

# The Sam Orbaum JERUSALEM SCRABBLE CLUB

## INFORMATION FOR NEW PLAYERS

The club meets at 7.15 pm Tuesdays, at the Himmelfarb School, Torah V'avodah Street 6. You needn't be a member to play. **Your first night is free.** After that, you pay NIS 20 for the evening, or NIS 15 if you take out an annual NIS 50 Club membership. Hilda, our treasurer, will gladly take your money and will be grateful if you have the right change. Couples receive a small discount and, as a bonus, are not asked to play one another. The fee covers the room, security guard, equipment, supplies and sundries. We generally welcome 45 to 55 players each week and there are no age limits. For more information about the Club, explore the rest of our website ([www.jsc.org.il](http://www.jsc.org.il)).

We play three games an evening, beginning at 7.30, with each game running about an hour. David, our director, pairs the players for each game. For regular players, we attempt to even out head-to-head pairings within each of the three divisions. New players are matched according to their self-assessed level, from novice to expert. Players can leave after one or two games, but we ask that you let the director know if you plan on leaving early.

Please arrive by 7.10 to register and get your **list of the 107 acceptable two-letters; you may refer to this list during your first 12 games.** All games are played one-on-one. When you win your first game, ask your opponent to show you how to enter the score on the score sheet and in the club computer. And please tell David, so your achievement is recognized!

**Equipment:** Many players bring their own boards, tiles and digital clocks, but the Club also has its own supply. Bring a pen or pencil to keep score.

**Club Etiquette:** Please turn off or mute your mobile phone. Once games begin, speak softly and as little as needed. When your game is over, remember that others are still in progress. You're welcome to chat at the front of the room or in the hallway outside.

**Scrabble Lexicon:** We use the North American Scrabble word list (the *Official Tournament and Club Word List, 2018 Edition*), also known as NWL2018 or OWL4. Please note that the Official Scrabble® Player's Dictionary may **not** be used, since it omits certain words deemed offensive as well as (most) words of nine letters or more.

**Phonies and Challenges:** Since none of us knows all 192,111 words listed in the official Scrabble lexicon, a legitimate (and fun) part of the game is to guess at likely words or even deliberately play words you know are invalid — if this helps your game. Your opponent is free to challenge any play for illegal words.

- ❖ *If the challenge is correct*, your play comes off and you lose your turn.
- ❖ *If the challenge is incorrect*, your opponent loses his/her turn.

Since playing phonies and issuing challenges are integral to Scrabble strategy, you may not check words in the dictionary (or other source) during the game (unless verifying a challenge), nor check with your opponent whether a word is legal. But, because you're new to the Club and have yet to build up your Scrabble-word-knowledge, **you're allowed three penalty-free challenges in each of the first nine games you play at the Club.**

**Clocks:** Dual clocks are used to track the cumulative 25 minutes allowed each player. This is usually more than enough time for a game, and most players get used to the clock very quickly. The penalty is a loss of 10 points for every minute — or part of a minute — of overtime.) To help you get used to the clock, **you will be allowed two minutes of penalty-free overtime in each of your first six games at the Club.**

**Scoring:** You must record both your score and that of your opponent. You may use Club scoresheets or your own. Scoresheets are also used to track tiles played/remaining, which is completely legal.

We're glad to see you, and welcome you to the Club....

**ENJOY!!**

