

# Regulations for the FIDE World Team Rapid & Blitz Chess Championships 2026

## Annex: World Blitz Championship – Pool System and Stage 2 Pairings

### 1. Reference regulations:

<https://handbook.fide.com/files/handbook/WRTC2026Regulations.pdf>

#### Article 4.1.2.1.1

All teams shall be divided by GSC into pools of approximately the same strength. The number of pools and teams in each pool shall depend on the total number of participating teams. Each pool shall play a round robin tournament. 16 teams shall qualify for Stage 2. E.g. If the total number of teams is 40, the following system can apply: 4 pools by 10 teams each. 4 teams from each pool qualify for Stage 2. The definitive pools system shall be published once the registration is over (by 1 June 2026)

### 2. Requirements and assumptions

- a. The expected final number of teams is not over 44.
- b. 4 Round Robin pools of 11 teams will be formed.
- c. To calculate the average team ratings, the same logic as Art. 4.1.1.4 shall apply, but swapping rapid and blitz ratings.

### 3. Process to compose the 4 Pools

#### a. Pool Allocation

Pools will be allocated using the starting rank list, and allocated using the serpentine method:

Pool A	Pool B	Pool C	Pool D
1	2	3	4
8	7	6	5
9	10	11	12
...	...	...	...
44	43	42	41

Where fewer than 44 teams are registered, the place will remain vacant in the pool.

#### b. Pairing Number Allocation

Once the pools are composed, the pairing number for each group will be allocated randomly using the Swiss-Manager pairing program.

#### c. Special Dispensation

Should the allocation of teams to pools cause a situation where more than one team with the same captain can be allocated to the same pool, the Chief Arbiter **may** decide either to:

1. Swap the team with the next team in the seeding list, in order for the teams to be placed in different pools, or
2. Restrict the drawing of lots to force those teams to be paired in Round 1 of the pool.

### 4. Sorting Qualified Teams

4.1. The best four teams in each pool qualify for Stage 2 in accordance with the following criteria in order of priority:

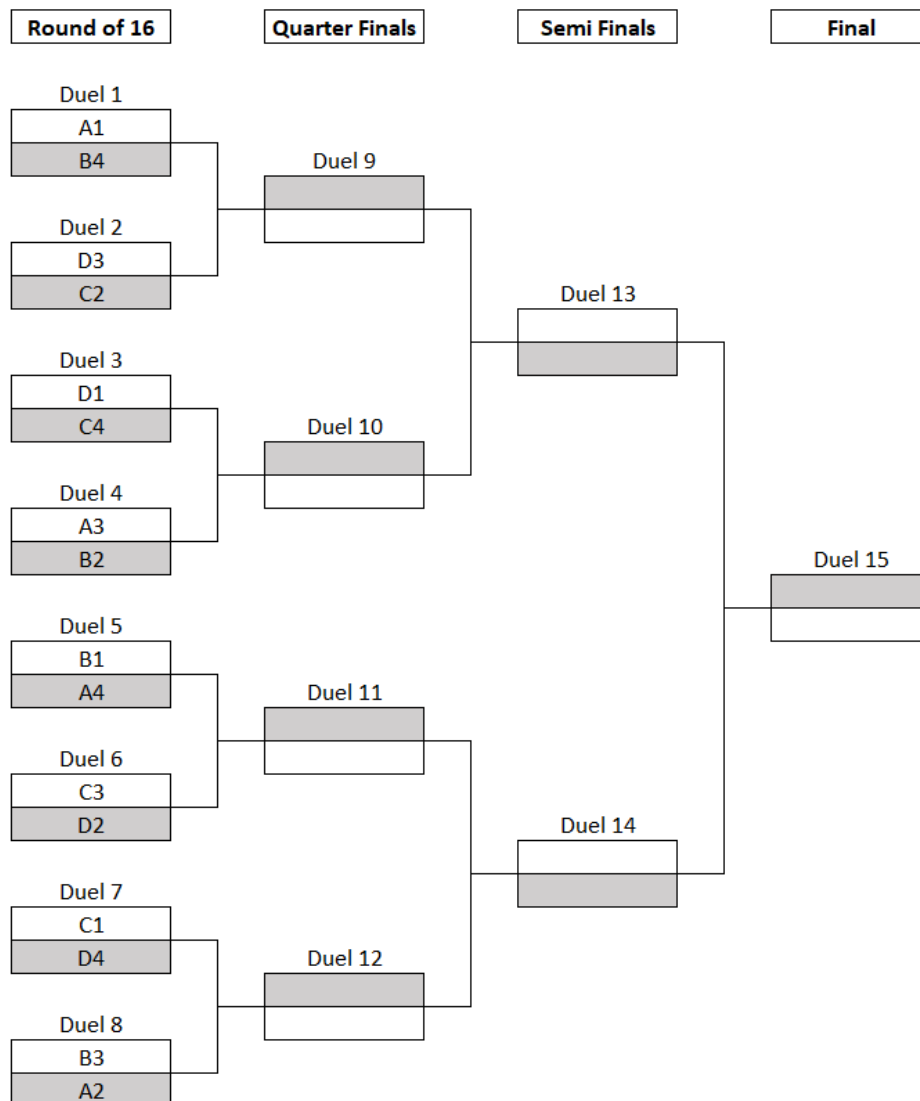
- a. Total number of Matchpoints
- b. Total number of Gamepoints
- c. Sonneborn-Berger (Matchpoints)
- d. Sonneborn-Berger (Gamepoints)
- e. Direct Encounter
- f. Direct Encounter (with Board Count)
- g. Direct Encounter (with Board Elimination)
- h. Drawing of lots.

5. Pairings for Stage 2. Play-off

For the purpose of pairings, a standard knockout bracket shall be composed:

Note 1: A grey background shows this team will be black on odd-numbered boards in match 1 of the duel; colours will be reversed for match 2 of the duel

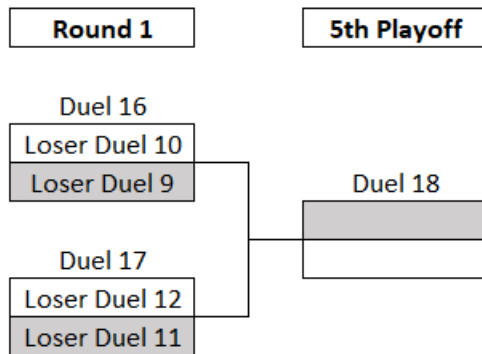
Note 2: "A1" means the team finished in 1<sup>st</sup> place in Pool A.



6. Pairings for Stage 2. Play-off (5<sup>th</sup> Place Playoff)

For the purpose of pairings, a standard knockout bracket shall be composed:

Note: A grey background shows this team will be black on odd-numbered boards in match 1 of the duel; colours will be reversed for match 2 of the duel



7. Pairings for Stage 2. Play-off (3<sup>rd</sup> Place Playoff)

The third place playoff will be contested between the Loser of Duel 13 and the Loser of Duel 14. The Loser of Duel 14 will have white on odd-numbered boards in the first match of the duel.

8. Provisional schedule for 20 June (Pools & Round of 16).

Stage	Round/Match	Time
POOLS	Round 1	2:00 pm
	Round 2	2:25 pm
	Round 3	2:50 pm
	Round 4	3:15 pm
	Round 5	3:40 pm
	Round 6	4:05 pm
	Round 7	4:30 pm
	Round 8	4:55 pm
	Round 9	5:20 pm
	Round 10	5:45 pm
	Round 11	6:10 pm
ROUND OF 16	Match 1	7:00 pm
	Match 2	7:30 pm
	TB	8:00 pm