



SINGAPORE CHESS FEDERATION

Affiliated to -

Fédération Internationale des Échecs (FIDE)

Singapore National Olympic Council (SNOC)

Sport Singapore (Sport SG)

Singapore Chess Federation Arbiters Commission (SCF ARB)

Chairperson's Report (2023 - 2025)

1. Introduction

The SCF Arbiters Commission (SCF ARB) was established in late 2023 with two objectives: (1) To represent Singapore's licensed arbiters in SCF, and (2) To improve the overall expertise and well being of our arbiters. In early 2024, we further established the SCF ARB committees to cope with the expanding scope of work. We assembled the commission and its committees from various parts of the chess scene, with all members contributing on a voluntary basis.

Having to develop an arbiter ecosystem that was dormant throughout the Covid-19 pandemic was a monumental task, which would not have been possible without the support of SCF and the local arbiters community. As our term draws to a close, here is a review of what the community has achieved over the past 2 years.

2. Learning Points from received feedback

SCF ARB received a number of feedback regarding local arbiters. Some of these incidents occurred in non-SCF events, and were redirected to and resolved with the organiser. Most of the feedback fell into two categories which we wish to share with the arbiters community.

First, an arbiter's tonality is important. In at least two incidents, the arbiter had good intentions when giving instructions, but due to the language and tonality, it caused distress among some individuals. It is true that some players / parents behave in an uncooperative manner and deserve to be shouted at. However, arbiters bear the burden of representing the organiser, and must do their best to de-escalate incidents without raising their voice or using undesirable language, while knowing when to seek help. While we wish to promote a culture where arbiters are willing to stand up for themselves, their colleagues and the interests of the tournament, they should do so in a manner that minimises cause for complaint against their behaviour.

Second, there were some incidents where the pairing software was not configured consistently with the tournament regulations. In a simpler case the tournament details displayed on chess-results had errors, while in a more serious case the tiebreaks were set up incorrectly. Most of these incidents happened in small scale tournaments, where the organiser - who might be less experienced - handles the pairing program. While these are mostly unintentional



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oversights, unfortunately the chief arbiter may get implicated when such inconsistencies result in greater problems. Therefore, we encourage chief arbiters and pairing officers of such events to work closely with the organiser to ensure that the pairing software is configured correctly.

3. Congratulating our new FAs / IAs

We congratulate our FIDE Arbiters / International Arbiters (including non-SGP individuals residing long-term in Singapore) who achieved their titles over the past 2 years:

International Arbiter:

- Lee Peng Keong
- Liu Yang Hazel
- Siew Kai Xin
- Thanda Aye Win
- Wee Chu En Kelvin

FIDE Arbiter:

- Chen Lukai
- Franz Robert Grafil
- Khor Eng Yeow
- Lau Yan Han
- Phua Zeng Yi Triszen
- Praveen Kumar
- Rohini Govindan
- Saajid
- Samuel Benedict
- Woon Sheng Kai Nicholas
- Zhou Yi Kelvin

4. National Arbiter Seminars

SCF ARB resumed the National Arbiter Seminars, which had been dormant since the Covid-19 pandemic. Our revised syllabus emphasizes practicality; the Basic Tournament Assistants Seminar (BTAS) focuses on Laws of Chess which all arbiters and assistants would encounter on the ground, while the NA seminar focuses on topics that chief arbiters of small scale local tournaments are likely to handle.



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The Training Committee, led by NA Ong Yujing, organised two BTAS + NA seminars in 2024, in collaboration with SMU Intellectual Sports and One Punggol CC respectively. They also supported the SCF-organised seminars in early 2025, training many aspiring arbiters to officiate in our local events. In the long term, we hope to continue supporting future SCF seminars, with the long term goal of designing a framework for non-SCF organised seminars.

5. SCF Arbiter Policy

One of SCF ARB's focus for 2023 - 2025 was to refine the SCF Arbiter Policy which was introduced in June 2023, especially the National and Candidate arbiter requirements. The requirements for both titles are stricter compared to 2023, and we understand that there may be concerns on the ground over whether they are too demanding. Please be assured that while we intend these requirements to be rigorous and aligned with SCF's vision of setting high standards for our arbiters, we also strike a balance to ensure that they are reasonably achievable given the current circumstances.

In addition, we thank the former Continuing Education Committee led by IA Siew Kai Xin, and the International Relations Committee led by IA Kelvin Wee, for their efforts in revising the arbiter refresher and selection policies respectively. We will continue to review these policies as and when needed.

6. Exposing arbiters to international events

The International Relations Committee spearheaded the campaign to expose our arbiters to more international events, including several regional tournaments and the Olympiad. Through these events, our arbiters gained valuable experience and connected with fellow arbiters around the region. We are especially appreciative to the Malaysian Chess Federation for allowing our arbiters to officiate in the Commonwealth Chess Championship 2023-24, East Asia Youth Chess Championships 2024, and the ASEAN Age Group Chess Championships 2025.

With recent developments demonstrating that prestigious international events are not guaranteed to be held all the time in Singapore, it is important for us to continue such initiatives. However, we must caution that building relationships with other organisers will take a lot of time, and there will inevitably be disappointment among arbiters who do not get such opportunities. We urge our local arbiters with international aspirations to also put in their own efforts to complement those of SCF ARB.



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7. Supporting major SCF events

SCF held many major events from 2023 - 2025, including the National Schools Individual / Team, the National Age Groups and the Singapore International Open (SIO) 2024. Our arbiters contributed enthusiastically and professionally to these events, especially in the SIO 2024 where many of them faced the intensity of working in a strong international tournament.

SCF ARB upheld our role of representing the arbiters in such events, working with SCF to address any concerns brought up by our arbiters. For example, we liaised with the National Schools Individual 2025 organising team to alleviate concerns over manpower shortage which would have affected the well being of our arbiters. We thank the SCF team for being receptive to our feedback and working pro-actively to address potential issues, contributing to a well managed event that left a strong impression on all stakeholders.

8. Outreach efforts

The SCF ARB Outreach Committee, led by FA Lau Yan Han, organised two outreach events with the objectives of fostering closer connections among our arbiters and promote a culture of continuous learning:

- "On the Shoulders of Giants - an Arbiter's Journey" panel discussion was held in conjunction with the World Chess Championships 2024. We were fortunate to have a panel of experienced arbiters (IA Abd Hamid bin Abd Majid, IA James Infiesto, IA Thanda Aye Win and IA Tan Tian Wah), who shared with the audience their valuable experiences in chess arbitration. Topics discussed include how to handle differently abled or younger players, and growth and development as an arbiter.
- In August 2025, we organised the inaugural SGP Chess Arbiters Forum 2025 in collaboration with Fernvale CC (Jalan Kayu Youth Network). Moderated by IA Lee Peng Keong, the forum discussed case studies that were more complicated than typical case studies in NA / FA seminars, with some falling outside the Laws of Chess altogether.

The SCF ARB Operations Committee, led by FA Triszen Phua, led the effort to set up a dedicated arbiters portal on the SCF website. After tirelessly working behind the scenes with the SCF team, we are pleased to announce that the portal has gone live in August 2025, providing our arbiters with a convenient avenue to access any arbiter-related resources in Singapore.



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9. Closing Remarks

As chess continues to expand in Singapore, our arbiters must work together with the wider chess community to support the game that we all love. While SCF is supportive of arbiter focused initiatives, their priority will naturally be the development of athletes, and rightfully so. This is the reason behind SCF ARB's existence: To be the voice of Singapore's arbiters in SCF. For us to achieve our objectives, we need the continued support from the local arbiters community.

I am grateful to my commission members and the committees for their contributions, despite everyone being volunteers and having busy schedules outside of chess. We also express our gratitude to the SCF Board and team, led by IM Hsu Li Yang and GM Kevin Goh respectively, for their consistent and unwavering support. And most importantly, to our arbiters, organisers and the wider chess community for continuing to put your trust in us, and doing your best to level up in experience and expertise, so as to support the growth of chess in Singapore.

FA Lau Yan Han

Chairperson, SCF ARB

SCF Arbiters Commission (SCF ARB) 2023 - 2025

FA Lau Yan Han, Chairperson

NA Bernard Carleton Lim, Vice Chairperson

NA Ong Yujing, Vice Chairperson

FA/NI Triszen Phua, Secretary

IA Kelvin Wee

IA/WFM/FI Liu Yang Hazel

IA Siew Kai Xin

SCF ARB Training Committee (TRC) 2023 - 2025

NA Ong Yujing, IC

IA Osric Mooi

FA Khor Eng Yeow

NA Andrew Tan

Mr Bruce Lee

SCF ARB Continuing Education Committee (CEC) 2023 - 2025*

IA Siew Kai Xin, IC

FA Khor Eng Yeow



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SCF ARB International Relations Committee (IRC) 2023 - 2025

IA Kelvin Wee, IC

IA Gerald Chan

IA Siew Kai Xin

SCF ARB Outreach Committee (OUC) 2023 - 2025

FA Lau Yan Han, IC

IA/FI Lee Peng Keong

IA Tan Tian Wah

IA/WFM/FT Thanda Aye Win

FA Chen Lukai

FA Samuel Benedict

SCF ARB Operations Committee (OPC) 2023 - 2025

FA Triszen Phua, IC

IA Siew Kai Xin

NA Chin Yik Hsiang

NA Renzo Phua

* SCF ARB CEC was dissolved in early 2025 after the release of the updated NA refresher policy, with SCF ARB assuming the responsibility of reviewing the policy in the future.