

GUYANA CHESS FEDERATION

OLYMPIAD QUALIFICATION PROCESS

September 16, 2019

BACKGROUND

Participation in the Chess Olympiad should be one of the highest aspirations of all chess players, since this allows the player to represent their country on the world stage. To encourage participation and to ensure that the best players are selected to form the Olympiad teams a rigorous, fair and transparent process is being implemented.

Guyana has participated in the last three Olympiads, the performance of the Open team were as follows:

- Year 2014, placed 160th out of 173 countries
- Year 2016, placed 164th out of 171 countries
- Year 2018, placed 138th out of 185 countries.

The rating data in the sheet below was extracted from the FIDE rating list for Sept 2019

Country	Players on FIDE rating List	Population Size	players per 10000 population	Players rated 2000 and above
Barbados	142	300,000	4.73	21
Surinam	148	600,000	2.47	12
T&T	216	1,400,000	1.54	25
Jamaica	246	3,000,000	0.82	30
Guyana	35	800,000	0.44	0
	787	6,100,000	1.29	88

Guyana scores the lowest when compared to our main CARICOM counterparts in three key indicators: only 35 players are listed from Guyana, we have the lowest player density per capita and we have no players rated above 2000. Our counterparts in CARICOM continue to make serious strides in improving the game in their countries while in Guyana progress in popularizing the game remains sluggish.

This by any measure is an unacceptable situation and indicates that progress has been very slow in the last decade and a half since chess was resuscitated in Guyana.

Opportunities were missed to utilize our participation in the last three Olympiads to popularize the game. The process of selection of the teams for these Olympiads were not publicized to the general public and chess community. Also no serious efforts were made to use this process and event to market the game to the chess community and public.

In order to improve, it is necessary that good governance be practiced; fair, transparent and robust systems must be put in place, and these systems will support the drive to popularize the game. A golden opportunity is to utilize our participation in the Olympiad, therefore it is critical that we treat with the team selection process in a more transparent manner to encourage participation in the process.

THE GRAND PRIX SYSTEM

The Gran Prix system being implemented is seeking to overcome these shortcomings by ensuring that the process of selection is publicized and marketed to the chess community and the public well in advance of the Olympiad. However given the relatively short time before the next Olympiad in August 2020, the period of notification and education efforts to the local chess community is less than what would be desired in ideal circumstances.

To help to overcome this deficiency the GCF will undertake an aggressive campaign to educate and market the system, in addition for the first four (4) preliminary tournaments, only the best three performances by players will be counted. This will reduce the disadvantage that some players would have otherwise faced if they miss participating in the first Grand Prix tournament.

The GCF recognizes that the system used in this pilot would most likely be improved upon in future cycles, nevertheless we are convinced that this system is far superior to what existed before since the system is designed to also: i) encourage participation by the senior players as well as newcomers to the game, ii) remove criteria that is difficult to measure and left up to the arbitrary judgement of others and iii) act as one of the main marketing opportunities to increase participation in chess.

It is proposed that in future cycles 2 towns be selected on a rotational basis to host tournaments where Gran Prix points will be awarded, this will help to spread the appeal of the game outside of the traditional base in Georgetown.

Modalities

To qualify for selection on the respective teams (Open or Women), regular and consistent participation by those hopeful of making the team will be required. Consistent performers will be rewarded since the aggregate of the players' performances over the two (2) year cycle will be used. During this shortened period before the 2020 Olympiad (only ten clear months remain), Olympiad Grand Prix points will be awarded based on players' performances in six (6) tournaments:

- The tournaments will consist of one (1) set of four (4) 'preliminary' tournaments, the 2020 National Qualification tournament and the 2020 National Championships.
- For the Preliminary tournaments, players will be credited for their three best performances only. For clarity if a player participates in all four tournaments only their three best performances will count. For example if a player plays in all four tournaments and place 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 1st respectively, their performance in the third preliminary tournament where they placed 5th will not count. They will receive Grand prix points for their performance in the 1st, 2nd and 4th tournaments only.
- Two of the Preliminary tournaments will be played on the weekends and two will be played on weekdays only. This is to allow for players who may not be able to play on weekends as well as those players who find weekend games more convenient.
- Those qualifying for selection to the teams will be the five (5) players with the highest Gran Prix points accumulated at the end of the 2020 National Championships.

The Grand Prix points awarded for each of the tournaments is shown in the table below. The points awarded for the National Championship Tournaments will have the most points, followed by the National Qualifiers and then the other Town tournaments.

GRAND PRIX POINTS SYSTEM

	Preliminary Tournaments				National Qualifiers 2020	National Championship 2020
	GP 1	GP 2	GP 3	GP 4		
Fide Rated	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
# of rounds	8	8	8	8	9	9
Time Control	90 min + 30secs per move	90 min + 30secs per move	90 min + 30secs per move	90 min + 30secs per move	90 min + 30secs per move	90 min + 30secs per move
PLACE ACHIEVED	POINTS AWARDED					
1st	22	22	22	22	30	40
2nd	17	17	17	17	23	30
3rd	13	13	13	13	18	22
4th	10	10	10	10	15	18
5th	7	7	7	7	12	15
6th	5	5	5	5	9	12
7th	4	4	4	4	7	10
8th	3	3	3	3	5	8
9th	2	2	2	2	4	7
10th	1	1	1	1	2	5
	84	84	84	84	125	167

IMPORTANT NOTES

- I) The Defending Champions (Open and Women) will automatically be awarded an additional 30 points since they are not required to participate in the National Qualifiers
- II) For the Preliminary tournaments, players will be credited for their three best performances only. For clarity if a player participates in all four tournaments only their three best performances will count.