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For Immediate Release

Grand Chess Tour Introduces Innovative Universal Rating System

The Grand Chess Tour (GCT) is pleased to announce that the selection of the 2017 GCT Tour wildcards will be based on a new rating system. This new system will be known as the Universal Rating System (URS™). The first URS™ list will be officially published on 1 January 2017 and will be accompanied by the launch of the official website explaining the methodology.

The development of the system has been sponsored by the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis and the Kasparov Chess Foundation. It represents an innovative approach to the computation of chess ratings which have relied on Elo-based calculations since the late 1960's. In future, the URS™ is expected to have applications beyond chess and other sports.

The new system will introduce the concept of a universal chess rating, a single rating value that represents a player's universal strength across all time controls. The release of the initial rating list on 1 January 2017 will represent the culmination of 2 years of research and analysis by a team of notable experts in the fields of mathematics and statistics.

The GCT will be assessing the results and performance of the new rating system during the initial pilot period which is expected to last a calendar year. We will welcome feedback from both players and other interested parties once the first URS™ rating list is released in order to help the research team further optimise the parameters of the URS™.

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About The Grand Chess Tour

The Grand Chess Tour is a circuit of international events, each demonstrating the highest level of organization for the world's best players. The 2016 Tour was created in partnership between the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis (Sinquefield 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. His tireless efforts to popularize the game around the world mirror the goals and ambitions of the Grand Chess Tour. The 2016 Grand Chess Tour consisted of the Paris Grand Chess Tour in Paris, France June 9-12; Your Next Move™ Grand Chess Tour in Leuven, Belgium June 17-20; the Sinquefield Cup in Saint Louis, USA August 5-16; and the London Classic in London, UK December 8-19, 2016.

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