

As the USCF Handbook puts it, there is no perfect tiebreak system; each has its faults. Here are the tiebreak systems used in the 2003 ND Championship, along with a brief description of how they are calculated.

### **Solkoff**

This is just like the Modified Median (below) except that no opponents' scores are discarded.

### **Modified Median**

Of the two median tiebreaks, this is the more standard now. It evaluates the strength of a player's opposition by summing the final scores of his or her opponents and then discarding either the highest of these scores, the lowest, or both, depending on the tied player's score:

For players who tie with even scores (that is, their number of wins and losses is the same), both high and low are discarded. For tied players with plus scores, only the lowest is discarded, and for players with minus scores only the highest is discarded.

These scores are adjusted for any unplayed games, which count a half point each. If the player involved in the tie has any unplayed games, they count as opponents with adjusted scores of 0.

### **Basic Median (Harkness Median)**

This works just like the modified median above, but highs and lows are discarded regardless of the tied player's score. Generally the modified median is preferred to this nowadays.

### **Cumulative Scores of Opposition**

This is easy to calculate by hand, and has been popular for that reason. To get this value just add up the cumulative (running) score for each round for each of the tied player's opponents. The theory is that players who win their games in the early rounds (and therefore end up with higher cumulative scores than players with the same score who win later rounds) have had to face tougher opposition throughout the tournament.

### **Win count**

Another straightforward method which, like the Kashdan system rewards aggressive play.

### **Head-to-head**

Head-to-head can be an undependable tiebreak system, and there are three reasons for this. First, there is no way to determine a clear winner in cases where A beats B, B beats C, and C beats D. Second, in ties involving two players, a draw does nothing to resolve the tie. Third, in ties involving more than two players, it is hard to decide a ranking when some players have lost to players in the same scoregroup, but others have not even played against anyone in the scoregroup.

In spite of this, head-to-head is still a popular tiebreak in some circles. Swis-Sys uses an arbitrary 100 point basis for players, then decreases that value by a point for every game lost against any one of the other tied players.