

Mind Sports Olympiad Tournament Rules & Information for:

Carcassonne

Saturday 7th March 2026 &
Sunday 8th March 2026



Under some circumstances the arbiter may see fit to amend the published tournament rules. Any rules presented by the arbiter on the day, either verbally or visually, will supersede all previously published rules. The MSO standard tournament rules and code of conduct apply unless contradicted by these tournament rules or the arbiter.

Section 1 - Key Information

How to take part

1. Register online at <http://www.mindsportsolympiad.com>
2. The preliminary stage shall be ran using the <http://boardgamearena.com> automated tournament system which will determine pairings and invite you to your table for each round. The play-offs and finals tournament will be organised via Discord (<http://discord.gg/mRhtB4M>) with games played on BoardGameArena (BGA).
3. Check-In will open 10 hours prior to each qualifying tournament starting. To check-in, you will need to be a member of our BGA group (<https://boardgamearena.com/group?id=9962498>) and then follow this link (<https://boardgamearena.com/tournament?id=535331&token=wN2mq54C3akuHzEbEBZR0KQj3lJ93mJh>) and/or (<https://boardgamearena.com/tournament?id=535339&token=b5UQzGWTep6SjmFqYa4VYX3KSfB0kxwm>) to the tournament page and click "register for this tournament". You must check-in in order to take part, and we cannot accommodate any late entries due to the BGA automated tournament system.
4. The first round will start immediately after check-in closes. The BGA system runs strictly to time and if you don't join your table in time you will forfeit the game and your place in the tournament.

There will be a dedicated lobby on Discord

(<https://discord.com/channels/711582386990874625/1468666496677974096>) for this tournament. It is not required to join this during the preliminary rounds but it is the best place to ask any questions or to chat with other participants between rounds. All players who qualify for the play-offs should join Discord from this point onwards.

Overall Tournament Format Summary

- Two qualification tournaments will be ran on Saturday 7th March 2026
- 4 players will qualify from each of the qualification tournaments
- 8 players will play in a Finals tournament on Sunday 8th March 2026
- All rounds will be 2 player games of 'base' Carcassonne (without expansions).

Qualification Tournament Format

- Tournament Length: 7 rounds plus play-offs
- Preliminary Rounds: All players play 7 games
- Players with 7 wins (14 Tournament Points) automatically qualify for the Finals tournament and do not participate in the play-offs.
- Play-offs: Players with precisely 6 wins (12 Tournament Points) advance to play-offs. Single elimination bracket to determine a total of four players (total includes automatic qualifiers), who advance to finals.
- Play-off Rounds: Initial pairings are a 'best of 1', final pairings play a 'best of 3' games.

Finals Tournament Format

- Double elimination phase: Players need to win 2 out of 3 rounds to progress
- Double elimination rounds: All pairings play a 'Best of 1' games.
- Knockout phase: 4 progress to a Single elimination bracket to determine a winner.
- Knockout rounds: 2 rounds (Semi Final and Final, plus Bronze Play-off). All pairings play a 'best of 3' games.
- Total Duration: A maximum of 9 games against 5 opponents to win. A minimum of 6 games against 4 opponents to win.

Game Settings

The automated tournament shall be played under the following settings:

- Tournament Type: Swiss System
- Time per player: 15:00 per player
- All expansions: Off
- Field scoring: Each field is worth 3 points per adjacent completed city (International rules)
- Completed 2-tile cities: 4 points (International rules)

Tournament Specific Rules

This tournament will utilise the MSO's published rules for BGA automated tournaments: <https://www.mindsportsolympiad.com/bga-tournaments>.

The use of any tile tracking tools, automated or otherwise, is strictly prohibited. This includes manual pen and paper tracking.

Clock Rules

Players are expected to play within the time allocated to them for each game. The clock settings are intended to allow sufficient time for players to think about their decisions whilst ensuring that the game continues to progress at a reasonable pace.

For games in the automated BGA qualification tournaments there is no automatic penalty for a player who exceeds their clock. Their opponent may 'skip' them, and if successful, they will be awarded the win by BGA. Should a game be cancelled by BGA for exceeding the time limit for a round, the victory will be awarded to the player who has used the least time in the game. The result that BGA uses will be accepted.

For games run manually at other stages of the tournament, should a player exceed their clock they will be ruled to automatically lose the game. A player is adjudged to have exceeded their clock if BGA marks their name with a red clock icon in the results view.

Prizes

- The winner of the finals tournament receives a qualification spot at the 2026 Carcassonne World Championships in Herne, Germany. This is scheduled to take place on Saturday 24th October 2026. If the winner of the finals tournament has already qualified for the 2026 Carcassonne World Championships, then the qualification spot will be taken by the next highest ranking eligible player.
- MSO Medals for the top 3.
- MSO Grand Prix Premier points for all players.
- MSO Grand Prix 'Imperfect Information' Meta Category points for all players.

Schedule

All timings given in GMT (UTC+0) are for guidance only and may be amended by the arbiter as the tournament progresses. Players should always be present at the communicated round start time.

Qualification Tournament 1

Tournament link: <https://boardgamearena.com/tournament?id=535331&token=wN2mq54C3akuHzEbEBZRoKQj3lJ93mjh>

Check-In Opens – Friday 6th March, 23:00

Check-In Closes – Saturday 7th March, 09:00

Round One – 09:00

Subsequent Rounds – Each follows immediately after the conclusion of the previous round. We expect each game to take approximately 30 minutes but this will vary based upon the speed of play. Play-offs are co-ordinated via Discord:

<https://discord.com/channels/711582386990874625/1468666496677974096>.

Qualification Tournament 2

Tournament link: <https://boardgamearena.com/tournament?id=535339&token=b5UQzGWTep6SjmFqYa4VYX3KSfBOkxwm>

Check-In Opens – Saturday 7th March, 09:00

Check-In Closes – Saturday 7th March, 19:00

Round One – 19:00

Subsequent Rounds – Each follows immediately after the conclusion of the previous round. We expect each game to take approximately 30 minutes but this will vary based upon the speed of play. Play-offs are co-ordinated via Discord:

<https://discord.com/channels/711582386990874625/1468666496677974096>.

Finals Tournament

Manually co-ordinated on Discord:

<https://discord.com/channels/711582386990874625/1468666496677974096>

Check-In Opens – Sunday 8th March, 11:30

Check-In Closes – Sunday 8th March, 12:00

Round One – 12:00

Subsequent Rounds – Each follows immediately after the conclusion of the previous round. We expect each game to take approximately 30 minutes but this will vary based upon the speed of play.

Section 2 - Qualification Tournaments

Each Qualification Tournament will run as follows:

Stage 1: Preliminary Stage

Played using the BGA tournament system. This stage of the tournament is ran entirely by the BGA system. When a new round is drawn a popup should appear in the bottom right of the page on BGA inviting you to join your match (you may need to refresh to see it). Follow this to join your table and play your game.

Please ensure that you join each of your matches promptly as any player who misses the start of a round will be automatically withdrawn from the tournament. We are also unable to facilitate late entries to the tournament for any players who do not join by the published start time.

After the prescribed number of rounds the preliminary stage in BGA will end. BGA will say that the tournament is over but that just means the preliminary stage. Players who achieved the criteria outlined in "Play-Offs Details" will move on to the final stage of the tournament.

Stage 2: Play-offs Stage

The play-offs are still played on BGA, however the games from this stage on are organised through Discord

(<https://discord.com/channels/711582386990874625/1468666496677974096>).

Once the tournament arbiter announces the draw, players should create a custom match between each other in BGA. The higher seed for a play-off match will choose who is responsible for creating the table on BGA with the settings detailed below. This requires a premium account on BGA, and therefore a premium account is likely to be necessary to participate in the play-offs. At the end of the match report the result in Discord and wait until the arbiter announces it is time for the next round to start.

Play-off Game Settings

The settings for a play-off game mirror the BGA automated tournament, except for the clock settings which should be:

Real Time – Slow Speed.

Play-Offs Details

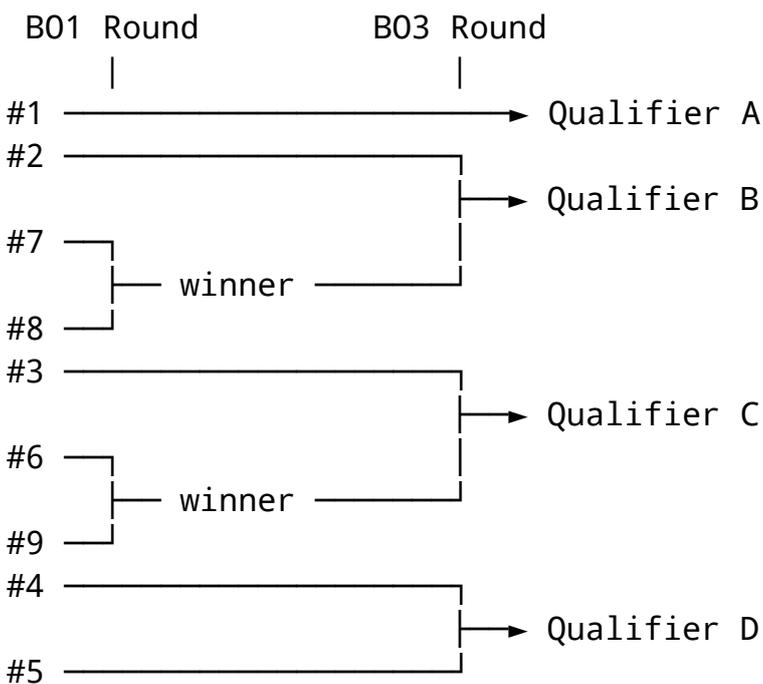
Players who finish the preliminary stage with 7 or more wins automatically qualify for the Finals tournament. Players who finish with exactly 6 wins enter the play-offs to compete for the remaining qualifying places, such that a total of 4 players qualify overall.

Players are seeded by their finishing position in the preliminary stage (with ties broken as per the MSO rules for automated BGA tournaments; full details at <https://mindsportsolympiad.com/bga-tournaments/>). Automatic qualifiers retain their seedings and are removed from the bracket.

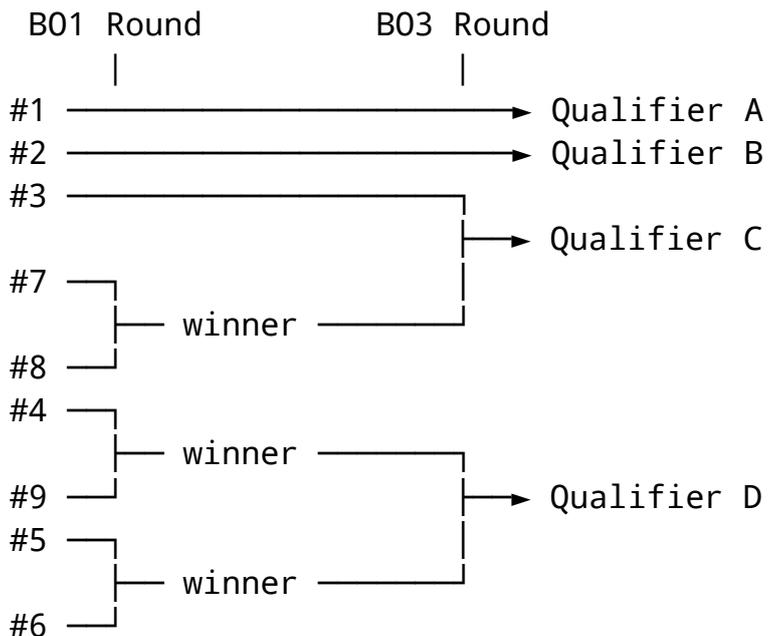
The play-offs use a single-elimination snake-seeded bracket among the 6-win players. Byes are inserted for missing seeds if there are fewer players than bracket slots require. The final match on each path to qualification is a best of 3 (BO3), stopping as soon as one player reaches 2 wins. All earlier matches are a best of 1 (BO1).

For a BO3 match, BGA will randomly pick a starting player for the first game. At the conclusion of the game, the same player who created the table should click the 'propose rematch' button that appears at the end of the game. This will create a table for the second game with the player order reversed. Should a third game be required, then once again the same player should click 'propose a rematch' button.

Example play-off draw X (One player with 7 wins, Eight players with 6 wins):



Example play-off draw Y (Two players with 7 wins, Seven players with 6 wins):



Interaction of Qualification Tournaments

The Qualification tournaments have been scheduled to allow players from all over the world to have a reasonable hour in which to enter the tournament.

It is permitted for a player to enter both Qualification tournaments. However should a player qualify for the final from the first Qualification tournament, they will be required to not enter/withdraw from the second Qualification tournament.

Section 3 - Finals Tournament

The finals tournament is entirely ran via Discord (<https://discord.com/channels/711582386990874625/1468666496677974096>) with games played on BGA.

The finals tournament can be considered to be split into two stages:

Stage 1 - Double Elimination:

All rounds in the Double Elimination are played as `best of 1` games. Any game that is tied in score will be awarded as a win to the player who played second in the game. This ensures each game produces a winner and a loser.

All players will play two rounds, with the winners of the first round playing each other and the losers of each round playing each other. At the end of the two rounds there will be three situations for a player to be in:

- Two players will have won both rounds. These players progress to Stage 2 without needing to play in round 3.
- Two players will have lost both rounds. These players are eliminated.
- Four players will have won one round, and lost one round. These players are paired for round 3, which will produce two winners to progress to Stage 2 and two losers who are eliminated.

The draw for the Double Elimination rounds is as follows:

Round 1

Match 1	Q1 Qualifier A	vs	Q2 Qualifier D
Match 2	Q2 Qualifier B	vs	Q1 Qualifier C
Match 3	Q1 Qualifier B	vs	Q2 Qualifier C
Match 4	Q2 Qualifier A	vs	Q1 Qualifier D

Round 2

Match 5	Winner of Match 1	vs	Winner of Match 2
Match 6	Winner of Match 3	vs	Winner of Match 4
Match 7	Loser of Match 1	vs	Loser of Match 2
Match 8	Loser of Match 3	vs	Loser of Match 4

Round 3

Match 9	Loser of Match 5	vs	Winner of Match 8
Match 10	Loser of Match 6	vs	Winner of Match 7

Stage 2 - Knockout:

Each match in the knockout shall be played as a best of 3 games, stopping as soon as one player has reached 2 wins. Any individual game that is tied in score will be awarded as a win to the player who played second in the game. This ensures that each knockout match will produce a winner after 3 games.

The player listed first in the schedule draw for a match will be responsible for creating the table on BGA. This requires a premium account on BGA, and therefore a premium account is necessary to participate in the finals.

BGA will randomly pick a starting player for the first game. At the conclusion of the game, the same player who created the table should click the 'propose rematch' button that appears at the end of the game. This will create a table for the second game with the player order reversed. Should a third game be required, then once again the same player should click 'propose a rematch' button. At the end of the game, report the result in Discord and wait until the arbiter announces it is time for the next round to start.

With only 4 players remaining the format is a simple Semi Final and Final. There is also a third-place play-off to determine the winner of the Bronze medal.

The draw for the Knockout is as follows:

Semi Finals

Match 11	Winner of Match 5	vs	Winner of Match 10
Match 12	Winner of Match 6	vs	Winner of Match 9

<u>Final</u>	Winner of Match 11	vs	Winner of Match 12
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<u>Bronze</u>	Loser of Match 11	vs	Loser of Match 12
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Finals Game Settings

The settings for a finals game mirror the BGA automated tournament, except for the clock settings which should be:

Real Time – Slow Speed.

Final Results Aggregation

The final rankings for the tournament, used for MSO competitions, will be as follows:

1. Gold medalist (winner in the final)
2. Silver medalist (runner-up in the final)
3. Bronze medalist (losing semi-finalist who wins the 3rd place play-offs)
4. 4th Place (losing semi-finalist who loses the 3rd place play-offs)
5. Losing players from round 3 of the finals tournament
6. Losing players from round 1 and 2 of the finals tournament
7. Players eliminated in the play-offs of the Qualification tournament (additionally broken by furthest round reached).
8. Merged standings from the Qualification tournament Swiss stage. If a player has played in both Qualification tournaments only their best result is taken.

The qualifier for the 2026 Carcassonne World Championship will be highest ranked player who has not already qualified for the World Championship. Any player who is not eligible to receive this prize should make themselves known to the organisers at the earliest opportunity.