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**2018 Grand Chess Tour Participants, Event Dates, and Tour Point Regulations**

The Grand Chess Tour (GCT) is pleased to announce the list of players that have been invited to participate as full tour participants for the 2018 GCT. The 2018 GCT event dates and tour point regulations have also now been finalised and are detailed below.

**2018 Tour Participants**

A total of 10 players have been offered full tour contracts for the 2018 tour. The 2018 tour invitees were selected in line with the following process:

#'s	Selection Methodology	Notes
1 - 3	Final 2017 GCT Tour Standings	The top three finishes from the 2017 Grand Chess Tour
4 - 6	Average of FIDE Classical Ratings	Top 3 (not already selected) based on the average of the 12 monthly FIDE classical ratings for the period from 1 February 2017 until 1 January 2018
7 - 9	Universal Rating System	Top 3 (not already selected) based on the Universal Rating List as at 1 January 2018
10	GCT Advisory Board Nominee	Selected by the GCT Advisory Board

The players that have been invited to participate in the 2018 Grand Chess Tour according to the above process are as follows:

1. GM Magnus Carlsen (NOR) – 1<sup>st</sup> place, 2017 Grand Chess Tour
2. GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (FRA) – 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 2017 Grand Chess Tour
3. GM Levon Aronian (ARM) – 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 2017 Grand Chess Tour
4. GM Fabiano Caruana, (USA) – 1<sup>st</sup> Average FIDE Classic Rating
5. GM Wesley So (USA) – 2<sup>nd</sup> Average FIDE Classic Rating
6. GM Vladimir Kramnik (RUS) – 3<sup>rd</sup> Average FIDE Classic Rating
7. GM Hikaru Nakamura (USA) – 1<sup>st</sup> Universal Rating System
8. GM Alexander Grischuk (RUS) – 2<sup>nd</sup> Universal Rating System
9. GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (AZE) - 3<sup>rd</sup> Universal Rating System
10. GM Viswanathan Anand (IND) – GCT Advisory Board Nominee

GM Viswanathan Anand was selected by the GCT Advisory Board after taking account of his status as a former World Champion and as the reigning World Rapid Chess Champion. GM Anand was also ranked 9<sup>th</sup> per the Average FIDE Classical Ratings and 11<sup>th</sup> according to the URS™ rating list as at 1 January 2018.

**2018 Tour Dates**

The dates for the 2018 Grand Chess Tour events will be follows:

- 2018 YourNextMove (Rapid & Blitz), June 10 – 17, 2018, Brussels-Leuven, Belgium
- 2018 Paris GCT (Rapid & Blitz), June 17 - 26, 2018, Paris, France
- 2018 St Louis Rapid (Rapid & Blitz), August, 2018 in St. Louis, Missouri USA
- 2018 Sinquefield Cup (Classical), August, 2018 in St. Louis, Missouri USA

The 2018 London Chess Classic & GCT Tour Finals will take place on dates still to be confirmed during the period between December 10, 2018 and December 21, 2018 in London, UK

**2018 Tour Points Structure**

2018 Tour Points will be awarded based on the final rank of each player in the events as set out below. Tour Point allocations for the 2018 Sinquefield Cup have been increased this year to ensure that a suitable balance is maintained between classical chess and rapid and blitz chess.

Another important change is that GCT Tour Points in 2018 shall be shared equally between tied players in all individual events. Tie-breaks will still be played to determine the overall winner of events but will not impact the allocation of GCT Tour Points in 2018.

<b>Place</b>	<b>Sinquefield Cup</b>	<b>Rapid &amp; Blitz Events (based on combined standings)</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	18/20*	12/13*
2 <sup>nd</sup>	15	10
3 <sup>rd</sup>	12	8
4 <sup>th</sup>	10	7
5 <sup>th</sup>	8	6
6 <sup>th</sup>	6	5
7 <sup>th</sup>	4	4
8 <sup>th</sup>	3	3
9 <sup>th</sup>	2	2
10 <sup>th</sup>	1	1

*\* Any player who wins an Event outright (without the need for a playoff) shall earn one extra bonus Tour Point in a Rapid & Blitz event and two extra bonus Tour Points in the Sinquefield Cup.*

**GCT Chief Arbiter**

IA David Sedgwick has been appointed as the GCT Chief Arbiter for 2018.

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**About the URS™** (<http://universalrating.com>)

The Universal Rating System (URS™), is a revolutionary new sport's rating system designed to assess the relative strength of participants across a wide variety of competitor vs competitor sports or games. The URS™ was developed as the result of a collaborative research project funded by the Grand Chess Tour, the Kasparov Chess Foundation and the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis. The system is the product of detailed research conducted over more than two years by some of the world's leading experts in methods of rating chess players.

**About the Grand Chess Tour** (<http://grandchesstour.org>)

The Grand Chess Tour is a circuit of international events, each demonstrating the highest level of organization for the world's best players. The Tour was created in partnership between the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis (Sinquefeld Cup) and Chess Promotions, Ltd. (London Chess Classic). The legendary Garry Kasparov, one of the world's greatest ambassadors for chess, inspired the Grand Chess Tour and helped solidify the partnership between the organizers.

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**Grand Chess Tour**

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