

BALL AND BENNETT CUP AND CHESS 960 COMPETITIONS 2026-7

Entries are invited for the 2026-7 Ball and Bennett Cups and a new Chess960 competition. These competitions are individual competitions within the Worcestershire Chess Association. The Ball Cup is restricted to players rated ECF 1650 and below at the time of entry. There is no rating constraint on the Bennett Cup nor on the Chess 960 competition.

Entry Fee The entry fee for these competitions is £8.00. For this season, the fee covers entry to all three competitions. However, players are asked to consider whether they will have time to play, typically, 5 games or more in each competition.

Time Control: The default time control for each player shall be all moves in 45 minutes, with a 30-second increment for each move played throughout the game. If a digital clock is not available, a time limit of all moves in 75 minutes shall be adopted. If both players agree, a time control of all moves in 60 minutes, with a 30-second increment for each move played throughout the game may be adopted. (Note that 45/30 is the default)

Date and location of fixtures: Both Cups are intended to be friendly competitions for individuals. It is up to the players to agree a mutually convenient venue to play their matches. There are no set rules about playing home and away. The basic principle is that the player with the Black pieces should have first choice of venue, but holding out for a free night at your club and slowing down the competition would not thought to be acting in the spirit of the event!

The players may play anywhere, any time of day: at home, at a club or in a pub (subject to reasonable noise levels). All you need is a chess board, pieces, clock and scoresheets

Format: The general format is that of one or more all-play-all sections followed by a play-off final. If there are fewer than 8 entrants, there will be one all-play-all section followed by a play-off between first and second place. If there are 8 entrants or more, there will be two all-play all sections, followed by semi-final play-offs between the winner of one section against the runner-up of the other, followed in turn by a final.

Rules: Other than the Chess960-specific rules (referenced in the appendix to this document) the FIDE Laws of Chess will apply to the games.

Colours: Colours will be allocated for the all-play-all sections. Players should toss for colours in the play-off stages: the controller will allocate colours randomly if requested.

Ties: In the all-play-all sections, ties will be broken as follows: (1) The winner (if any) of the game between the tied players; (2) If (1) does not break the tie, the Gelbfuss method using sum of opponents' scores will be used (i.e. 100% of the opponent's score for wins, 50% for draws and 0% for losses); (3) If still tied;

(3.1) If there are only two players tied for first place. or two players tied for second place, a further game should be played with colours reversed at the standard time control. If this game is drawn, then the player rated lower at the time of entry will qualify.

(3.2) If there are more than two players tied for first place. or more than two players tied for second place, the player rated lowest at the time of entry will qualify. In practice, in a group of three players, this means that if all three players tie on 1 point, the highest rated player will be eliminated

In the play-off stages, a drawn game should be replayed with reversed colours. This will need to be arranged on a separate date. If the replay is also drawn, the tie will be broken by a sudden-death

(“Armageddon”) rapid play game, in which the players toss for colours. White will have 6 minutes on the clock for the whole game; Black 5 minutes. In the event of a draw, Black is deemed the winner.

Disputes: In the unlikely event of a dispute, the organiser reserves the right to refer the matter to the WCA secretary. The latter’s decision, together with the organiser’s, is final.

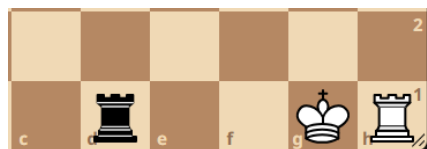
ECF Membership: players must be ECF members at the time of entry.

Junior players: games involving players under the age of 18 should be played at clubs or in the presence of a responsible adult

Queries: Should be directed to Brian Turner on 01684 568398 or by e-mail at bturner_uk2003@yahoo.co.uk

Appendix - Chess960 additions:

- FIDE Rules. To support a smooth game, it may be useful to familiarise yourself with Chess960 specific rules: <https://rcc.fide.com/guidelinesii/>. It is particular important to ensure you are confident where and when you can castle. For example, it would be illegal to castle kingside in this position:



- Starting position. The starting position should be determined by the player with the black pieces on the night of the fixture with both players present. If the player with the black pieces wishes, they may defer this process to the player with the white pieces.

- The following website is an example of site to support with finding a randomised position: <https://chess960.tv/> . Alternative sites could be used. The starting positions 518 & 534 should be excluded and rerandomized. If an electronic device is not available to generate the position, then players should take it in turns to select a piece and place it on the starting rank in line with the FIDE Rules.

- Other than the Chess960 specific rules the FIDE Laws of Chess will apply to the games.

- Players must write moves down on a scoresheet to support analysis and potential disputes and make a note of the starting position on their scoresheet.