

CSCA Approves CCO Proposed Grand Prix Selection Format for National Nominations; Organizers to Share NNGP Events; Other New State Tournaments Also Approved

On October 1, 2016, the Connecticut State Chess Association (CSCA) Board approved a new format for the selection of Connecticut nominees to national invitational tournaments: Denker Tournament of High School Champions, Barber Tournament of K-8 Champions and National Girls' Tournament of Champions. The format was proposed by the Connecticut Chess Organization (CCO) to remove the nomination process from the annual State Scholastic Championship and create a more direct, competitive and fair selection process.

The new format calls for a National Nominations Grand Prix (NNGP), as the CCO bid entitles it, which will consist of four tournaments or legs, and a Candidates Tournament to select the Connecticut nominees.

Each leg of the NNGP will contain an open K-12 section, within which potential candidates will compete. Fifteen Grand Prix points (8-4-2-1) will be awarded at each leg event to the top four finishers for each national event. Points will be awarded to the top four 9-12 players, top four K-8 players and top four girls K-12 players. Point standings will be published on the CSCA website following the close of each event.

Currently, the schedule of the four NNGP legs is as follows:

November 12 at Elm City Prep, New Haven, organized by Educational Technologies

December 3 at Farmington Main Library, organized by Connecticut Chess Organization

January 14 at St. Thomas Aquinas School, Fairfield, organized by DJA Chess and Swan.e4

March 25 at US Coast Guard Academy, New London, organized by Connecticut Chess Organization

With the exception of November 12, NNGP leg events will offer a K-12 U1000 section, which will include both individual and team placements for a more robust tournament event. However, unless there is insufficient number of category players in the open section, only players participating in the K-12 open section of any leg will be eligible to receive Grand Prix points.

NNGP time controls will be Game 45 delay 5. Each leg will consist of four rounds, played via Swiss pairing format with typical tie breaks. Regardless of Grand Prix point distribution, five trophies will be awarded to the top five finishers in each section, and three trophies to the top three teams in the U1000.

Unless there is overlap of candidates between the invitationals, the Candidates Tournament will be held in all three categories in April 2017 together with the Connecticut State Scholastic Quick Championship, organized by the Connecticut Chess Organization. Each Candidates section will contain four players.

Denker Candidates will be the 9-12 champion, as determined at the 2017 State Scholastic Championship, and the top three Grand Prix 9-12 scorers.

Barber Candidates will be the elementary and middle school champions, as determined at the 2017 State Scholastic Championship, and the top two Grand Prix K-8 scorers.

NGTC Candidates will be the overall champion at the 2017 Connecticut State Girls' Scholastic Championship and the top three female Grand Prix K-12 scorers.

A precise date for the Candidates event has yet to be selected. CCO is working to secure a collegiate or scholastic venue, which would distribute the state chess events throughout Connecticut.

The Candidates format will consist of three Swiss paired rounds—resulting in round robin pairing—with time controls of Game 60 delay 10.

Tie breaks in the Candidates event will be total Grand Prix points, total NNGP wins, average strength of NNGP opponents using post-event rating, and highest rating at the conclusion of the final leg of the NNGP.

Advance entry fee for the NNGP is only \$30, with a second level of entry of \$45 to commence no more than two weeks prior to the event. On site entry is \$60.

The Candidates Tournament is without entry fee. The winner of each section of the Candidates Tournament will receive a trophy and certificate of nomination.

Questions in reference to the NNGP and the Candidates tournaments can be directed to Alexander Lumelsky, co-Founder CCO at alexander.lumelsky@gmail.com.

In addition to the NNGP and Candidates events, CSCA also approved the following new scholastic tournaments for the 2016-17 academic year:

1. State Scholastic TEAM Championship on March 4 at Hall High School (West Hartford), organized by New Britain Chess Club.
2. State Scholastic QUICK Championship, which will be held simultaneously with the Candidates Tournament in April 2017, venue to be determined, organized by CCO. (The 2016 Scholastic Quick was a CCO event only. The CSCA approved the event as state-level post-completion.)

Also an adult State RAPID Championship was CSCA-approved and will be held on April 1 at the West Haven Police Department, organized by Educational Technologies.

Please visit www.ctchess.com for a full listing of the 2016-17 Connecticut State Championship Tournaments.

Submitted by
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