation of why something happened. Chess Control is **typically located somewhere**

**outside of but nearby the playing hall**, and their phone number is typically listed in the tournament program and newsletter.

One common use of Chess Control is registering a “Bye,” which is a tournament round in which a player does not have a game, usually because there are an odd number of players. While there are 0, ½, and 1 point byes, ½-point byes are the most common, usually because someone requested a bye due to a conflict of some kind.



## Tournament Program and Newsletter

A Tournament Program is produced for the National Elementary, Junior High, and High School Championships as well as the K-12 Grade Championships. The program is designed as a keepsake souvenir that also has helpful information such as the tournament schedule, staff list, scoresheets, seminar information, and QR Codes for the tournament website and pairing/results information.

A newsletter is also available that duplicates much of the above information but that is easier to carry around. Both are available at Chess Control, and the **Tournament Program can be downloaded from the tournament website.**

## Cell Phones & Other Devices

Cell phones are prohibited from being in the playing hall in the on position during games. The current rule is **cell phones may be in the off position and placed inside of a bag**. The phone should NOT be used during an active game. If it is a requirement to use it during the game, it needs to be used with a TD present for the entire usage of the phone. The TD will likely require the player to step aside and not conduct this business at the



board. If your child is caught with a phone in the on position during a game, they can lose half of their time or even be forfeited. If they are caught blatantly cheating, they can be removed from the tournament and face additional sanctions. So, make sure that your child understands to be very careful with their phone. **This policy applies to other electronic devices too such as tablets and smart watches**. Approved electronic scoring devices such as ChessNoteR are perfectly acceptable.

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## Scheduled Rounds

Many local events run “ASAP rounds,” which means that as soon as a round is finished, the next round goes up. However, at nationals, all the rounds are scheduled. Be sure to obtain the schedule and stick to it—**round times are on the tournament website, program, and newsletter**. Otherwise, you may show up late to a game and find out you were forfeited. Everyone has one hour to show up after the round officially begins before they are forfeited.

So, you can be late and begin the game with up to 59 minutes less time on your clock; however, if you are too late you will lose the game by forfeit. If this occurs, you will not just lose that game but also be automatically removed from the tournament. Therefore, if you do show up late and are forfeited, you need to inform the staff at Chess Control that you are still present and want to continue to play in the tournament.





## The Tournament Floor

The location where the chess boards are set up is referred to as “The Floor.” When games are active, **parents are not supposed to be in the room.** Removing parents from the floor is not done to be mean but to help increase efficiency, reduce the chances of

impropriety (purposeful or accidental), and to allow tournament directors to focus on the tournament itself.

You can take photos of your child at their board before the round begins, preferably **at least ten minutes before the round begins.**

## Results Slips

Unlike the typical practice at local tournaments, results slips are used to communicate the game result to the pairings Tournament Directors (TDs). These are the TDs who run the computers. **Results slips are a document both players fill out after the game without help.** Once both players agree to the result, they sign it. The TD will check it over, make sure both players agree to what is written, and then initial it themselves. If both players agree to what is written on the slip, **it will be very difficult to overturn the result later.** This is a critical part of being at nationals that needs to be understood so please discuss this with your young competitor.

GAME RESULT		
On Site Form		
Round:	Board:	Section:
White:		Black:
First Name:	First Name:	
Last Name:	Last Name:	
School:	School:	
Circle Result:		
White Won	Draw	Black Won
White's Signature	TD	Black's Signature

# Notation Requirement

Many local organizers across the country do not require notation at their events. At nationals, notation is required in all sections as per the rules of chess. This rule is a bit more relaxed in the K-1 sections. Parents should note that a player's strongest evidence for how things went during a game is notation. There are also many chess rules that you can use to your advantage if you notate your game. If you do not, those rules do not help you. Examples of those rules would include draws by repetition, who made what move when (if you needed to prove it), or if you want to prove an illegal move occurred. The tournament programs include seven scoresheets, but players may use their own scoresheet books if they have them. Click [here](#) for a primer on notation.



# Wall Charts

There are a few different kinds of wall charts that we post up. These include our pairings sheets, individual cross tables, and team scores. Pairings sheets display an alphabetical list of names and list a "W" or "B" next to your name to indicate if you are playing white or black. It will also list your opponent's name on the right column that is not alphabetized. This sheet also contains your table number so you know where to go sit. It is always recommended that you ask your opponent for their name when they sit down to ensure you are playing against the correct player.

No.	Name	Gr	Team	St	Rate	Pts	Tbrk1	Tbrk2	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	Rnd7
1	Shuman, Nathaniel Lande	6	NYDALT	NY	2119	6.0	30.0	24.5	W 79	W 42	W 18	W 16	W 13	D 8	D 7
2	Fan, Kevin	6	CAMS3E	CA	2096	6.0	29.5	24.0	W 86	D 38	W 30	D 5	W 9	W 21	W 8
3	Polavaram, Rithik Sai	6	TXACAS	TX	2092	6.0	27.5	22.5	W 96	W 51	D 19	W 39	W 22	D 12	W 14
4	Ke, Rianne	6	CATEAS	CA	2056	6.0	26.0	20.5	W 82	D 74	W 38	W 67	D 5	W 17	W 12
5	Nasta, Kiren	5	NYSB16	NY	1837	5.5	30.0	24.0	W 88	W 69	W 23	D 2	D 4	D 6	W 27
6	Murgescu, Adi	5	NYB076	NY	2090	5.5	29.5	24.0	W 84	W 20	W 17	L 13	W 35	D 5	W 15
7	Zheng, Michael Zihan	6	MIPN02	MI	2186	5.5	28.0	22.0	W 97	D 36	D 32	W 31	W 37	W 13	D 1
8	Justice, Drew	6	GAPR11	GA	2002	5.5	28.0	22.0	W 98	W 76	W 26	W 35	W 21	D 1	L 2
9	Johnson, Donald	6	NC390	NC	1741	5.5	26.0	20.0	W 81	D 73	W 29	W 110	L 2	W 45	W 22
10	Oh, James Y	5	NYSB16	NY	1905	5.5	25.5	21.0	W 87	W 43	L 35	W 23	W 41	D 27	W 26
11	Lu, Aaron	6	MANR11	MA	1832	5.5	25.5	20.5	D 112	W 56	W 74	W 24	L 12	W 30	W 25
12	Huston, Gus	6	NYDALT	NY	2127	5.0	30.5	24.5	W 47	W 31	W 40	D 22	W 11	D 3	L 4
13	Mei, Austin R	6	TXAPRH	TX	1882	5.0	28.0	22.0	W 86	W 64	W 49	W 6	L 1	L 7	W 37
14	Xu, Arthur	5	IL0005	IL	2067	5.0	27.5	21.5	W 55	L 23	W 52	W 43	W 54	W 18	L 3
15	Singh, Harsh	6	WIUNIV	WI	2020	5.0	26.5	21.0	W 81	W 90	W 37	L 23	W 28	W 19	L 6
16	Burton, Henry	6	NYEANT	NY	1892	5.0	26.5	20.5	W 80	W 50	W 41	L 1	L 27	W 53	W 35
17	Nachiappan, Aghilan	5	CAMS3E	CA	1811	5.0	26.5	20.5	W 80	W 48	L 6	W 50	W 76	L 4	W 38
18	Province, Cael Douglas	6	KSLMCH	KS	1823	5.0	26.5	20.5	W 111	W 70	L 1	W 44	W 20	L 14	W 54
19	Chonnareddy, Yuvraj Radra	2	ILH041	IL	1808	5.0	25.0	19.0	W 77	W 99	D 3	D 36	W 75	L 15	W 42
20	Qian, Daniel	6	WAIPCM	WA	1666	5.0	24.5	19.0	W 118	L 1	W 81	W 40	W 18	W 72	W 39
21	Peterson, Ryan Harada	6	NYSB16	NY	1851	4.5	29.0	23.0	W 60	W 53	W 46	W 15	L 8	L 2	D 28
22	Penagalapati, Abhinav	6	CAMS3E	CA	1944	4.5	28.0	22.0	W 61	W 44	W 59	D 12	L 3	W 32	L 9
23	Shrauger, Alex Hayden	6	CAMPAL	CA	1664	4.5	27.0	21.5	W 120	W 14	L 5	L 10	W 98	W 40	D 24
24	Mero, Daniel	5	NYCGPS	NY	1799	4.5	26.5	21.0	W 85	W 52	D 110	L 11	D 29	W 43	D 23
25	Rambha, Menachandra	6	TBMSUN	TH	1892	4.5	25.5	20.0	W 75	L 46	W 65	W 42	W 36	D 26	L 11
26	Colombo, Dominic Michael	6	GAEGRE	GA	1798	4.5	25.5	20.0	W 95	W 82	L 8	W 48	W 77	D 25	L 10
27	Jiang, Andrew	6	NC390	NC	1715	4.5	25.5	20.0	L 129	W 81	W 97	W 80	W 16	D 10	L 5
28	Safrank, William	4	NYDALT	NY	1759	4.5	24.0	19.0	L 72	W 117	W 47	W 64	L 15	W 58	D 21
29	Bergman Chadrow, Bryan	4	NYEANT	NY	1557	4.5	24.0	18.5	W 119	D 39	L 9	W 113	D 24	W 49	D 33
30	Panda, Ojas	6	NC390	NC	1669	4.5	24.0	18.0	D 63	W 83	L 2	W 111	W 62	L 11	W 61
31	Wong, Aliston	5	CAMS3E	CA	1704	4.5	23.5	18.0	W 84	L 12	W 81	L 7	D 79	W 65	W 70
32	Rajanish, Adhwaith	6	MIB00L	MI	1733	4.5	23.0	17.5	D 85	W 93	D 7	D 62	W 66	L 22	W 64
33	Ahmed, Kabir	6	TXLSTE	TX	1801	4.5	22.0	17.5	L 73	W 68	W 84	L 76	W 48	L 57	D 29
34	Menon, Gauri	6	WIBN01	WI	1697	4.5	18.0	14.5	D 103	L 63	W 114	L 66	W 78	W 96	W 62
35	Jiang, Nicholas	6	CAMS3E	CA	1778	4.0	28.5	23.0	W 117	W 62	W 10	L 8	L 6	W 46	L 16
36	Beerman, Alexander Morris	4	NYSB16	NY	1697	4.0	26.5	21.0	W 94	D 7	W 45	D 19	L 25	D 61	D 56
37	Baalla, Nura	6	NYNSAH	NY	1788	4.0	26.5	21.0	W 88	W 65	L 15	W 46	L 7	W 76	L 13
38	Karthik, Adhwaith	6	NC390	NC	1680	4.0	26.0	20.0	W 78	D 2	L 4	D 73	W 84	W 75	L 17
39	Ho, Stephen	6	CAMS3E	CA	1799	4.0	26.0	20.0	W 115	D 29	W 73	L 3	D 58	W 44	L 20
40	Morris-Suzuki, Alan Hiroshi	6	NYQTS5	NY	1813	4.0	25.5	20.5	W 66	W 58	L 12	L 20	W 63	L 23	W 79
41	Singer, Dylan	6	NYNS54	NY	1730	4.0	25.0	19.5	W 71	W 72	L 16	W 61	L 10	D 64	D 53
42	Samputh, Vedanth	6	COG002	CO	1700	4.0	25.0	19.0	W 113	L 1	W 96	L 14	W 47	W 77	L 19
43	Heller, Jack	6	ILC035	IL	1660	4.0	24.5	19.0	W 114	L 10	W 98	L 14	W 55	L 24	W 83
44	Smith, Silas	5	NYNSAH	NY	1642	4.0	23.5	18.5	-X	L 22	W 88	L 18	W 60	L 39	W 87
45	Ye, Luke Sicong	4	MOS008	MO	2039	4.0	23.5	18.0	D 56	W 112	L 36	W 72	W 74	L 9	D 51

Individual cross tables are generally posted after round one. These sheets are not organized alphabetically but are organized based on "score group." Score groups are the groups of people who have the same score.

It also contains the history of the tournament. Listings to the right of the player's names will say things like W28, L15, D23 which would be read as "Win against number 28, Loss against number 15, and Draw against number 23. The "number" is listed to the left of the player name list.

Team scores are pretty simple in that they read just like individual cross tables but have team names posted instead with a cumulative team score. Tiebreaks are also listed and often tiebreaks for individuals are different than they are for teams.

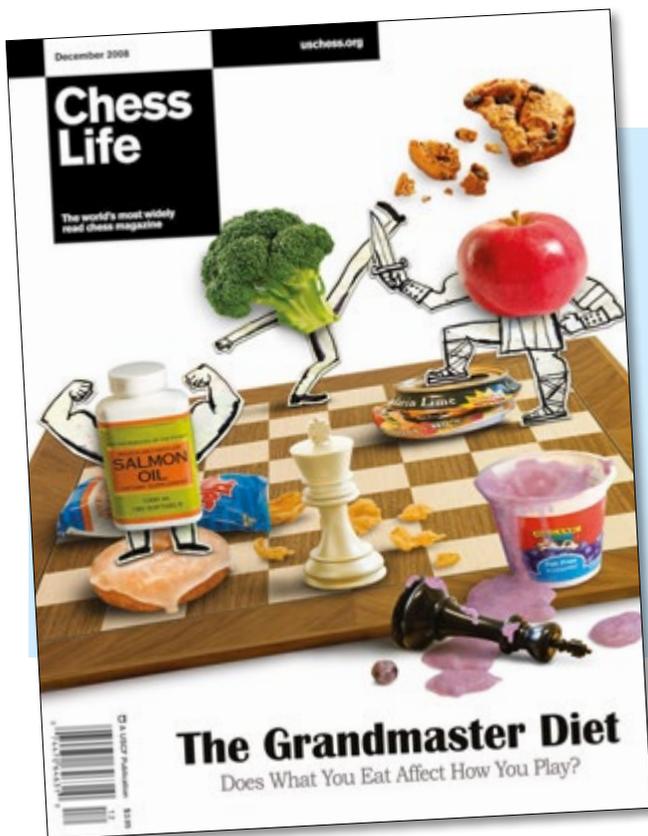
At the end of the tournament, the final results are posted. These results are exactly the same as cross tables except they have all the information for all the rounds filled out.

## Swiss System Pairings

The general idea in a Swiss System (SS) tournament is that players will approach their most closely matched opponent as the tournament progresses. After four rounds, if a player has one point, he will most likely play someone else with one point as well. SS also attempts to be fair with color distribution. By the end of a seven-round event, for example, a player has most likely played four times as White, and three as Black or vice-versa.

In general, a SS event will pair the top half of players in a score group against the bottom half. If there were 20 players with a score of three points, the top-ranked player would play the 11th-ranked player in that score group. There are many exceptions, however that might change that—color, team sensitivity, draws, and more.

Alphabetical Pairings. K-1 Section, 2016 Elementary Nationals			
Player	Color	Opponent	Board
<u>Bashtavenko, Aleks</u>	White	<u>Kovvali, Omkar V (1320)</u>	24
<u>Bhargav, Karthik</u>	White	Wu, Nathan D (1549)	27
<u>Bhargav, Samarth</u>	White	Scott, Mark (1686)	25
<u>Bredesen, Zoe</u>		Half point bye	
Covey, Theodore De	Black	Porter, Wayne W (1712)	19
<u>Dasari, Santosh</u>	White	<u>Xie, Nicholas (1606)</u>	26
<u>Faries, Joe</u>	Black	Guthrie, Duncan M (1489)	22
Guthrie, Duncan M	White	<u>Faries, Joe (1623)</u>	22
<u>Hiban, Michael</u>		Check with TD before you leave.	
Holmes, Rodney	White	<u>Sriniaiyer, Sudars (1582)</u>	23
Knoll, Lucas Michael		Half point bye	
<u>Kovvali, Omkar V</u>	Black	<u>Bashtavenko, Aleks (1574)</u>	24
<u>Mak, Yoseph</u>		Half point bye	
Natarajan, Varun	White	<u>Vivek, Mantra (1428)</u>	29
<u>Patel, Niraj</u>		Half point bye	
Phillips, David Leigh	Black	Rhodes, R Adrian (1529)	20
<u>Ponugoti, Rahul</u>	White	Wu, Yan (1347)	28
Porter, Wayne W	White	Covey, Theodore De (1540)	19
Rhodes, R Adrian	White	Phillips, David Leigh (1665)	20
Scott, Mark	Black	<u>Bhargav, Samarth (1156)</u>	25
<u>Sriniaiyer, Sudars</u>	Black	Holmes, Rodney (1344)	23
<u>Suresh, Nithil</u>	Black	<u>Vishwa, Susheel (1638)</u>	21
<u>Vishwa, Susheel</u>	White	Suresh, Nithil (1532)	21
<u>Vivek, Mantra</u>	Black	Natarajan, Varun (1098)	29
Wu, Nathan D	Black	<u>Bhargav, Karthik (1199)</u>	27
Wu, Yan	Black	<u>Ponugoti, Rahul (1436)</u>	28
<u>Xie, Nicholas</u>	Black	<u>Dasari, Santosh (1404)</u>	26
Xing, Ashley		Half point bye	



## Food & Drinks

Food and drinks are allowed in the playing hall—to a point. French Onion soup with a sandwich to dip in it is inappropriate. A power bar is fine so long as the wrapper isn't disruptive. The tournament provides water for all players and water bottles are allowed in. Making sure that your young player is properly fueled can require advanced planning by scoping out ahead of time what food options are available on site before and between rounds and/or bringing food with you.



## Awards Ceremony

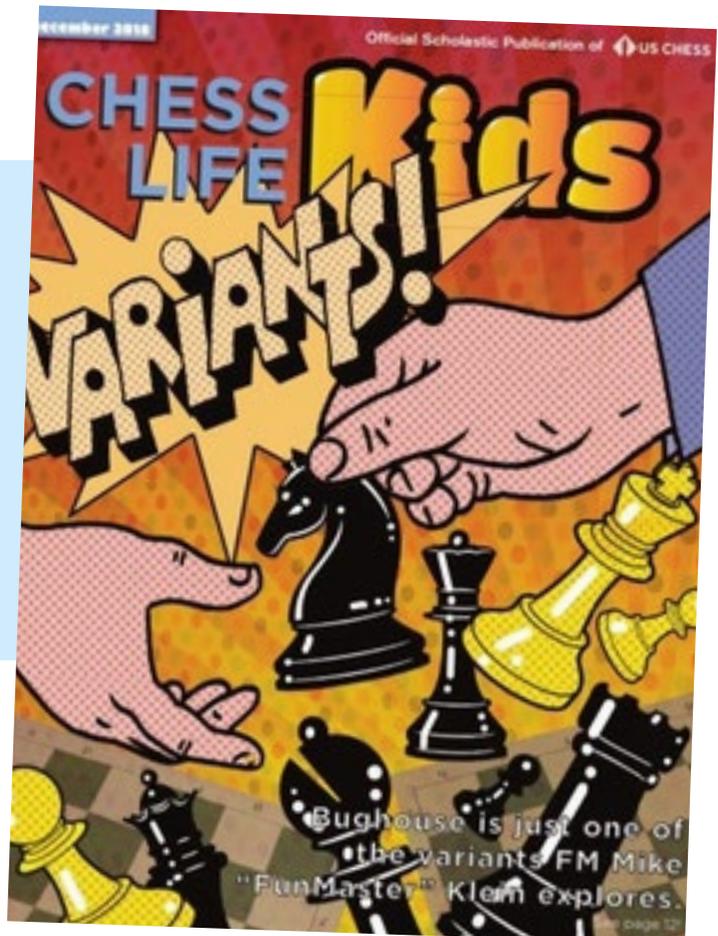
The Awards Ceremonies are scheduled to begin after all the games are finished. Sometimes the awards ceremony may start a little late if the last game of the tournament went overtime (rare, but it can happen). The Kindergarten and 1st grade awards ceremony(ies) are generally held in a separate location away from everyone. All others are held in the main playing hall.

### Early Trophy Pick Up

*If you cannot wait for the awards ceremony or it starts late due to a game taking too long, you can request your trophy early at Chess Control. This process does take a bit of time because we have to give a slip of paper with your trophy information to our "runners," who take the paper, retrieve the trophy, and sign it out to you so that we have a record that you collected the trophy. If you are unsure whether you are getting a trophy, Chess Control can inform you. You will need your name and section for them to look this information up for you.*

## Side Events

National chess tournaments offer different side events (some of which parents can play in too). Take advantage of them as they are scheduled to avoid the main event. Side events usually include the Blitz tournament, Bughouse tournament, and the Friends & Family tournament.



## Team Rooms

Team rooms are rooms we reserve for specific teams. Therefore, if you try to enter a room to sit down and a team informs you it is their room, don't be surprised or offended. These rooms act like central hubs for teams as a meeting place for when rounds finish. Teams, especially large teams, reserve these rooms through the US Chess Events Department. If you think your team might need a team room, contact the events staff well in advance of the event (see the tournament website for contact information).



## Skittles Room

The “Skittles Room” is a casual play area. When a tournament game is finished, if the competitors wish to discuss their game they usually go to the Skittles Room to do so. This is also a good place for casual play between rounds.

# LEARN MORE!

## Visit [uschess.org](http://uschess.org)

All of the information in this document is simply intended to get you started. There is always more to learn. Our website [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org) is a good resource; see especially our [Scholastic Chess](#) pages. Another good resource is the article “The Challenges of Chess Parenting” by Jennifer Vallens in the December 2018 issue of [Chess Life](#). For the complete Rules of Chess, you can purchase the rule book at [uscfsales.com](http://uscfsales.com) or download a “no frills” version [here](#).

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