Gert Sibande Chess

Affiliate of Mpumalanga Chess

Secretariat: Ms. Naom Mpofu Contact number: 073 237 3019
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# GERT SIBANDE CHESS AWARDS 2026

## Awards Guidelines

### 1. Purpose

The Gert Sibande Chess Awards recognise players, schools, coaches, educators and volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution to chess in the Gert Sibande region during the 2026 season. These guidelines set out the award categories, who may qualify, how nominations are made and how the winners will be decided.

### 2. Qualifying Period

Only results and activities from 31 October 2025 to 31 October 2026 will be considered.

### 3. General Eligibility

- Players, coaches, educators and volunteers must be members of a club or school affiliated to Gert Sibande Chess for 2026.
- Schools must be registered for the Gert Sibande Schools Chess Programme for 2026.
- A player or school may receive more than one award.
- The Executive Committee may decide not to make an award in a category where there is no qualifying candidate or no suitable nomination.

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## 4. Award Categories

There are thirteen (13) awards. The ten results-based awards are decided from official results and Chess SA ratings, and no nominations are needed. Coach of the Year and Organiser of the Year are decided by an adjudication panel from the nominations received. The Player of the Year, the highest award of the evening, is chosen by the adjudication panel from the results of the season.

| No | Award | How it is decided |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Primary Junior Player of the Year – Boys | Results-based |
| 2 | Primary Junior Player of the Year – Girls | Results-based |
| 3 | Secondary Junior Player of the Year – Boys | Results-based |
| 4 | Secondary Junior Player of the Year – Girls | Results-based |
| 5 | Senior Player of the Year | Results-based |
| 6 | Female Player of the Year | Results-based |
| 7 | Most Improved Player | Results-based |
| 8 | Most Active Player | Results-based |
| 9 | Top Primary School | Results-based |
| 10 | Top Secondary School | Results-based |
| 11 | Organiser of the Year | Nomination and panel |
| 12 | Coach of the Year | Nomination and panel |
| 13 | Player of the Year | Panel, from the results of the season |

## 5. Results-Based Awards

### 5.1 Age categories

- **Primary Junior (U8 to U13):** players born in 2013 or later.
- **Secondary Junior (U14 to U19):** players born from 2007 to 2012.
- **Senior:** players born in 2006 or earlier.
- **Female Player of the Year:** open to all female players, regardless of age.

### 5.2 Minimum participation

To qualify for awards 1 to 6, a player must have played in at least three (3) Chess SA rated tournaments in the Gert Sibande region during the qualifying period.

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### 5.3 Player of the Year awards (awards 1 to 6)

Players will be ranked on points earned from their best results during the qualifying period, as follows:

| Level of event | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gert Sibande regional tournaments (section or age group) | 10 | 7 | 5 |
| Sub-district and district individual championships (age group) | 10 | 7 | 5 |
| Mpumalanga provincial championships (age group or section) | 15 | 10 | 7 |
| National championships (age group or section) | 20 | 15 | 10 |

A player selected to represent Mpumalanga at a national championship receives an additional 5 points. Where two or more players have the same number of points, the player with the higher Chess SA rating on 31 October 2026 will be placed first.

### 5.4 Most Improved Player

Awarded to the player with the largest increase in Chess SA rating between the first rating list of 2026 and the last rating list published before 31 October 2026. The player must have had a Chess SA rating at the start of the year and must meet the minimum participation in 5.2.

### 5.5 Most Active Player

Awarded to the player who played the most Chess SA rated games in tournaments held in the Gert Sibande region during the qualifying period. Where players are tied, the player who took part in more tournaments will be placed first.

### 5.6 Top Primary School and Top Secondary School

Schools will be ranked on points earned during the 2026 Schools Chess Programme, as follows:

| Event | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
|---|---|---|---|
| District Top Schools team championship | 15 | 10 | 7 |
| Provincial Top Schools team championship | 20 | 15 | 10 |
| Individual medals at the district individual championship (per medal) | 3 | 2 | 1 |

In addition, a school receives 1 point for every five (5) learners entered in its sub-district individual championship. Where two schools have the same number of points, the school with the better result at the district Top Schools team championship will be placed first.

### 5.7 Sources of results

Results will be taken from the Chess SA rating database and from the official results of tournaments held in the region. Clubs, schools and parents may submit results of provincial and national events not held in the region, with proof, by 30 October 2026. The adjudication panel will check all figures before the winners are confirmed.

## 6. Merit Awards

Coach of the Year and Organiser of the Year are decided from nominations. Each member of the adjudication panel will score each nominee out of 100 using the criteria below. The scores will be averaged, and the nominee with the highest average score will be the winner.

### 6.1 Organiser of the Year

Open to school chess organisers, teachers, administrators and volunteers who served chess in the region during the qualifying period.

| Criteria | Points |
|---|---|
| Organising and running tournaments and other chess activities | 35 |
| Service given to the association, clubs or schools | 30 |
| Growth in the number of people playing chess at their school, club or in the region | 25 |
| Reliability, cooperation and conduct | 10 |

### 6.2 Coach of the Year

Open to coaches who work with a club or school affiliated to Gert Sibande Chess.

| Criteria | Points |
|---|---|
| Results achieved by the players coached during the qualifying period | 40 |
| Number of players developed and new players introduced to chess | 25 |
| Contribution to chess in the region (workshops, assisting at events, mentoring) | 25 |
| Conduct and sportsmanship | 10 |

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## 7. Player of the Year

The Player of the Year is the highest award of the evening. There are no nominations for this award. The adjudication panel will choose the player who achieved the most outstanding results during the qualifying period, regardless of age or gender.

The panel will consider the winners of awards 1 to 6 and the five players with the most points under section 5.3. The player must meet the minimum participation in section 5.2. Each panel member will score each of these players out of 100:

| Criteria | Points |
|---|---|
| Results and placings during the qualifying period | 40 |
| Level of competition (provincial and national results) | 30 |
| Rating performance and improvement | 20 |
| Conduct and sportsmanship | 10 |

The scores will be averaged, and the player with the highest average score will be the Player of the Year.

## 8. Nominations

- Nominations are invited for Coach of the Year and Organiser of the Year. They may be submitted by an affiliated club, an affiliated school or an affiliated member.
- Self-nominations will not be accepted.
- Nominations must be made on the official nomination form, with a motivation of not more than 300 words. Supporting documents may be attached.
- The nominee must agree to the nomination by signing the acceptance section of the form.
- Completed forms must be emailed to **secretary@gertsibandechess.co.za** by **Friday, 30 October 2026**.
- Late or incomplete nominations will not be considered.

## 9. Adjudication Panel

- The Executive Committee will appoint an adjudication panel of three (3) to five (5) members. Where possible, at least one member should not be connected to any club or school in the region.

- Panel members must declare any conflict of interest, for example where a nominee is a family member or a member of the same club or school. A panel member with a conflict will not score that category.
- A panel member may not be nominated for a merit award.
- Where nominees have the same average score, the panel will decide by majority vote. If the vote is tied, the chairperson of the panel will have a casting vote.
- The decisions of the panel are final. Results will be kept confidential until the awards ceremony.

## 10. Timeline

| Date | Activity |
|---|---|
| Friday, 9 October 2026 | Call for nominations sent to clubs and schools |
| Friday, 30 October 2026 | Closing date for nominations and for submission of provincial and national results |
| By Saturday, 7 November 2026 | Adjudication panel scores nominees and confirms results-based awards |
| Tuesday, 10 November 2026 | Finalists (top three in each category) announced |
| Friday, 20 November 2026 | Gert Sibande Chess Awards ceremony, 16H30 to 18H30, Kinross Sports and Community Centre |

## 11. Enquiries

Enquiries about these guidelines may be directed to the Secretariat, Ms Naom Mpofu, on 073 237 3019 or secretary@gertsibandechess.co.za.