

Tiebreak regulations - Tata Steel Masters

A. General

1. If the top two or more players score the same number of points in the Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2024, a tiebreak to determine the tournament winner will be played. All players with this highest score will participate in the tiebreak games. Irrespective of the outcome, the prize money will be divided equally among all the players in the tiebreak.
2. Tiebreak games are only played to determine the tournament winner. All other players (except the winner) in the tiebreak will share second place. As soon as there is a clear winner, other scheduled tiebreak games will no longer be played.
3. The tiebreak games will be played as soon as possible after all (potential) players in the tiebreak games have finished their games in the main tournament. Every player will have a minimum rest period of 30 minutes before the start of the tiebreak games.
4. In principle, there will not be a rest period between tiebreak games, i.e. the next games will be played as soon as possible. However, the chief arbiter may decide on granting a limited rest period.

B. Time control

1. The time control of the tiebreak games for both players is 3 minutes with a 2 seconds increment per move as of the first move, with an exception for 'sudden death' tiebreak games.
2. The time control of the 'sudden death' tiebreak games (see paragraph C.2) is 2½ minutes for white and 3 minutes for black with a 2 seconds increment per move as of the first move for both players.

The playing schedule of the tiebreak games depends on the number of players in the tiebreak games (see paragraphs C to F). If the top two or more players score the same number of points after a series of tiebreak games, these players will advance to the next series of tiebreak games, following the relevant schedule related to the number of remaining players (see paragraphs C to F).

C. Two players

If there are two players in the tiebreak, the following playing schedule will apply:

1. A play-off match of two games will be played. A drawing of lots will decide which player will start with white.
2. If the play-off match as per section 1 above results in a tie, a 'sudden death' game will be played. If this game is a draw, the next 'sudden death' game will be played. This will continue until a player wins a game. A drawing of lots will decide which player will start with white. The other player will play white in the next two 'sudden death' games. After three 'sudden death games' the first player will play white in the next two games, and so on.

D. Three players

If there are three players in the tiebreak, the following playing schedule will apply:

1. A single round robin tournament (following the Berger tables) will be played. A drawing of lots will decide the pairing numbers.
2. If there is a tie with three players in the play-off tournament as per section 1 above, a new single round robin tournament will be played, with the colours reversed.
3. If there is a tie with three players in the play-off tournament as per section 2 above, a new single round robin will be played according to section 1 (and 2) above. This continues until one or two player(s) win(s) the play-off tournament.
4. If there is a tie with two players in the play-off tournament as per section 1 to 3 above, the tie break games continue according to paragraph C above.

E. Four players

If there are four players in the tiebreak, the following playing schedule will apply:

1. Two semi-final play-off matches will be played simultaneously, following the play-off match schedule as per paragraph C.
2. The pairings of the play-off matches will be based on the following criteria related to the final standings of the main tournament, where number 1 will play against number 4 and number 2 will play against number 3:
 1. the mutual result,

2. the Sonneborn-Berger score,
 3. the player with more games with black,
 4. drawing of lots.
3. The two winners of the semi-final play-off matches will play a final play-off match, following the play-off match schedule as per paragraph C.

F. Five or more players

If there are five or more players in the tiebreak, the following playing schedule will apply:

1. A single round robin tournament (following the Berger tables) will be played. A drawing of lots will decide the pairing numbers.
2. If there is a tie with all players in the play-off tournament as per section 1 above, a new single round robin tournament will be played, with the colours reversed.
3. If there is a tie with all players in the play-off tournament as per section 2 above, a new single round robin will be played according to section 1 (and 2) above. This continues until not all players have the same score after the play-off tournament.
4. If there is a tie with five or more (but not all) players in the play-off tournament as per section 1 to 3 above, a new single round robin tournament will be played according to section 1 (to 3) above.
5. If there is a tie with two, three or four players in the play-off tournament as per section 1 to 3 above, the tie break games continue according to paragraphs C to E above.