

MONRAD KNOCKOUT TOURNAMENTS

1. Monrad tournaments are a way of ensuring that players who enter are guaranteed matches throughout the tournament regardless of whether they win or lose in each round. They are in effect a way of running several plate competitions for losers, except that, rather than these being played separately, they are an integrated part of the tournament. They are therefore more attractive to players than being entered in a plate competition – and they don't have the option of choosing not to participate. The outcome is one list of all the players in their merit order based on performance during the tournament. Note that it is still a knockout tournament, not a league.
2. Entries of 4, 8, 16, 32 etc. guarantee that each player will have a match in each round. Entries in between these numbers mean that some players will not have an opponent in one round, but not necessarily the first round as is the case in a traditional knockout tournament. Players without an opponent are deemed to be the winners of that tie. There are a number of ways of avoiding this situation, including restricting entry to one of the above numbers, or having a preliminary competition until the total number of competitors is exactly one of these numbers.
3. A major consideration when planning a Monrad tournament is court time. For instance, an entry of 16 players means 8 matches on each day of the tournament, although they don't have to be played consecutively (ie if a club has 4 courts, 4 matches can be played at the same time, followed by the second 4. However, it means that the final day will require as many courts (and maybe more, because matches on the final day are more likely to be evenly contested and therefore longer), and therefore time, as the first day. This has particular implications if several tournaments (eg for players in various age categories) are being played at the same time.
4. The number of entrants also has implications. Playing a round a day with an entry of 32 means the tournament occupies 5 days, 16 four days or 8 three days. Court space permitting, it would be possible to reduce this by playing two rounds per day in the early stages, especially as those matches are less likely to be closely contested. A local Monrad tournament could have the option of allowing players to arrange their own matches, and fixing a closing date for each round, after which players would arrange their next round and so on, with maybe the final round or even just the top 2 or 3 ties being played at a set time and date.
5. To do the draw, list all the entrants as far as possible in merit order and after that at random, give them a consecutive number with the top player as 1, the second player as 2 and so on, and insert them into the draw (see matrix) against that number for the first round. As matches are played, the winner always takes the smaller number assigned to that round, and goes into the next round against that number. The loser takes the higher number ditto. This ensures that, in each round after the first, winners play winners and losers play losers – the final outcome being a 'ranking' list of all competitors based on their results during the tournament.