

SOG Grandmasters Series



SOG Grandmasters Series

Rulebook (2024)

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1. The SOG Grandmasters Series ("SOG GMS"/"Event"/"Tournament") is a premier competition for skill-based mind sports players hosted by the SOG Sports Private Limited, as affiliated by Skillhub Online Games Federation ("Organiser"). This tournament aims to elevate recognized skill-based sport in India. These rules ("Rules") of the SOG Grandmasters Series shall apply to all individual players who are willing to participate in the Event (each a "Participant"/"Player").
- 1.2. The SOG Grandmasters Series 2024 shall feature three different game titles, namely: Indian Chess Masters (ICM), Indian Chess Masters for Blind (ICMB) and Indian Rummy Grandmasters (IRG).
- 1.3. These Rules are established as a framework to ensure the integrity of the system set by the Organisers of the Event promoting fair play and maintaining the highest standards of gameplay among all Participants. These Rules form a binding agreement between the Participants and the Organisers and shall govern the relationship between the Participants and the Organisers. By Participating in the Event, all Participants hereby indicate their acceptance of these Rules and hence all Participants are advised to read the Rules carefully before participating in the Event.
- 1.4. The Tournament shall be hosted and conducted on an online mobile software applications for each game-title owned and operated by credible, authentic and fairplay promoting bodies/companies. The Participants shall only be allowed to play in the Tournament through the Platforms vetted and selected by the SOG Organising and SOG Ethics Committee. In addition to these Rules, the Participants shall be bound by the terms and conditions and other platform policies of the Platforms.

## 2. Definitions:

- 2.1. SOG GMS Executive Committee: Shall mean the panel of individuals comprising the operations team of the Organisers. They shall be responsible for overall management and execution of the Tournament.
- 2.2. SOG GMS Ethics Committee: Shall mean a panel of individuals comprising of professors from Indian Institute of Management - Bangalore, Indian Statistical Institute & other such reputed institutes, which shall be the final decision-making authority with respect to all issues related to the gameplay of the Tournament for the Zonal and National level rounds of the Tournament.

### 3. Eligibility and Registration

- 3.1. Only individuals above the age of 18 years shall be entitled to participate and register for the Event.
- 3.2. Individuals can register for participation in the Tournament through the website of SOG Grandmasters Series, i.e., [www.soggrandmasters.com](http://www.soggrandmasters.com)
- 3.3. While registering for the Tournament, a Participant shall be required to provide the following details: (a) name; (b) phone number; (c) age; (d) state of residence.
- 3.4. Only individuals from the respective states of a particular zone shall be eligible to participate in the Event as per the zone break-up below:

Zone	States
South Zone 1	Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep
North & North East	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Manipur, Ladakh, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal
West Zone	Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli
South Zone 2	Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- 3.5. Participants shall only be able to participate in the zonal segment of the Tournament wherein the Participant is located. Accordingly, each Participant shall be required to provide a valid address proof evidencing their residence status in that particular zone. A valid proof of address document shall be Adhaar Card, Voter ID Card, Driving License, or any other official documentation confirming eligibility for representation from the specified zone. The Participants hereby agree and consent that any personal details provided by them for registering in the Tournament is being provided voluntarily and such details may be shared with third parties, including advertising/marketing agency, broadcast agency and more such other agencies, who are engaging in providing services to the Organisers with respect to the conducting of the Event.

- 3.6. The usage of the residence proof as provided by a Participant under Clause 3.5 shall be subject to the privacy policy of the relevant party to which such proof is provided.
- 3.7. Each Participant agrees and undertakes that it shall provide a proof of residence that belongs to the relevant Participant and shall not provide a document as proof of address that belongs to any other person.
- 3.8. Employees of the Organiser or any of their respective affiliates shall not be eligible to participate in the Tournament.
- 3.9. While registering for the Tournament, a Participant shall be allowed to choose his/her username which shall be the screen name of such Participant for the Tournament. The Participants shall ensure that the username chosen must not be indecent, objectionable, offensive, or unlawful. Usernames that are found to violate the intellectual property of any entity, reveal personal information, or be suggestive of an advertising or promotional activity, may be rejected. Usernames chosen during registration and cannot be changed during the tournament. All usernames are subject to review and approval by the SOG GMS Executive Committee.
- 3.10. To participate in the Tournament, all Players shall ensure that they have the latest updated version of the Platform on their devices to play the Online Satellite Qualifiers.
- 3.11. Tournament Equipment:
- 3.11.1. For the offline rounds of the Tournament, i.e., Zonals and Nationals, the qualifying Participants shall be provided with the tournament equipment, including mobile phones, Players will not be allowed to use personal devices for the duration of the Zonal matches. All mobile devices will be checked by the SOG GMS Executive Committee for technical compliance and anti-bug specifications to ensure a level playing field for all Participants. The provided equipment includes but is not limited to:
- Mobile Phones (with necessary accessories such as chargers and cables)
  - Headsets (noise-cancelling)
  - Tables and Chairs
  - Backup Phones
- 3.11.2. Before the start of each round of the offline stages of the Tournament, the devices of each Participant shall be checked by the relevant Participant. The Participants shall not be allowed to download/install/uninstall any apps or software on these devices. Phones must be configured according to the Tournament requirements, and settings such as FPS and volume may not be changed without permission of the SOG GMS committee. Players are prohibited from using these devices to access social media or websites, and shall not be allowed to view live streams of the Tournament during matches. All Participants must ensure that the devices allotted to them remain in their designated holders during gameplay and otherwise, and Players may only touch them after the phase is complete.

- 3.11.3. All audio equipment, including headphones, microphones, and audio controllers, will be provided by the SOG GMS Committee. Players must maintain a minimum volume level determined by the SOG GMS Committee. The referee can ask players to adjust their volume if necessary. Headphones must be worn directly on the player's ears throughout the match, and players are not allowed to obstruct them with hats, scarves, or other clothing items.
- 3.11.4. In case of equipment or technical issues during the Tournament, a Player or the SOG GMS Ethics Committee can request a technical review. The SOG GMS Ethics Committee will troubleshoot and diagnose any problems. If necessary, the SOG GMS Ethics Committee can order a replacement of the equipment at their discretion. All decisions regarding equipment replacement are at the sole discretion of the SOG GMS Ethics Committee.
- 3.11.5. No Player is allowed to interfere with or touch any equipment provided at the tournament venue, including lights, cameras, or other devices set up by the SOG GMS Ethics Committee. Players and team members are strictly prohibited from standing on chairs, tables, or other equipment at the venue. All participants must adhere to the instructions provided by the SOG GMS Ethics Committee and ensure that they do not interfere with any tournament equipment during the event.

#### 4. Tournament Structure

- 4.1. The Tournament shall consist of three primary stages:
  - 4.1.1. Online Satellite Qualifiers: Participants who have registered through the SOG GMS website: [www.soggrandmasters.com](http://www.soggrandmasters.com) will participate in the zonal online qualifiers held on the Platform.
  - 4.1.2. Zonal: The winners from the Online Satellite Qualifiers will advance to the Zonals stage to compete against other qualified Participants from the same zone.
  - 4.1.3. National: The winners from all Zonals will advance to the Nationals stage to compete against one another for the title of 'National Champion'
- 4.2. The Zonals and National stages of the Tournament shall be conducted at an offline venue, the details of which will be communicated to the Participants who qualify to such stages by the Organisers.
- 4.3. Competition Prize Distribution  
Prizes will be awarded to individual Players based on their final standings in the Tournament. Prizes are non-transferable and will be distributed directly to the winning Players ("Potential Winners"). Potential Winners who are eligible for a prize must assume all liability for its use.

#### 4.4. Requirements to Collect a Prize Award

- 4.4.1. Potential Winners must comply with these Rules, and winning is contingent upon fulfilling all eligibility and participation requirements. No Player will have the right to claim a prize unless all conditions outlined in these Rules and any additional applicable guidelines are met.
- 4.4.2. Potential Winners will be notified after the tournament has concluded. Each Potential Winner is required to follow the instructions provided in the notification.
- 4.4.3. To claim a prize, each Potential Winner must complete and sign, within the prescribed period outlined in the notification, an affidavit of eligibility, a liability/publicity release form, and all applicable tax forms as may be required to receive the prize. Such forms and affidavits shall be provided by the Organisers to the Potential Winners.

4.5. Costs Associated with Collecting a Prize: Participants are responsible for any costs and expenses related to their prize not explicitly covered by the Tournament. This includes national or local taxes, such as VAT/GST/TDS, which are associated with the receipt or use of any prizes and are the Participant's sole responsibility.

#### 5. Participant's Conduct

- 5.1. Individual Participation: Participants are only allowed to compete and participate in the Tournament as an individual and are strictly prohibited from representing any organization, team, or group at the venue. All Participants are expected to maintain their identity without affiliations during the tournament..
- 5.2. No Substitutions: The Participants shall not be allowed any substitutions and each Participant must compete individually in all scheduled games without the option to replace themselves at any stage of the Tournament.
- 1.1. Absenteeism and Missed Attendance: With respect to the Zonals and Nationals stages of the Tournament which will be held at an offline location, the Participants shall ensure that they reach the venue at the specified time as may be notified to the qualifying Participants by the Organisers. If a Participant fails to arrive at the venue on time or remains absent from the table just before the tournament's commencement or any subsequent rounds, the Participant will be directly eliminated. No exceptions will be made for absenteeism, and the match schedule will proceed without delay. This rule is enforced to maintain the integrity and smooth operation of the Tournament. .
- 5.3. Restriction on Logos and Attire: With respect to the Zonals and Nationals stages of the Tournament which will be held at an offline location, Participants cannot feature any logos, symbols, or branding of outside organizations, teams, or sponsors on their attire, including jerseys, t-shirts, or other clothing during the Event. However, jerseys may include logos, names, or branding related to the Organisers and its official partners, as approved by the SOG GMS

Committee. Participants may be provided with T-shirts which may contain branding of the Organizers and its official partners, in such a case the Participants shall be required to wear the t-shirts as provided by the Organisers for their participation in the Zonals and Nationals stages of the Tournament. Players will not be permitted to wear their apparel during the tournament. All participants must wear the official clothing the SOG GMS Committee provides for all matches and appearances. The official apparel includes T-shirts & jackets and will feature branding related to the SOG Grandmasters Series and its official partners.

- 5.4. Players must wear long dark pants and closed-toe shoes during the Tournament. Short pants, sweatpants, athletic pants, and pajama pants are not considered appropriate attire. The on-stage attire provided by the SOG GMS Committee is mandatory during all matches, pre-match, and post-match interviews.
  - 5.5. Review and Approval: All player attire must be reviewed and approved by the SOG GMS Committee before being used in the Tournament. The SOG GMS Committee reserves the right to reject any attire that does not meet professional standards or guidelines. No changes to attire will be permitted once approved, except under exceptional circumstances approved by the SOG GMS Committee.
  - 5.6. Code of Conduct: All Participants shall adhere to the Code of Conduct as Annexed to these Rules.
  - 5.7. Sponsorship Guidelines: Players are not allowed to have individual sponsors. Instead, all Players will wear jerseys featuring the Organiser's official sponsors and must support these sponsors through various promotional activities. The SOG GMS Executive Committee can approve or reject any sponsorships to ensure they meet the Tournament's professional standards.
6. Offline Stages Set-up and Procedures
- 6.1. The Players shall be required to physically present the proof of address uploaded by them during the registration process for verification and identification purposes.
  - 6.2. The Players shall be required to submit additional documents/information as may be required by the Organisers to enable their participation in the Event.

### 6.3. Referees

6.3.1. The SOG GMS Ethics Committee shall appoint individuals who will oversee all game-related matters, including issues arising before, during, and after the games conducted during the Zonals and National stages of the Tournament (“Referees”).

The Referees shall be responsible for:

- (a) Verifying each Player's registration and account setup before the match.
- (b) Supervise all phases of the match and monitor the conduct of individuals in the match environment.
- (c) Inspecting and verifying players’ mobile devices and ensuring compliance with technical standards.
- (d) Implementing the basic match procedures, such as starting, pausing, and resuming games.
- (e) Handling technical issues that arise during the game.
- (f) Making decisions to resolve in-game disputes
- (g) Issuing penalties for non-compliance with the rules during the match.
- (h) Confirming match results and documenting the outcomes.

6.3.2. Referee Conduct: Referees must always act professionally and make impartial decisions. Referees are expected to avoid bias or prejudice towards players or other individuals involved in the match.

6.3.3. Appeal Process: Players may appeal referee decisions, but appeals must be communicated to the SOG GMS Ethics Committee for review and arbitration. Referees are not authorized to independently agree to any demands from players. The SOG GMS Ethics Committee will review any appeal related to referee judgments and can reassess decisions made before, during, or after a match to ensure proper procedures are followed.

6.4. Venue: The Zonal and Nationals stages of the Tournament shall be held in an offline location as may be notified to the Participants by the Organisers.

6.5. Match Area: The Venue will have a match area where in a designated space tournament equipment shall be kept. Players' access to the match area shall be restricted to the extent, only Players that are participating in the specific stage of the Tournament shall be allowed to enter the match area.

6.6. Holding Area: Access to the Holding Area is exclusively reserved for Players and members of the SOG GMS Executive Committee and SOG GMS Ethics Committee. No food is allowed in the Holding Area, but non-alcoholic beverages will be provided.



- 6.7. Player Lounge: Access to the Player Lounge is limited to members of the SOG GMS Executive Committee, broadcasters, media, and promotion personnel, with entry permission determined by the SOG GMS Executive Committee. Players must follow all applicable rules and maintain order within the Player Lounge. Loud noises or disruptive behavior are prohibited to avoid disturbing others.
  - 6.8. Pre-Tournament Briefing: Before the zonal finals of the Tournament, the SOG GMS Executive Committee will hold a briefing to inform Players of essential details such as the schedule, the version of the Platform to be used, match procedures, emergency measures, and any other relevant updates.
  - 6.9. Player Submissions and Setup: Each Player's seat and game setup will be pre-determined by the Organisers, and Players must adhere to the seating plan. No substitutions or changes in the lineup are allowed once the Tournament begins.
  - 6.10. Equipment check and set-up: Players will be given designated time blocks before their match to verify that all equipment provided by the SOG GMS Executive Committee functions correctly. Players may only leave the match area once setup begins with permission from the on-site referee. The setup includes:
    - Ensuring the quality of all SOG GMS-provided equipment.
    - Proper connection and calibration of devices.
    - Adjusting in-game settings within the Platform.
    - Limited in-app games for practice, as permitted.
  - 6.11. Technical Support: Representatives of the Organisers will be available during the setup time to provide technical support and resolve equipment-related issues. If a Player encounters technical difficulties during the setup process or at any point during the game, they must immediately notify the referee. Players are responsible for identifying and reporting technical issues during the match to ensure smooth gameplay.
7. Investigations and Penalty of Non-compliance
    - 7.1. Investigation and Monitoring of Compliance: The SOG GMS Executive Committee and the SOG GMS Ethics Committee reserves the right to monitor and enforce compliance with all official rules to maintain the Tournament's integrity. All Players must cooperate fully with investigations initiated by the SOG GMS Executive Committee and the SOG GMS Ethics Committee . Any dishonesty, withholding of information, tampering with evidence, or failure to assist in an investigation will be treated as violating the official rules.
    - 7.2. Penalty Enforcement: Any violation of these Rules, whether through deliberate actions or negligence, will result in penalties determined by the SOG GMS Executive Committee and the SOG GMS Ethics Committee . The SOG GMS Executive Committee and SOG GMS Ethics Committee 's decisions regarding rule violations or other disputes related to the tournament will be final and binding.
    - 7.3. Penalties
    - 7.4. Penalties for violating these Rules may include, but are not limited to:
      - Verbal Warning(s)
      - Written Warning(s)
      - Game Forfeiture(s)

- Match Forfeiture(s)
- Player Suspension(s)
- Prize Forfeiture(s)
- Player Disqualification(s)
- Ban from Future SOG GMS and other tournaments or events hosted by the Organisers.

## 8. Additional Terms

### 8.1. Publicity Release

By participating in the Tournament, you give the Organiser and/ or its affiliates, official sponsors and partners of the Tournament, the permission to use your name, likeness, image, voice, and/or appearance as such may be embodied in any pictures, photos, video recordings, audiotapes, digital images, and the like, taken or made in relation to the Tournament and any promotions, events, or contests to follow. You agree that the Organiser and/ or its affiliates, official sponsors and partners of the Tournament have the right to publish your saved item details for any communication, promotions, events, or contests that follow. You agree that the Organiser and/ or its affiliates, official sponsors and partners of the Tournaments have complete ownership of such pictures, etc., including the entire copyright, and may use them for any purpose. These uses include, but are not limited to illustrations, bulletins, exhibitions, videotapes, reprints, reproductions, publications, advertisements, and any promotional or educational materials in any medium now known or later developed, including the internet. You acknowledge that you will not receive any compensation, etc. for the use of such pictures, etc., and hereby release the Organiser and/ or its affiliates, official sponsors and partners of the Tournament and their respective agents and assigns from any and all claims which arise out of or are in any way connected with such use.

8.2. These Rules shall be governed by the laws of India and any dispute in relation to these Rules or any matter arising here from shall be subject to the jurisdictions of courts in Delhi.

8.3. Each Participant shall be solely responsible for any consequence resulting from his/her use of the Platform and participation in the Tournament, and the Player understands that the Organisers and/or its official partners assume no liability or responsibility for any financial loss that You may sustain in this regard.

## Annexure: Code of Conduct

The Players hereby agree to not be involved in any illegal or unethical activity during their participation in the Tournament. The Players shall not engage in any behaviour or activity that could result in reputational harm to the Organisers or its official partners. The Players shall not engage in any verbal or physical altercation with any other Player during any stages of the Tournament. Each Player hereby agrees to abide by this code of conduct:

### 1. Competition Code of Conduct

### 1.1. Collusion

Collusion involves any agreement between two or more players to gain an unfair advantage. This includes secret agreements to share prize money or any other form of compensation, signaling between players, or deliberately losing games for compensation or to influence outcomes.

### 1.2. Competitive Integrity

Players are expected to perform their best at all times and maintain principles of good sportsmanship, honesty, and fair play. Any behavior that undermines competitive integrity is strictly prohibited.

### 1.3. Buying, Selling, Renting, Transferring

Players cannot buy, sell, rent, or transfer any materials or assets related to SOG GMS or its associated games. This includes accounts, items, and other in-game assets.

### 1.4. Cheating

Cheating in any form is prohibited. This includes modifying the SOG GMS game client, using unauthorized equipment or accessories, or employing other cheating methods such as signaling devices or unauthorized substances.

### 1.5. Exploiting

Exploiting involves using in-game bugs or glitches for an unfair advantage. Players must not exploit any game functions that are not working as intended by the Organisers.

### 1.6. Spectator Monitors

Players are not allowed to look at or attempt to view the monitors of spectators during matches.

### 1.7. Ringing

Ringing, playing under another player's account, or encouraging others to do so is prohibited.

## 1.8. Profanity and Hate Speech

Players must not use aggressive, insulting, defamatory, obscene, discriminatory, threatening, vulgar, or offensive language in the Match Area or online. This includes social media and public events such as streaming.

## 1.9. Studio Interference

Players must not touch or interfere with the tournament equipment, including devices, audio phones, tables, chairs etc.

## 1.10. Unauthorized Communications

Players must remove all communication devices from the Match Area. They are prohibited from texting, emailing, or using social media during matches.

## 1.11. Doping

Doping, which includes the use of banned performance-enhancing drugs such as stimulants, narcotics, or beta-blockers, is prohibited. All participants must report any doping violations to the Invitational Committee.

## 1.12. Identity

Players must not cover their faces or attempt to conceal their identity. Hats and other items that obscure the face are not allowed on stage.

## 1.13. Appearance

Players are expected to maintain proper hygiene and follow the instructions of the Organisers regarding stage makeup and appearance.

## 1.14. Unprofessional Behavior

### 1.14.1. Harassment

Harassment, defined as systematic, hostile, and repeated acts aimed at isolating or ostracizing a person or any egregious instances affecting a person's dignity, is forbidden.

1.14.2. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances or coercion, is strictly prohibited. Any conduct that is considered undesirable or offensive by the recipient is not tolerated, and there is zero tolerance for sexual threats or promises of advantages in exchange for sexual favours.

1.14.3. Discrimination and Denigration

Players are prohibited from making any statements or engaging in actions that offend the dignity or integrity of any individual, group, or entity. This includes discrimination or derogatory remarks based on race, skin color, ethnicity, national or social origin, gender, language, religion, political opinion, financial status, birth, sexual orientation, or other status.

1.14.4. Statements Regarding SOGF, SOG GMS, Rummy Culture App, Tornelo and SOGF

Players must not issue, endorse, or authorize any statements or actions that could negatively impact the interests of the SOG GMS, the Rummy Culture App, Tornelo or the SOG Federation. This includes any statements or actions deemed prejudicial or detrimental by the SOG GMS Executive Committee.

1.14.5. Confidentiality

Players are not permitted to disclose any information about the SOG GMS, the Rummy Culture App, Tornelo or the SOG Federation without prior authorization from the SOG GMS Executive Committee. All information provided by the committee must be kept confidential.

1.14.6. Player Behavior Investigation

If contacted by an SOG GMS official for an investigation, players are required to provide truthful information. Withholding information or misleading an official is considered obstruction and may result in disciplinary action.

1.14.7. Criminal Activity

Players must not engage in any activities prohibited by law, including any actions that are illegal or pose a threat to public security.

- 1.14.8. Moral Turpitude  
Players must not engage in any behavior deemed immoral, disgraceful, or contrary to accepted ethical standards by the SOG GMS or SOG Federation.
  
- 1.14.9. Public Order Disturbance  
Players are prohibited from damaging public property or disturbing public order, including engaging in fights or using abusive language in or around the match area.
  
- 1.14.10. Abusive Behavior  
Abuse of SOG GMS referees or officials, whether verbal or otherwise, is strictly prohibited and goes against professional sportsmanship standards.
  
- 1.14.11. Bribery  
Players must not offer, solicit, or accept any gifts or rewards for services related to influencing match outcomes or attempting to undermine the competition.
  
- 1.14.12. Gifts  
Players are not allowed to accept any gifts, rewards, or compensation for services related to competitive play or any activities associated with the game.
  
- 1.14.13. Match-Fixing  
Players are prohibited from engaging in any form of match-fixing. Any attempts to fix matches will be met with severe penalties.
  
- 1.14.14. Association with Gambling  
Players and SOG GMS officials must not participate in any form of betting or gambling related to the results of SOG GMS games, matches, or tournaments.

**Thank You!**

