

Galway Chess Congress

Friday 4 to Sunday 6 April 2025



GALWAY
Chess Club

Venue: Loughrea Hotel, Loughrea, Co. Galway

Entry Procedure

To **Enter online**: First, fill in the [Entry Form](#), and then pay the entry fee via PayPal at the link.

Advance entries will close 24 hours before the start of the tournament.

Entry fee:	€50
Student, retired, under 16, unemployed:	€40

A further discount of €10 applies **if entry fee received** on or before 24 March.

A discount of €20 on the standard entry fee applies for players rated over 2000 (ICU) **if entry fee received** on or before 4 March.

Free entry for IMS and GMs, **if entry received** on or before 4 March.

Entries will not be taken by telephone, and you will not be considered as entered until we have received the entry fee.

Late entries: You may also enter at the venue on the day of the first round (4 April) before 7.00 p.m., but there is a surcharge of €20 for those who enter that way, as it is a considerable extra inconvenience for the organisers.

Entries received at the venue after 7.00 p.m. on 4 April will be accepted, to start the tournament in round 2; we will try to put such entries into round 1 if that is possible, paired manually against another latecomer, but that cannot be guaranteed. Any such late entry that is not included in the round 1 draw will receive no points for round 1.

All entrants resident in Ireland have to be a member of the Irish Chess Union; to join, see icu.ie/shop.

In accordance with standard international practice, the organizers have the right to refuse any entry without giving a reason. In such a case, the entry fee will be refunded in full; that is, we will bear any transaction costs imposed by PayPal. Anybody who pays the entry fee and then has to withdraw should notify the organizers in good time and certainly on or before Wednesday 2 April (if that is possible); in such a case the entry fee will be returned, less any transaction costs. Entry fees will not be returned to anybody who does not show up without notifying us in advance.

Entries are very welcome from junior players of any age, but parents/guardian will remain responsible for their children at all times.

The submission of an entry will be taken as indicating an agreement to accept and abide by the tournament rules, including our [GDPR policy](#).

Sections

The tournament will take place in **one section, with strong accelerated pairing** in place to minimize mismatches in the early rounds, similar to the system employed successfully in 2022. Full ICU ratings, where available, will be used to determine pairings; FIDE ratings, other national ratings, or, failing that, online ratings (which may be adjusted by the organizers) will be used for those who do not have an ICU rating.

Prizes

The total prize fund is €2500, made up of cash prizes and engraved trophies. Also perpetual trophies will be awarded to the overall winner, the highest-placed player with a current ICU rating below 1600, and the highest-placed player living in, or born in, Connaught.

Cash prizes are shown below. The place prizes are guaranteed. The number and size of the rating prizes may be adjusted up or down to reflect the number of entries. (The last time the tournament took place, in 2023, the number of entries allowed us to raise the announced prize fund by €700; we hope that numbers this year will allow us to do that again.) The exact prize structure will be announced before the start of round 3.

	1st	2nd	3rd
Place Prizes	€1000	€500	€300
Rating Prizes			
Under-2000	€200	-	-
Under-1800	€150	-	-
Under-1600	€120	-	-

The bands for the rating prizes may be changed depending on the profile of entries. For instance, if there should be no entrants rated over 2000, then the cut-off point for the top rating prize will be reduced.

In the event of a tie for any prize, the prize money will be shared between all players on the same number of points.

No player may win more than one prize; anybody who is eligible for two or more prizes, will receive the largest one. For instance, if you are the outright highest-placed player under-2000 and are also outright third overall, you will receive the third prize of €300 and not the rating prize as well. But if the outright highest-placed player under-2000 is also in a tie for third place, he or she will receive the rating prize of €200 rather than their (lower) share of the place prize.

A player who cannot provide evidence of over-the-board playing strength may only be awarded 50% of any prize money due as a rating prize, at the organizers' discretion.

Perpetual trophies. Three perpetual trophies will be awarded: the Galway Chess Congress Perpetual Shield to the overall winner, the Hugh Finan Memorial Cup to the highest-placed under-1600 player [this was under-1200 before the ICU's rating adjustment in May 2024], and the Reynolds Electronics Perpetual Trophy to the Connaught Champion. In the event of a tie for any of these trophies it will be resolved by a tie-break using the following criteria: first, Median-Buchholz; second, Buchholz; third, greater number of games with black; fourth, progressive scores; fifth, toss of a coin.

Trophies. In addition, there will be plentiful further prizes which will take the form of engraved trophies. These will be awarded to players coming first and second in rating bands of 200 points from 2000 down to unrated. (This distribution may be changed, depending on the profile of entries. We will announce the exact allocation of rating trophies before the start of round 3.) In the event of a tie, trophies will be awarded to *all* players in the tie.

The prize-giving ceremony will be held as soon as possible after the end of the last round; usually that has been about 6.30 p.m. Prizes will not be given out before the ceremony: money will be sent to any prize winners not present at the ceremony a few days later, but we regret that we cannot post out the perpetual trophies. The engraved trophies will be posted to the prize-winners within a couple of weeks of the tournament.

Playing Schedule

Round No.	Start Time	Day	Date
Round 1	8 p.m.	Friday	4 April
Round 2	10 a.m.	Saturday	5 April
Round 3	2.30 p.m.	Saturday	5 April
Round 4	7 p.m.	Saturday	5 April
Round 5	10 a.m.	Sunday	6 April
Round 6	2.30 p.m.	Sunday	6 April

Players who have not arrived at the board an hour after the starting time will forfeit the game. If you are travelling and realise that you will arrive late, it would be a great help if you could contact the organizers at 086 8701483 before the start of the round.

A player who forfeits a game will be deemed to have withdrawn from the tournament and will not be included in the pairings for subsequent rounds; the organizers, at their discretion, may reinstate a player thus excluded upon the player's request.

Time limit: 90 minutes for the game, plus an increment of 15 seconds from move 1.

Other Tournament Rules

The current FIDE rules of chess will apply (available [here](#)).

Please note in particular the following.

Mobile phones

You are strongly urged not to bring mobile phones or other electronic devices to the event. If you do bring a mobile phone, or any device capable of containing a chess programme, it must be **completely switched off** for the entire duration of your game, and must also always be completely switched off in the playing venue whilst any game is still being played. If any player's mobile phone makes any noise during their game, that player automatically loses the game. If you are found using or consulting such a device (or having any communication from anyone else who is using or consulting such a device) whilst your game is in progress, you will immediately lose your game and be expelled from the tournament; a report will be prepared for the Irish Chess Union, which might impose further disciplinary sanctions.

If you feel that you have to be in contact with the outside world during your game – perhaps because you expect an urgent and important message – you should consult an arbiter, who will do what he can to help you by looking after your phone for you. In no circumstances will you be allowed to use any communication device yourself during your game.

Spectators (including parents) must not have a mobile phone, or any device capable of containing a chess programme, switched on in the playing venue whilst any game is still being played. Note that the “playing venue” includes all the areas which a player has access to during their game, including the toilets, bar, lobby, and smoking area.

If you suspect a player is using a mobile phone or device containing a chess programme, you should immediately inform an arbiter; you should not attempt to intervene yourself.

Keeping score

You are required to keep a record of the moves in your game so long as you have 5 minutes or more left on your clock, irrespective of how much time your opponent has left. Once your time goes below 5 minutes you may either continue to keep recording the moves or stop doing so, at your discretion. If the time shown on your clock subsequently rises above 5 minutes, you are not required to resume recording the moves.

Byes

A player who does not wish to play in all rounds will receive one half-point bye if requested in advance of the round being paired. Any subsequent bye after the first, or any bye in the last two rounds, will receive no points.

Disability

If you have any disability that makes it difficult or impossible for you to play in a standard manner – for instance, you have difficulty in pressing the clock or writing down the moves, or you require designated seating – please notify the organizer at the time that you enter. (If the disability emerges after you have entered, please notify us as soon as possible.)

If it is essential for you to have an electronic device on your person for health reasons, please notify the organizer at the time that you enter. On arrival at the venue, please contact an organizer or arbiter so that they can inspect the device and approve it. Before each game you should inform your opponent that you have such a device and that it has been approved by the arbiter.

Appeals

We regret that because of the short time between rounds, we cannot allow appeals against the arbiters' decisions. However, if you think there has been some mistake – for instance in the pairings – we would be grateful if you could draw it to our attention as soon as you can.

Enquiries

Enquiries are welcomed to **GalwayChess@gmail.com**

How To Get There

By Road

The Loughrea Hotel's Eircode is H62 Y189. [Note that on the maps on the hotel's website, the destinations shown are the centre of Loughrea, *not* the hotel.]

To get there from Galway. You can **either** (a) take the M6 towards Dublin; at Junction 16 take the N65 exit for Loughrea; then follow signs for Loughrea; after 7 kilometres you will come to a roundabout (Monearmore roundabout), at which you take the 4th exit (R380) signposted Gort; after 2 kms you will come to another roundabout (the Caherlavine roundabout), at which take the 1st exit (R380/R446) signposted for Loughrea. The hotel is about another 250 metres on your left, set back a bit from the road. **Or** (b) [shorter, but best avoided except at quiet times of day] take the Old Dublin Road (R338); at the T-junction by the Galway Clinic, turn right onto the N67; at the roundabout by the Maldron Hotel continue on the N67; at the next roundabout take the 1st left (R446) to Craughwell; continue on this road (the old Dublin road) through Craughwell to Loughrea; at the first roundabout after Craughwell (the Caherlavine roundabout) take the 3rd exit (R380/R446) signposted for Loughrea; the hotel is about 250 metres on your left, set back a bit from the road.

To get there from Dublin and the east. Get on the M6 towards Galway. **To get to the hotel do not follow the hotel's map.** Instead take exit 16, for Loughrea (N65). Continue until the Monearmore roundabout and take the 4th exit (R380) signposted to Gort. At the next roundabout (the Caherlavine roundabout) take the 1st exit (R380/R446) signposted for Loughrea; the hotel is about 250 meters on your left, set back a bit from the road.

To get there from Ennis and the south. Take the M18 towards Galway. You then have a choice of routes. **(a)** Much the shortest, but likely not the quickest at busy times, is to exit at junction 16 on the R380/R458 to Loughrea and Gort. Follow the R458 for 1.5 km. until you see a left turn for R380 (signposted Loughrea). Continue for 23 kms into the centre of Loughrea. After a Circle K petrol station on your left, turn left (still on R380); the hotel is on your right (setback a bit from the road) about half-way to the roundabout. **(b)** Continue on the M18 until you reach the M6; join the M6 towards Dublin. At Junction 16 take the N65 exit for Loughrea; then follow signs for Loughrea; after 7 kilometres you will come to a roundabout (Monearmore roundabout), at which you take the 4th exit (R380) signposted Gort; after 2 kms you will come to another roundabout (the Caherlavine roundabout), at which take the 1st exit (R380/R446) signposted for Loughrea. The hotel is about another 250 metres on your left, set back a bit from the road.

By Public Transport

From Galway.

CityLink run a **bus service** between Galway Coach Station and Loughrea (also stopping at GMIT, Oranmore and Craughwell; timetable [here](#)); it takes 30 minutes, but it is not very frequent. It is then a 20 minute walk to the hotel (according to google maps). To get there for the first round on Friday, the 1800 bus (arriving at 1830) would be suitable; that is the last bus of the day in that direction. Returning, there are buses at 2250 (if your game is over quickly) and 0050; these are also the bus times back on Saturday. To get there for the rounds on Saturday and Sunday you would need to catch the 730 (arriving 805). Buses back after the end of the tournament on Sunday leave at 1850 and 2050.

By train. The nearest station is Craughwell, from where a taxi would take about 10 minutes. This is on the Galway-Limerick line. There are trains on the Friday leaving Galway at 1752 (arriving 1830) and 1848 (arriving 1924). There are no suitable trains for the return on Friday evening, or getting there or back on Saturday, but on Sunday, strangely, there is a train leaving Galway at 825, arriving in Craughwell at 855, and you could return at the end of the tournament on the 1941 (arriving Galway 2014; this is the last train).

On the Dublin line, the nearest station is Athenry, from where a taxi would take about 20 minutes. Trains leave Galway on the Friday at 1818 (arriving 1839) and 1848 (arriving 1915; this is the train to Limerick that also goes to Craughwell) – and 1925 (arriving 1945) but that would not get you to the venue on time. On Saturday morning there are trains at 840 (arriving 859) and 925 (arriving 948 – again too late to get to your board by the start time of 10). On Sunday there are trains at 800 (arriving 818) and 825 (arriving 846; this is the train to Limerick that also goes to Craughwell) but nothing suitable later. Getting back the last trains to Galway on Friday and Saturday evenings leave Athenry at 2245, which is probably too early to be useful on the Friday, though you might be able to catch it on Saturday. After the tournament, you could get back on the 1850, and there are also trains at 1955, 2104 and 2225.

Lift arrangement. Public transport back to Galway on the Friday and Saturday nights is not good. There will doubtless be people driving back towards Galway from the venue. If anybody who does not have their own transport could use a lift back to Galway, then, on request, we will put out a call to anybody who is driving back and is willing to give lifts to rendez-vous in the hotel lobby. But we offer no guarantee that a lift can be arranged, and any such lift arrangement is entirely at the participants' own risk. Anybody who hopes for a lift and fails to get one will have to take the late bus back to Galway, or a taxi, costing about €80.

From Dublin, and some places en route.

CityLink run a **bus service** between Dublin and Loughrea (also stopping at some intermediate places, for instance Athlone and Ballinasloe; timetable [here](#)). It is then a 20 minute walk to the hotel (according to google maps). To get there for round 1 you would need to catch the 1600, which arrives in Loughrea at 1850. (There are also earlier buses at 2-hour intervals.) Returning on the Sunday, the last bus leaves at 1830, arriving in Dublin at 2140.

By train the best stations to go to would be Ballinasloe, from where a taxi would take about 30 minutes or Woodlawn (20 minutes by taxi – but note that Woodlawn is not near a significant town, and it might take a while to get a taxi). The last possible train leaves Dublin at 1730, arriving at Ballinasloe at 1921. You would cut it less fine on the 1630, arriving at Ballinasloe at 1807 and Woodlawn at 1819. On the Sunday, the last train back (the last train of the day) leaves Woodlawn at 1834 and Ballinasloe at 1845.

From Limerick and Ennis

There are trains to Craughwell, from where a taxi would take about 10 minutes, but there are no suitable trains to get there for Friday evening – the trains arrive at Craughwell at 1541 and 2001. You could return on the Sunday on the train leaving Craughwell at 1904 (this is the last train).

Accommodation

Tournament Venue: Loughrea Hotel and Spa, Loughrea, Co. Galway
loughreahotelandspa.com 091-880088

We have reserved a number of bedrooms at the Loughrea Hotel at a reduced price of Single B&B €149.00 per night, and Double B&B €159.00 (not cheap, but no decent hotels are in Ireland at the moment). To book a bedroom, phone the hotel and say that you are playing in the chess event. **Please note that the hotel is only holding rooms for us until Monday 17 March.**

The award-winning spa facilities at the hotel (see the hotel website) are available to all at the Congress; the hotel advises anybody wishing to use the spa to book in advance.