

How about some faster chess?

2024-02-17

Our approach for what we offer for rated play is:

- “Make the decision process easy.”
 - You want to play this month, or you don’t.
 - You like the same thing offered again and again or you don’t

The things we strive to keep constant.

- Where we play
- What day we play
- What time the round starts
- Entry Fee, regardless of the number of rounds
- Prizes, regardless of the number of rounds
- Time Control, always the same.

We believe this makes the decision simple: You either want to play or you don’t.

Our offering may drive away some people, but we have found it attracts more than it drives away.

Over time the club accumulates more players who like what we offer. We know this works because we have applied this philosophy from 1995 through present. During that time, we went from 40 to 60 to twelve years of over 80 players per event. When we were forced to change our time control to G/60, our attendance dropped off significantly for over four years and we never recovered. Then Covid hit and we had to figure out what to “reset” the club to for long term stability.

We used to try the occasional faster time control when we had months when we couldn’t offer at least four rounds. This sometimes happened once or twice a year so we had three to six nights a year where we offered a variety of time controls, e.g. A night of G/10, an event of G/30, etc.

What we found when we looked at the years we were averaged 84 players per month and did these faster events was:

- A “good” night had 30 players, with players coming from other clubs to attend.
- That the very next event where we returned to our usual time controls, was always one of the lowest attended events that year.
 - Basically, people who would normally be playing, delayed returning from the club after a faster event.

Well over half our players clearly didn’t want the alternate events and that when we did have them, we saw a fall-off of the attendance for the next regular event.

We decided to “do what we do best”, offer a consistent product and experience. Two other clubs within reasonable traveling distance of our club offer a variety of time controls on a frequent basis, Waltham CC and Boylston CC.