

# CONSTITUTION OF THE MONTANA CHESS ASSOCIATION (MCA)

## PREAMBLE

The Montana Chess Association is the State Chapter Affiliate of the United States Chess Federation and organized to promote activities that enhance the enjoyment of the game for the membership, support chess education and general interest in chess.

## ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION

I. The organization shall be known as the Montana Chess Association (MCA).

### II. Membership

A. Membership is open to Montana residents (following the definition of residency employed by the Montana Attorney General).

B. Privileges of resident membership

Resident members who have paid their annual dues (as defined in the bylaws) are eligible to:

- a. Vote, if present, at the annual MCA business meeting
- b. Earn grand prix points (as defined in the bylaws)
- c. Compete for the title Montana State Chess Champion (as defined in the bylaws)
- d. Receive, as part of their membership, the occasional newsletter, Montana Chess News (MCN)

C. Non-resident membership

Non-residents may join without cost. However, non-resident members are not eligible for the above-mentioned privileges of membership. Upon payment of resident dues, non-resident members may receive the newsletter.

D. Suspension of membership

Membership may be suspended by majority vote of the Executive Board (defined in Article III) for paying for MCA membership fees, an MCA-sponsored, or an MCA-sanctioned tournament (as defined in the bylaws) entry fee with a check returned for insufficient funds. The suspension is effective immediately and will continue for some period after the check is made good, as determined by the board.

E. Revocation of membership and expulsion

Membership may be revoked and an individual expelled from the MCA by majority vote of the Executive Board for any one of the following reasons:

- a. Failure to observe any of the standards of conduct listed in the Code of Ethics section of the current edition in force of the U.S. Chess Federations Official Rules of Chess.
- b. Refusal to comply with the rules of chess and tournament play.
- c. Repeated and/or egregious violation of the standards of conduct of players and spectators in the Rules of Play section of the current edition in force of the U.S. Chess Federations Official Rules of Chess.
- d. Repeated payment of entry or MCA membership fees with checks returned for insufficient funds.

F. Notification of suspension or revocation/expelled membership

Any individual who is suspended or expelled will be notified in writing by the Executive Board (defined in Article III) within ten (10) days of the decision. This notification will include the reason for the

suspension or expulsion. Suspended or expelled members do not have the membership privileges listed above (Article II, Section B).

#### G. Appeal of suspension or revocation of membership.

Any individual who is suspended or expelled may appeal the decision. This is to be done in writing within thirty (30) days of receipt of notification of the action. In the appeal, the appellant is to nominate five (5) MCA members in good standing to the Executive Board (defined in Article III). The Executive Board will select at least one of these and appoint four (4) other members in good standing (not current members of the Executive Board) to serve as an appeals committee. The committee will render its decision based on the evidence contained in the written notification which levied the suspension or expulsion and on the individual's written appeal. By majority vote of the committee, the appeal will be either allowed or denied. The decision of the committee is final. If the appeal is allowed, full membership rights are restored.

### III. Governance

An Executive Board, consisting of the elected officers specified in Article IV, will conduct the affairs of the MCA between its annual meetings.

### IV. Officers

- A. There shall be:
  - 1. President
  - 2. Executive Vice-President
  - 3. Eastern Regional Vice President (east of the continental divide)
  - 4. Western Regional Vice President (west of the continental divide)
  - 5. Secretary/Treasurer
  - 6. The Board will appoint an individual to serve as MCN editor. If not already an officer, this person will be a member of the Board without vote.
- B. The duties and powers of these officers shall be those normally associated with the titles, plus any defined by these articles and bylaws.
- C. The Regional Vice Presidents will assist the Executive Board and represent the membership in their respective geographic areas.
- D. Officers shall be elected for one-year terms, beginning with the annual meeting (as defined in the bylaws). There are no term limits.
- E. Elections are held during the annual meeting and are conducted by secret ballot if requested by any member. Members in good standing may nominate (no second is required) someone for an office. Only resident members may serve as officers and only resident members may vote.

### V. Annual Meeting

- A. There shall be an annual meeting held in conjunction with the State Open Tournament (as described in the bylaws).
- B. The agenda of the meeting will always include the election of officers and any other business to be conducted.
- C. The agenda for the meeting will be published on the MCA website at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- D. Members wishing to place items on the agenda must provide the Secretary/Treasurer with written text 30 days prior to the State Open Tournament. The agenda will also include the names and desired positions of any persons seeking a position on the Executive Board for the following year.
- E. The Order of Business shall be:
  - 1. Treasurers and other reports from the Executive Board
  - 2. Election of officers – nominations from the floor are in order and need not be seconded.

3. The published agenda
4. Members items (a two-thirds majority of resident members present shall be required to consider any actionable items offered from the floor)
5. Good and Welfare
- F. Except for amendment to these articles of organization, a majority vote of resident members present shall prevail.
- G. The out-going president, or designee, shall preside (and generally follow Roberts Rules of Order to conduct the meeting efficiently).

## VI. Affiliation

The Montana Chess Association shall cooperate with other clubs and associations to promote chess. The Montana Chess Association shall be the recognized state chapter affiliate of the United States Chess Federation, paying the required annual affiliation fee, sponsoring the tournament that determines the Montana State Champion, and holding annual election of officers.

## VII. Bylaws

The bylaws of the Montana Chess Association (following these Articles of Organization) are to standardize and guide the specific activities of the Association.

## VIII. Amendment

Changes in these articles may be made during the annual meeting. The proposed changes must be announced, at least 10 days in advance, on the MCA website. A two-thirds majority of those resident members in good standing who are present during the annual meeting is required to make changes.

# BYLAWS

## I. Dues (includes the newsletter, Montana Chess News)

### A. Current Rates

1. Adult membership: \$15 per year
2. Youth membership: \$6 per year
3. Surcharges (for checks returned for insufficient funds): \$10.00

### B. Changes in rates

Annual dues, including any necessary increases, are established by the Executive Board. Any increase exceeding 20% must be approved by the membership during the annual meeting.

### C. Dues are not refundable

## II. Tournaments:

### A. MCA sponsored tournaments:

1. The Montana Open and the Montana Closed Championship are sponsored by the MCA (see bylaws IV and V)
2. At the discretion of the Executive Board, MCA may sponsor other tournaments (historically, these have included an invitational, triple header, and junior championship)

### B. MCA sanctioned tournaments:

Individuals and groups wishing to conduct tournaments are encouraged to offer them as MCA sanctioned events. Sanctioned tournaments:

1. May qualify as MCA grand prix tournaments (see bylaw III, below)
2. May be advertised on the MCA website (contact the secretary/treasurer for listing)
3. Must provide the secretary/treasurer with a cross-table of the results

4. Must conform to the conditions of tournament play specified in the current edition in force of the U.S. Chess Federations Official Rules of Chess.
- C. MCA membership is required for participation in MCA sponsored and sanctioned tournaments. Current memberships in other state associations are accepted for nonresidents.
- D. The MCA will make arrangements, provide a tournament director, and absorb any loss, while retaining any profit, from MCA-sponsored events. The MCA has no responsibility, other than advertising tournament and publishing results, for MCA-sanctioned tournaments. The organizers of MCA-sanctioned events bear the responsibility for conducting the tournament, including absorbing losses and retaining profits.
- E. Tie-breaks. Ties in round-robin events will be broken with Sonneborn-Berger and then Kashdan systems. With Swiss-style competitions, the tie breaks are (in the following order): Modified Median, Solkoff, Cumulative, Cumulative of opponents. Organizers of MCA-sanctioned tournaments are encouraged to use the same tie-breaks.
- F. New Players. MCA dues will be waived for a new player in their first-ever USCF rated event.

### III. Grand Prix System

- A. The annual grand prix cycle shall begin after the Montana Open each year, and conclude with the following year's Montana Open. Grand prix points shall be issued to all resident MCA players with a plus score. Grand prix points shall not be issued to nonresident members. The Secretary/Treasurer shall compute the grand prix points awarded and track the standings, arranging for those standings to be published on the MCA website throughout the year.
- B. Grand Prix points shall be awarded according to the following formula:  
$$\text{Grand Prix points} = (N/5) \times (11-P) \times C \times M$$

where

  - N = Number of rounds in the event.
  - P = Place in order of finish among Montana resident players (the average place in the event of ties)
  - C = Average rating of all players in the event divided by 1500
  - M = Travel Bonus Multiplier. This value rewards players for miles traveled (one way from home) according to the following scale:
    - 0-49 miles: M = 1.0
    - 50-150 miles: M = 1.33
    - 151-250 miles: M = 1.66
    - Over 250 miles: M = 2.0

For the purpose of determining the average rating of all players in an event, the ratings used by the director for pairings shall be used, except that players without ratings shall be assigned a provisional rating equal to their performance rating for that tournament. The performance rating is calculated by:

$$A + 400 \times (W-L) / N$$

where:

- A = Average rating of the unrated player's rated opponents.
- W = Wins and L=Losses of the unrated player against rated opponents.
- N = Number of games played against rated opponents (if greater than zero)

- C. Grand Prix status shall be limited to sanctioned tournaments that are open, Swiss system events. Furthermore, Grand Prix tournaments must draw 10 or more resident MCA members as participants and have time control not faster than game in 30 minutes. Grand Prix events must be announced as such in

advance in the official tournament announcement, newsletter and/or website. In the interest of avoiding scheduling conflicts, the Board may see fit to limit Grand Prix events throughout the state to one per month. In resolving such scheduling conflicts, the Board shall give due consideration to tradition and to a fair geographic distribution of Grand Prix tournaments.

#### IV. State Open

- A. The date of the State Open shall be determined by the Board, but no earlier than April 1 and no later than June 30.
- B. The site of the State Open shall rotate alphabetically through the following cities: Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula.
- C. Entry fees are \$25 (\$30 at the door) for adults and half price for juniors. If necessary to meet expenses, the entry fees may be raised by as much as \$10.

#### V. State Champion

- A. The MCA shall sponsor and sanction an annual tournament called The State Closed Championship following the Montana State Open to determine the State Champion. The Closed shall be a six-player, round-robin tournament. There shall be no entry fee. Non-residents are not eligible for the Closed.
- B. The six players to compete in the State Closed shall be, in order of priority:
  - 1. The previous year's State Champion.
  - 2. The top two (2) finishers in the Grand Prix.
  - 3. The top three (3) finishers with plus scores in the Montana State Open.
  - 4. In the event of state co-champions, the championship will be a ten-person Swiss-format tournament with seeds going first to co-champions and then proportionately to those qualifying in 2 and 3 (above).
- C. The MCA shall sponsor and sanction an open satellite tournament, called the Barto Memorial, to run concurrently with the Closed.
- D. Site and Date for the State Closed

The site and date of the Closed will be determined after the MT Open to accommodate the participants and encourage attendance for the satellite tournament. The Closed will be held sometime between June 1 and October 31. Because of their relative centrality, Bozeman, Butte, and Helena will be given first consideration for sites for the Closed.
- E. Players for the Closed are seeded after the Montana Open. The procedure for seeding players into the Closed is as follows: seed each of the categories listed in V.B, above, in the order of priority in which they are listed, 1-4. Each vacancy in the seeded categories will be filled from the Grand Prix standings.
- F. The champion will be awarded a trophy.
- G. All players tied for first place shall be listed as co-champions for that year, regardless of tie breaks.

#### VI. Amendment

These bylaws may be changed during the annual meeting, a simple majority of resident members present prevailing.

Revised April 16, 2016  
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