

4NCL Junior Online Survey Results

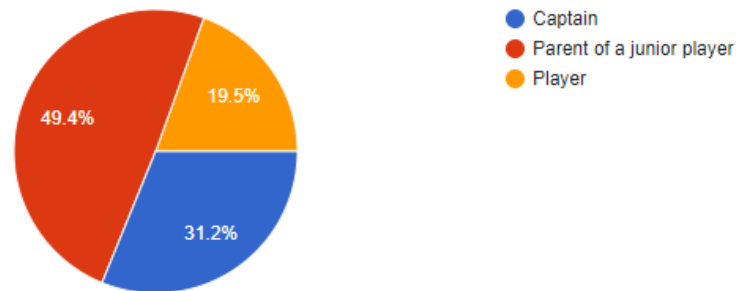
The responses below are reproduced verbatim, with some commentary. Some responses were filtered out:

- Spam responses
- People who anonymised their response

Section 1: Information About the Respondent

What is your role?

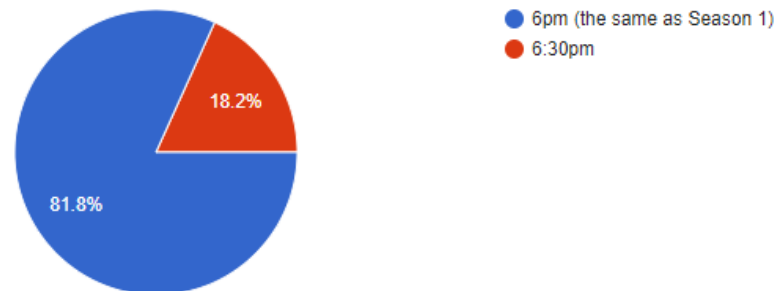
77 responses



Section 2: Individual Games on Match Nights

What is the right start time for league games?

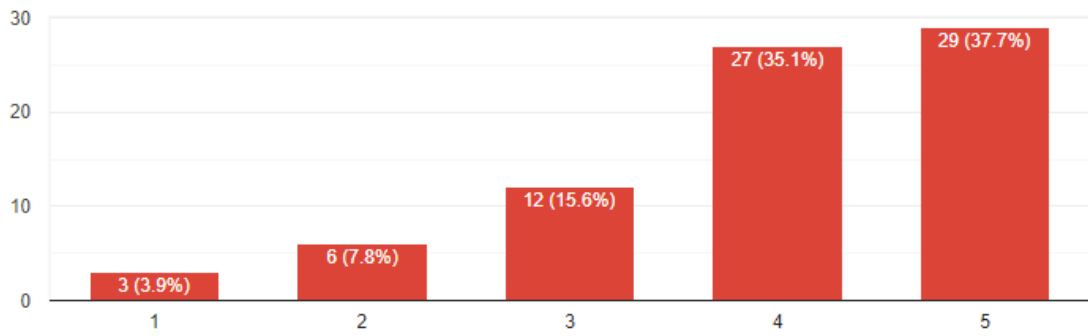
77 responses



There is no real difference between Players, Parents and Captains.

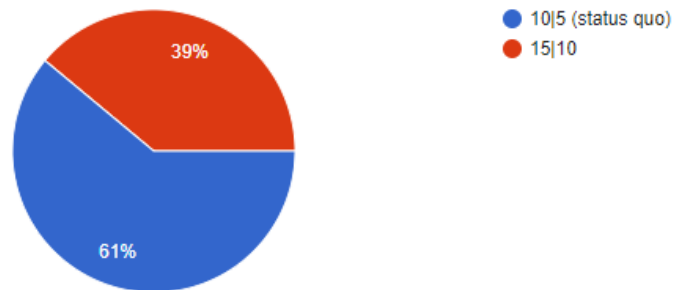
How satisfied are you with the time limit used for games in Season 1?

77 responses



What should the time limit be?

77 responses

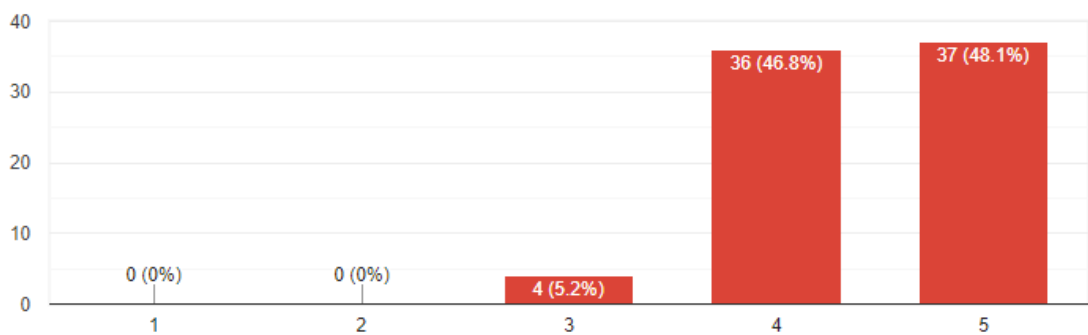


There is no real difference in these percentages and this opinion when broken down by category of response.

Section 3: Format of the Competition

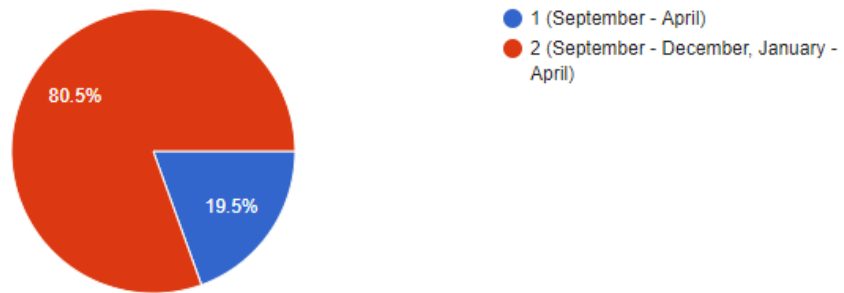
How satisfied are you with the format (i.e. number of rounds, playoffs) of Season 1?

77 responses



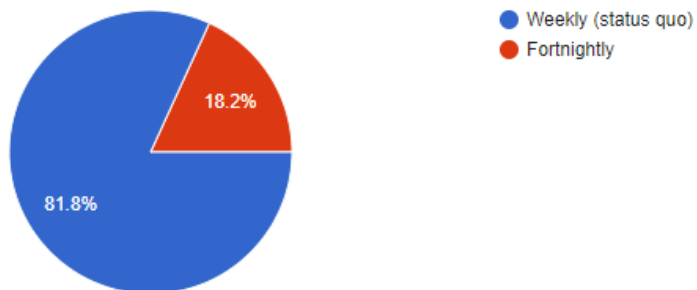
How many seasons of Junior 4NCL Online should take place each year?

77 responses



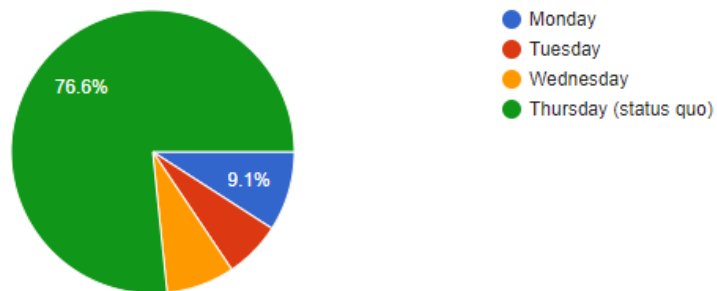
How frequently should rounds of Junior 4NCL Online be played?

77 responses



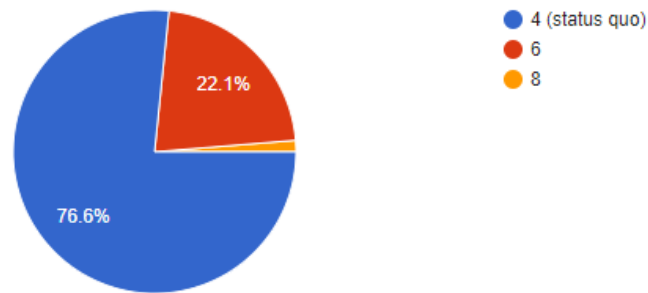
For practical reasons, it is necessary to hold 4NCL Online on one night of the week. Which night is best?

77 responses



How many players should be in a team?

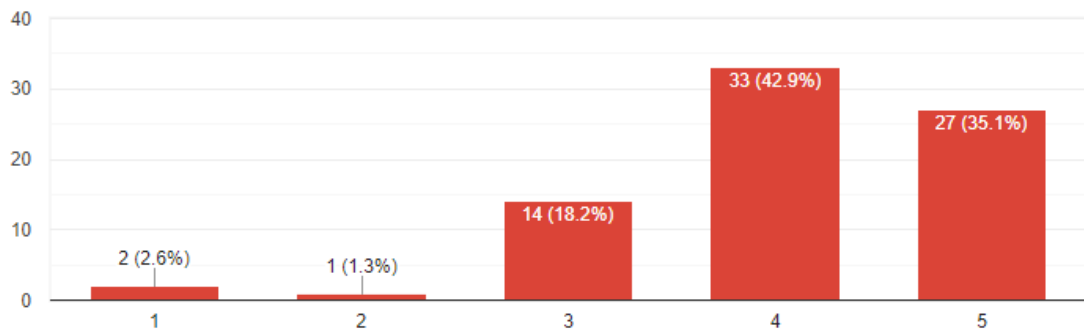
77 responses



Section 4: Fair Play

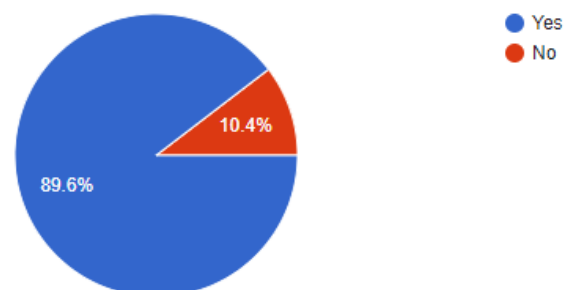
To what extent do you think the 4NCL's approach towards Fair Play issues was effective in Season 1?

77 responses



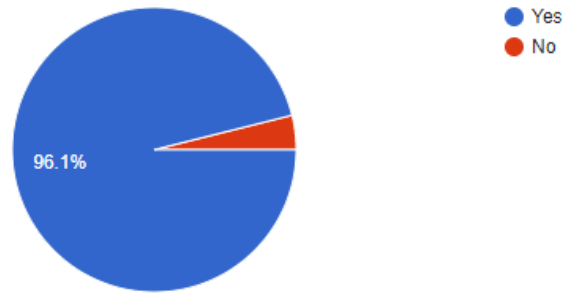
Should the 4NCL proactively inform captains that there are concerns about a player potentially using engine assistance in their squad, based on the data we have available from Junior 4NCL Online games? This would have to be on the understanding that such a comment might be wrong, but it would give a captain the chance to warn their squad that we have suspicions one of their players.

77 responses



A draft of the 4NCL Fair Play Guidelines for Season 2 has been published on the 4NCL website. Do you think this policy is an improvement over the old policy?

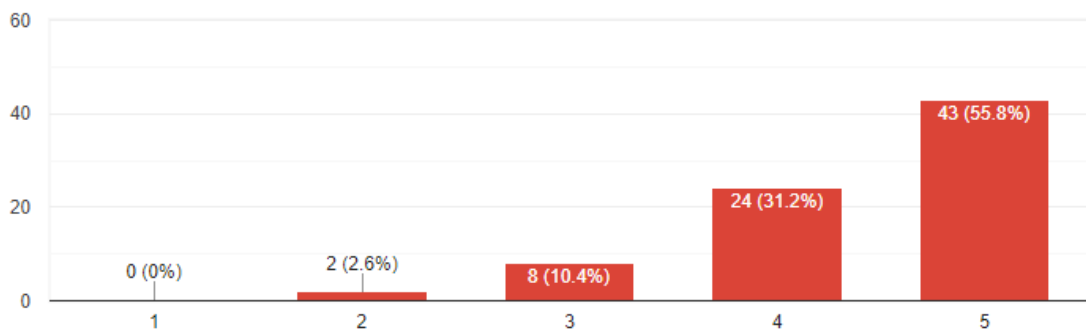
77 responses



Section 5: Lichess

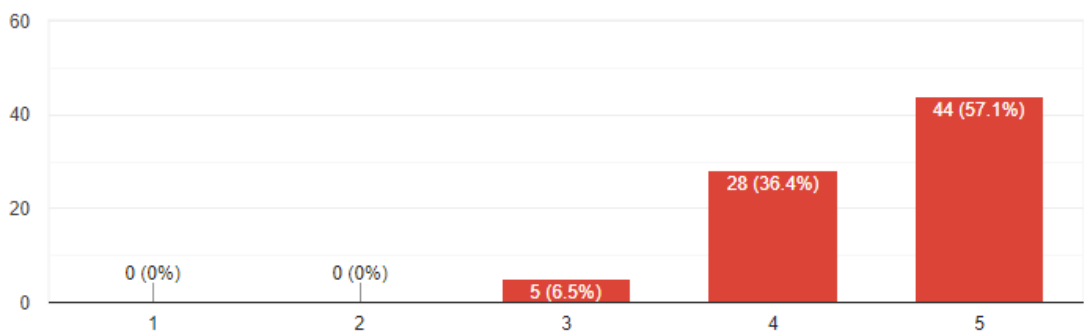
How user-friendly did you find the 4NCL user guides for issuing challenges on Lichess?

77 responses



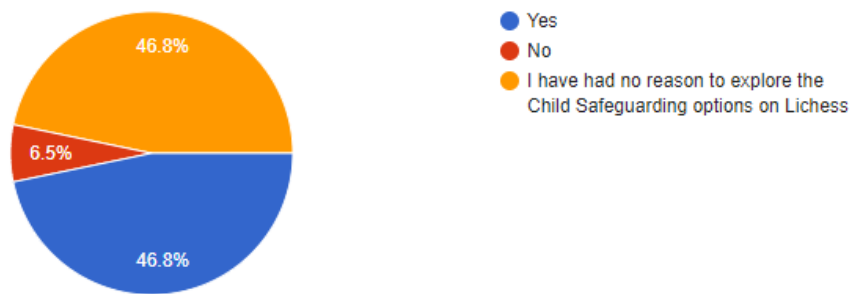
How user-friendly did you find the Lichess website?

77 responses



Are you satisfied with the Child Safeguarding options available to you on Lichess?

77 responses

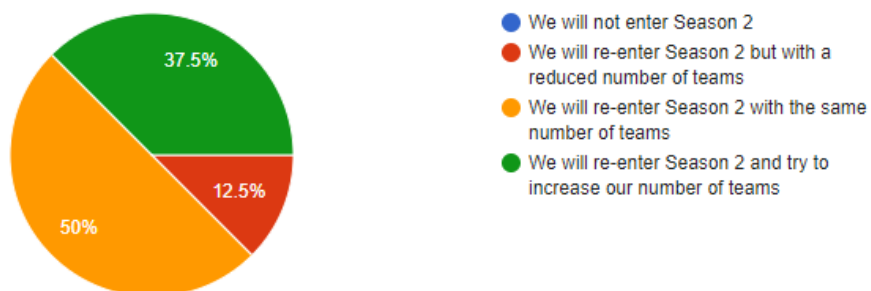


The parents who responded to the Safeguarding point were 16 yes, 2 no, 18 no reason to explore. Given the importance with which Child Safeguarding is stressed in every activity that volunteers engage in when children are involved, the percentage of responders who did not explore the options is surprisingly high.

Section 6: Season 2 Plans (Captains)

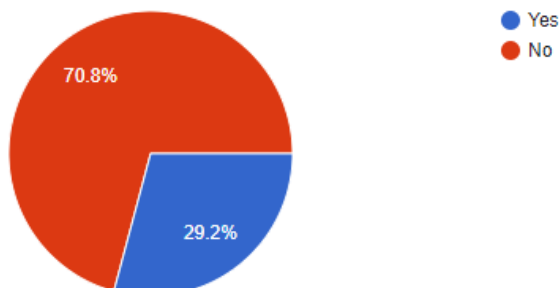
Which of these best summarises your intentions for Season 2, assuming it will start in approximately August?

24 responses



Would an entry fee of £10 per team (to cover the cost of trophies and administration), assuming the competition has a broadly similar format to Season 1, make you decide not to enter Season 2?

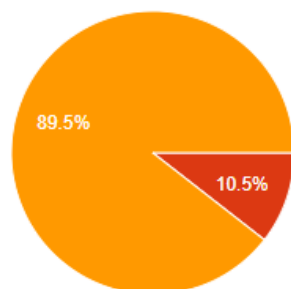
24 responses



Section 7: Season 2 Plans (Parents)

Which of these best summarises your intentions for Season 2, assuming it will start in approximately August?

38 responses

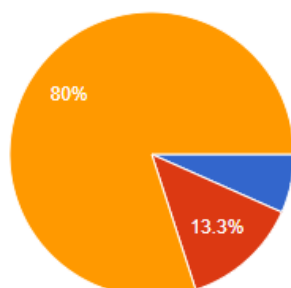


- I will not let my child play in Season 2
- I would like my child to play in Season 2, but not in every round
- I would like my child to play in Season 2 in as many rounds as the team captain invites my child to play in

Section 8: Season 2 Plans (Players)

Which of these best summarises your intentions for Season 2, assuming it will start in approximately August?

15 responses

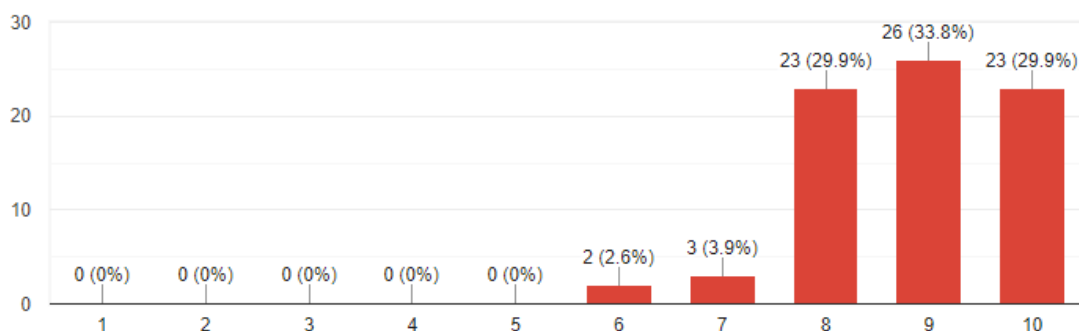


- I will not play in Season 2
- I would like to play in Season 2, but not in every round
- I would like to play in Season 2 in as many rounds as my captain wants me to play

Section 9: General Comments

Overall, what mark out of 10 would you give Junior 4NCL Online Season 1?

77 responses



This is an average score of 8.84/10.

Appendix – General Comments for each section

Section 2: Individual Games on Match Nights

My son would be happy with 5mins+10s
No
Please not longer. Cheating at the moment seems very low indeed (in Divs 2&5)
Games should be 20 minutes + 5. The current time limit puts my children under extreme stress (they have played in 10's of tournaments including standard tournaments). They do not like the restricted time limits of 4NCL games. One gave up playing in the 4NCL team partly because of time limits.
Thank you for running online tournaments during lockdown it's gives juniors activity they are looking forward to
Probably the current time control suits beginners better than aspiring players. I would say one or both of our junior teams will move to regular 4NCL instead for a second season. Though appreciate that there's no point making the junior time control the same as the senior one.
No.
I'd prefer if the games started later at around 8-8:30
No
Increased online time limit would be useful as it would be similar to when they are playing in actual games.
700 or 730 like the adult league could be better
I don't see why adults play 45+10 but kids have to play blitz. Blitz isn't very good for improving chess (despite playing 3000 blitz games). I don't mind it but for 4ncl (quite a competitive league) it should be longer. You can get lucky in blitz meaning a lower rated player has a bit of a chance against a higher rated player. In this standard of competition, I feel it should be a bit longer to find the best players. Even just 20+10 would be fine. I understand kids may lose concentration quick. But chess is about concentration and battling any thoughts that get you distracted. In order to play good chess, you have to fight those thoughts in my opinion.
I would like the time to be at least 25 0 or up to 30 0
15/10 would mean a better competition because players can focus on the game and not be under time pressure.
Most players are young and some in primary school too so a 15/10-time limit would be ideal to help them think, strategize and apply their chess knowledge effectively during play. Time pressure at a young age on tender minds might deter them from playing and participating in the long run.
6:30 start time might be better so young children can complete online school and online clubs if any then start the competition with a refreshed mind.
It would be more practical if there is also a time limit in the rule of tournament for waiting for the opponent at the start of the first game, as it happened to my child be waiting in front of the computer for more than half an hour, for the opponent to attend, but finally found out the opponent totally forgot the game!
There is a lot of blitz and rapidplay online for kids during lockdown and little standard play. It is not helping them improve their chess as many of them aren't thinking about their moves for long enough. Could we have a J4NCL online standard play team tournament for kids? Could still be four players in a team with one game starting at 6pm.
I think generally a slightly later time will be helpful once people return to work and school. It shouldn't make it too late for the younger players.

Good to get done in an hour (in theory!)
No, we are very satisfied with the whole event
There are so few opportunities in Lockdown for juniors to play standard play, particularly against other juniors. There are so many rapid and blitz tournaments. Why can't J4NCL operate 45+15 one match a night, just like 4NCL?
No
No
No
i would raver have 15 mins on the clock with no increment instead of 10mins with 5 se increment
No
I think it was ideal (also Thursday is a good day for us).
NO
No
Longer time limit is preferred
No
6:30 when school is all open.
An earlier start time would be fine. Maybe a time limit of 15/5 would be fine, to lead to higher quality games. It was good the server downtime happened only one week, as my son was on and his opponent and his friend never got on so the games weren't played and we lost the match (with only half the games played). That artificial match result has it happened was used again as first port of call to decide relegation as the two teams finished level on points, probably game points would be better since the match never got properly played.
I think players should be encouraged to take a 2-minute break between games to reset the emotions after a win/loss. Now I see a lot of games turning seamlessly into the next, including the momentum. I believe that a little break will encourage higher quality chess.
No
My son found the match far too quick especially as J4NCL is usually standard play

Section 3: Format of the Competition

No
Seems ideal
Suggest scoring based on game points rather than match points? Means every game is scored equally; no dead games or winner-takes-all games. Appreciate match points traditionally used by 4NCL though.
A longer time control and one leg of games may be better for stronger players - but appreciate it's a balancing act and as per previous comment, we may look at moving to main 4NCL, which would solve the problem and allow Junior 4NCL continue as is.
It's great for the younger players, but squad availability might be affected once 'normality' returns.
No
There should be a rule on the issuing of a challenge, where Lichess can notify as some times challenges made at the same time. Should always be the white player who

challenges as one of our players games was defaulted unfairly. When neither accept it come down to someone's discretion. This needs to be tightened up if possible?
Also for fairness a time limit of 30 minutes should available to accept matches, or contact between managers made easier with the contact numbers? a few clubs are more worried on results than children playing competitive games.
Which shouldn't be a problem seeing most are on WhatsApp group it's just knowing who is what manager for what team.
No
No.
No.
No
None apart from thanks for running it so well.
Considering how quickly everything came together, as a format it worked very well. Perhaps more divisions though - there seemed a big spread of ability in division 5.
I don't have any strong opinion that weekly is "best" and Thursdays are "best". It is definitely more convenient for it to be on a different night from the adult competition.
no
No
It's fantastic for my daughter during lockdown, but once school starts up again, we'll have move problems in giving a regular commitment.
no
No
It worked so well (although this was the first time), I don't think it is necessary to change much.
Thank you organising.
Well organised
No
Wednesday or Tuesday night is fine also.
No
Thanks for organising this event it has been helpful in the circumstances

Section 4: Fair Play

Its fine as it is
no comment
If someone doesn't turn up without informing for their game within 10 mins the player should be able to claim a win
Greater human intervention analysing games of suspicious players
Use of cameras
Didn't have any interaction with 4NCL Fair Play policy, so above answers not hugely relevant. Would have voted "I don't know/mind" if the option was there.
One complaint which came back constantly from our players was unsporting - offering repeated draws or stalling when in lost positions, sending takeback requests, chatting

during the game. Would like to see an Etiquette section added to the Fair Play policy covering these points. Our experience of Div 4/5 was that many players (and captains) were likely relative beginners and wouldn't have known about etiquette guidelines, so including that in the guidelines would be a help

As for the answer above - warn first.

Make it a closed game so that spectators are not allowed to watch it in real time. In one of the rounds my son played, he had 5 spectators watching the game and two of them had ratings of over 2000. Possibly it was the opponent's coaches, but this made him quite uncomfortable. His opponent played exceptionally well and we did wonder if they have had some help.

Not sure

I am happy with the policy.

No comments.

It's looks good to me. Might need further evolving as new incidents and precedents arise.

I am pretty comfortable that the vast majority of players (especially juniors) play fairly. There will always be some that don't whatever policy is in place.

none

The sanctions actually seem harsher in version 1 despite the policy being much, much longer in version 2. I guess you don't want to discourage children learning from their mistakes, the flip side is that those that have been cheated against don't feel like they have received justice.

My child suspected an opponent was using computer assistance against them in an earlier round of J4NCL because the opponent kept coming on and offline during both matches. This week the opponent's account was marked as using computer assistance by Lichess, but 4NCL has been silent. it's rather dissatisfying for those that have been cheated against and the anonymity / lack of publicity doesn't do much to discourage other players from trying to cheat (in contrast to the praise players get when they are continually winning).

None

I'm not sure there is a definitive solution to the problem of cheating. Perhaps continual reminders and then being strict with anyone who is caught. But it's very easy to cheat, and can be almost impossible to prove.

It would be useful to have some guides for parents / players as to what it means if a particular Lichess flag goes up, e.g. what could have triggered it. Quite difficult for the team captain to have to explain / second guess to a parent / child. Maybe also a list of things not to do, e.g. don't have other browsers open when playing,

?

No

It looks fine as it is, it is good to see the extra clarifications/detail added.

Players that are found to use engines should have results retrospectively annulled. My son played a player from to be Decided. It was clear an engine was being used as the accuracy was 2400 level. Several weeks later his account was identified as "using an engine." It leaves a bad taste that the result still stands. I would adopt a ZERO tolerance policy and have the power to alter historic results.

Live web cam playing.

one typo: "De Ken Regan's"

Beyond fair play, I found the lack of etiquette of many players lacking. Repeated draw offers when in a lost position. Chatting during games. Being late for games. Not

congratulating each other at end of games etc. These are young players, and captains and organizers have a responsibility to push for civilized proceedings.

I didn't read the whole policy but I don't think children should have a long ban for cheating

Section 5: Lichess

Generally excellent. Better than chess.com in many ways

What an important addition through the COVID restrictions.

Good website

Good platform but did have some issues when everyone was trying to log in at the same time.

Generally, very good indeed

Occasional difficulties logging onto the server

How do you turn off chat!!!???

Lichess is kid-friendly.

My child finds Lichess very user friendly.

No

It's free and generally works well, aside from the occasional server issue.

It is a remarkable resource and one I'm hugely grateful for. It allows a great range of chess competitions. Most find it easier to navigate than chess.com

In my opinion the best available

sometimes there are issues with the platform but looks like they resolving it very fast

I have seen some rather abusive language in chats among players in other junior tournaments. But it's tricky. One of my children had real difficulties connecting with an opponent and the chat between them was really helpful. Perhaps Lichess needs some filters on the language used in chat?

No

Excellent vehicle for internet chess

No

No

Only that it is a great site!

Excellent

Lichess most easy software to use.

Players have not been able to log in around 6pm a couple of times, probably due to too many trying to get on at the same time?

Happy to be able to view current games.

Generally, it is a good system.

It's a shame the time frames are so fast

Section 8: General Comments

My comment about £10 per team is subject to parental buy-in. I think the competition has been superb.

To clarify comment about entering next year with a reduced number of teams - would see one or both moving to main 4NCL instead.

Thanks to all who give up so much time running it.

Thank you for organizing this season. I'd be happy to contribute towards administrative costs/your time but not towards trophies (too much hassle to collect money). I'm slightly uneasy about the sanctions for offences from Lichess (an opaque process) which could affect a player OTB (players real life identities are known).

Excellent event which you got up and running very fast. All my issues were related to players not being able to get online or simply not turning up on time which is clearly not the fault of the tournament.

Great effort all round, good to see your inspecting and adapting.

The only reason I won't be playing season 2 is I will be too old

A really good effort, very friendly and easy to communicate with team. Hard work considering newness of it all.

You should all be proud of yourselves.

i think this would be better with chess.com

I enjoyed playing from home I did not have to travel. I had could practice more.

It was a great endeavour to start the online tournaments, as it saves travel time and my child could organise the day with other engagements and play in the evening from his home in a relaxed manner.

No

Thanks very much for organising it and being so responsive via WhatsApp and email.

Thank you!

Considering how quickly it got off the ground I think it really was "outstanding". As far as charging for entry goes, I think it is entirely reasonable. It could definitely have an effect on a decision to enter more than one team in the future. As above, I don't think it would stop us entering at all.

No

A big thank you to Alex and 4NCL for running the competition - it was really appreciated by my children and all the children in the club. I particularly liked the graduate quality of the Divisions. Our 4th team players regularly lose when they play the top players in the club, but in J4NCL they had well-matched opposition - they won some, they lost some.

I'd prefer no trophies, and ideally no fees - a hassle to collect, particularly when seeing no-one and having to request online payment. I know that in the Welsh On-line Secondary School Champs, where the best player in each school had a trophy, that some of these will have gone to those that have cheated. In hindsight, I wish I had never had trophies. I'd prefer trophies just for OTB chess, where chances of cheating are far, far smaller.

Main problem we encountered were opponent challenges using the wrong parameters

On a couple of occasions my boys waited over 30mins for their opponents. I think there should be a time limit on this.

I think it's marvellous that people give up their time to organise internet chess.

More chance at playing every week

I think there should not be a charge for the tournament as not only will this put off entries, but may flair up even more cheating accusations when trophies and prizes are awarded. Personal opinion is to keep them free and a bit of competitive fun.

No

No

It has been great to take part in this. Alex is tremendously helpful in every way!

I would wish to see all player's real names displayed on Lichess so my child know who he is playing.

Well done. In this time without OTB chess, this is an excellent replacement

Thank you again for organising

Overall, season 1 was very well managed and organised. Thanks for an enjoyable season 1.

Perhaps, pairings can be made available earlier.

Thank you for the extraordinary effort putting this event together in such a short notice. It would be better if Lichess has a team battle for this - more than individual user issue/accept challenge.

Not sure how easy it is to follow the match score, or whether you should. Son could just play his game.

The standout feeling that I came away with after this first season is that 4NCL was not a very friendly affair. The lack of fair play ethos was almost palpable in Division 4. I think every round yielded behaviour that you do not (or seldom) see in live chess events. I understand that the first concern is about not cheating with engines, but stopping there is a mistake. Even more so than in live events, online events should set out to guard the spirit of the competition, so that juniors grow up to respect their opponent (whether they won or lost against them), and can learn positive lessons from losing a game.

Thanks for doing the tournament