

COMPETITION AND LEAGUE RULES

1. CONDITIONS

Except where varied by these Rules the Laws of the Sport of Bowls shall apply to the League and Competitions.

The Association shall

- (i) Run competitions as set out in and in accordance with Rules 2,3,4 and 5 below, and
- (ii) Organise and run a League in accordance with Rule 6 below

2. COMPETITION RULES

The Competitions shall consist of:-

- (a) **Men's Singles Championship** - One player, four bowls each, first to 21 shots
- (b) **Men's Pairs Championship** - Two players, four bowls each, 18 ends plus an extra end if required
- (c) **Men's Triples Championship** - Three players, three bowls each, 18 ends plus an extra end if required
- (d) **Men's Fours Championship** - Four players, two bowls each, 18 ends plus an extra end if required
- (e) **Open Secretary Singles** - One player, four bowls each, first to 21 shots

Open to all committee members of affiliated clubs, restricted to two entrants per club. In addition, committee members of the Association and the previous year's winner of the competition may enter. No entry fee.

- (f) **Men's Champion of Champions Singles** - One player, four bowls each, first to 21 shots

Open to the winner of the men's singles competition of the club in the previous season. A person who would otherwise be eligible but who has joined another Affiliated Club shall be eligible to enter the competition.

In addition, the winners of both the Association's Singles Championship and the Champion of Champions singles in the previous season may be entered. Should an Affiliated Club cease to exist before the last date for entering competitions of the Association the winner of that club's men's singles in the previous year shall be eligible to enter the competition under the name of his new Affiliated Club. No entry fee.

- (g) **Men's Two Wood Triples** – Three players, two bowls each, 18 ends plus an extra end if required

- (h) **The Coventry Cup** – A club side shall consist of two rinks of four men and they shall play 18 ends, two bowls each player, restricted to one entry per club. Failure to field eight players will result in a walkover for the opponents.

The total number of shots on both rinks shall determine the winner. In the event of a tie after 18 ends on each rink then an extra end shall be played by the nominated rink to determine the overall winner.

3. COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

- (a) Players shall be members of an Affiliated Club but may only enter Association competitions from one club.
- (b) Club secretaries shall supply, by the date advised by the Competition Secretary, a list of the members of their club who desire to enter the competitions showing their names, telephone numbers and email addresses together with the appropriate fees. Only the contact shall be named in an entry.
- (c) The Competition Secretary shall advise the date of, and arrange for, the draw of all competitions to take place at an open meeting. The result of the draw shall be circulated to all clubs. A list of competitors who are to be contacted together with their telephone number shall also be circulated.
- (d) The Finals of all the competitions shall be held on one day; the date and location shall be advised when the competition entry forms are issued.

4. COMPETITION DRAW, CHALLENGERS AND OPPONENTS

- (a) The first named in any game in a competition is the challenger who will, except for the semi-finals and finals, have the choice of green and rink and in the case of Singles shall provide a marker.

For an opening match in the round, the Challenger must offer their opponent, within 14 days of the closing date of the first round, three dates of play. When either a challenger or opponent of the tie is competing in an earlier round and the awaiting opposition has a bye to the next round then the rule governing subsequent rounds will apply.

For all subsequent rounds, excluding the finals, the Challenger must offer their opponent, within 48 hours after the closing date of the previous round, three dates of play. The three dates offered must fall within the window of the round.

Failure to offer eligible dates – opponent may, by notifying the Competition Secretary that he wishes to do so, become the challenger and must make all match arrangements within 48 hours of becoming the challenger.

(b) Matches may be played prior to the closing date of the previous round only by mutual agreement.

- A minimum of 48 hours' notice is required for any dates offered to be eligible.
- The offering of two different start times on a single date does not count as two dates.
- At least two of the dates offered must be a weekday.

The start time for any match shall be set by the Challenger when the dates are offered and, unless mutually agreed, must be played on either:

- Weekdays - start time no earlier than 6pm or later than 6.30pm
- Weekends - start time no earlier than 9.30am or later than 6.30pm
- No challenger shall offer Aldershot and District League evenings.

The opponent must accept a date for play no later than 48 hours after receiving the challenge. Competitors are encouraged to confirm verbal arrangements by text or e-mail.

- (b) The result of all ties in competitions must be communicated to the Competition Secretary immediately after the game if possible and in any case within twenty-four hours. Except in the case of singles competitions, the scorecard or a scanned copy is to be sent to the Competition Secretary and the onus is on the winner(s). The scorecard must bear the name(s) and initials of those taking part and signed by either players or skips. Skips are reminded that they are certifying not only the accuracy of the score but also the names of those taking part. Failure to comply with these Rules may result in the defaulting player(s) or team(s) being struck from the competition.
- (c) If a game cannot be played due to inclement weather and consequently cannot be played by the "end date" of the round, the Competition Secretary may, on application from the players or teams, extend the "end date" of the round. If the game is not played by the revised "end date" both players/teams shall be struck from the Competition.
- (d) Dress for all competitions – white or approved coloured shirts (in accordance with BE and County guidelines) with bowls approved grey/club colour trousers or shorts, except for the Finals for which bowls approved white/club colour trousers or shorts shall be worn. All members of the team shall wear the same colour below the waist.
- (e) The Semi-finals and Finals shall be played on greens selected by the Competition Secretary. Markers and Umpires shall be provided by the Association.

5. CONSTITUTION AND SUBSTITUTES

- (a) In the Pairs, Triples, Fours and Two Wood Triples the players taking part in the first game of the respective competition shall all be members of the same club and shall constitute “the team” for the remainder of the competition. For Pairs and Triples One additional, and the same player, may be used as a substitute provided they have not already played or entered in the same competition. For Fours two additional, and the same players, may be used as substitutes provided they have not already played or entered in the same competition. They may play in any position. If a substitute is required during a game then the rules in the current Laws of the Sport of Bowls applies.
- (b) Any player included in the original entry but not taking part shall not play in any other entry in that competition.
- (c) When in Pairs, Triples. Fours or Two Wood triples, the scores are level after the requisite number of ends have been played, an extra end shall be played to determine the winner.
- (d) Except for the semi-finals and final in the Coventry Cup the challenger shall have choice of green and rinks. Before commencing the game, the Fours of each team to play on each rink shall be decided by random draw as will the rink to play an extra end should the scores be level after eighteen ends have been played on both rinks.
- (e) If a player fails to appear or is not ready to play within thirty minutes of the agreed time for the game, the opponent can claim a ‘walk over’

6. LEAGUE RULES

(a) LEAGUE STRUCTURE

League games shall be played with club teams of three Fours in Divisions as required by the number of teams entered. As far as possible all Divisions shall have the same number of teams. The Divisions shall be titled The Premier, 1, 2, 3 etc.

(b) TEAM ENTRY AND WITHDRAWAL

An application to enter a team into the League shall be made to the General Secretary. Any application is subject to the approval of the Management Committee. A new team shall play in the lowest Division in its first year in the League.

Clubs wishing to withdraw one or more of their teams, which shall be their lowest team(s) shall advise the League Secretary in writing as soon as they have resolved to do so, stating clearly when such withdrawal is to take effect.

If a team withdraws from the League during the season all games already played by that team shall be void.

If a team withdraws from the League after the fixtures list for the season have been published but before it has played a game no change shall be made to the fixture list and teams shall be given a bye in the week when they were due to play the withdrawn team.

The results of any matches played by a team, who still have two or more matches not played at the end of the season, shall also be void. If one match remains not played by teams, they shall all forfeit their match points and shots.

Any team who has withdrawn from the League may apply for re-admission as a new team.

(c) ARRANGEMENT OF FIXTURES

The League shall be played at the stipulated times on Tuesday evenings or such other evenings as deemed necessary by the League Secretary. Where possible each team shall play all other teams in its division at least once at home and once away.

If a game is postponed due to inclement weather or because of other exceptional circumstances the two captains shall immediately inform the League Secretary of the postponement and shall, within 7 days inform the League Secretary of the new date for the game to be played.

(d) **ABANDONED GAMES**

If the game is abandoned after a total of at least 36 ends have been completed, then the score stands as a result.

If a game is abandoned after a total of more than 15 but less than 36 ends have been played the two captains shall immediately inform the League Secretary of the abandonment and within 7 days inform the League Secretary of the date the game is to be resumed. The game shall be resumed at the number of ends played before the abandonment (any incomplete ends being ignored). Where original players are not available a club may apply to the League Secretary for dispensation to play more than one substitute per rink. Substitutes may not play as Skip and one of the original players will take over the position. Players may not move between rinks.

If less than 15 ends have been played the League Secretary shall immediately be informed and the game shall be replayed. The two captains shall within 7 days inform the League Secretary of the date the game is to be played. The replay or resumed date shall be on a date before the scheduled end of the League season, only in matches postponed or abandoned in the final two weeks of the League season shall the League Secretary be empowered to extend the League season by a maximum of one week.

(e) **THE GAME and PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

The Fours of each team to play on a particular rink shall be decided by a random draw before the game. It is not permitted for either team to decide otherwise but the home team shall decide before the draw is made which three rinks shall be used.

Dress for league games shall be Club Shirts with bowls approved grey/club colour trousers or shorts. All members of the team shall wear the same colour below the waist.

Clubs may only play members of their own club. Any individual may only play for one club in any one year.

Any team of a club playing in a lower Division of the League or is in a lower position in the same Division cannot play with more players in their team than the number of players in any team of the Club playing in a higher Division of the League or is in a higher position in the same Division. This does not apply if the team(s) from the higher Division have no game on the same day.

A team may not play with only 2 players in a rink and players shall not be permitted to join the game after the third end has started. A rink playing with only three players after the third end has started shall lose 25% of the total shots scored and fractions shall be taken into account to determine points obtained or shots difference. If a rink is playing with only three players, then after two ends have been played (and not before) the Lead and Two shall play with three bowls and the Skip with two.

If a player retires from a game underway and a substitute does not immediately replace him, then for the remainder of the game from the beginning of the next end the Lead and Two will play with three woods and the Skip with two and the shots by that rink scored after the retirement shall be reduced by 25%.

Where a team has three or fewer games to play in the season it may not play more than three players who have previously played in the current season eight or more games for any team of the club holding a higher place in the same Division or is in a higher Division at the relevant time.

In exceptional circumstances the League Secretary may on application from the Club but subject to such conditions as he may impose, permit a team to play one or more players who otherwise would be ineligible to play.

(f) SCORING

The aggregate score after eighteen ends have been played by all sides in the game shall decide the winner.

One point shall be awarded for a winning rink and two points for the higher aggregate of shots scored by the three rinks. If the total shots scored on a rink or the aggregate of the shots scored on all rinks is tied the relevant points will be shared. If a team fails to fulfil the fixture or fails to field three rinks, five points and fifteen shots shall be awarded to their opponents.

If a game has not been played and other provisions of this Bye-Law do not apply, and the League Secretary determines that one of the teams is at fault, five points and fifteen shots shall be awarded to their opponents. If the League Secretary determines that both teams are at fault, no points or shots shall be awarded to either team.

A team playing with only three players on one or more rinks shall be deemed to have played three rinks. If the shots scored have been reduced in accordance with Bye-Law 6(c) the result card must indicate which rinks played for either the whole or part of the game with only three players and the reduced score put on the result card.

If a team plays anyone who is ineligible to play in the game the following shall apply:-

- (1) The points won by the offending team shall be reduced by one point for each ineligible player.
- (2) The points deducted shall be added to the points won by the non offending team.
- (3) The number of points lost shall be adjusted, if necessary, so that the point awarded for the game do not exceed five or be less than nought.
- (4) The number of shots shall not be adjusted.

(g) NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Both home and away team captains must advise the match result to the League Secretary by either email, text or WhatsApp immediately after the game is played (ie the same day/ evening) by sending the Result Card signed by both Captains along with one set of the scorecards (signed or unsigned) with players names clearly readable. Any team failing to notify their match results as above could forfeit their match points and shots.

(h) LEAGUE POSITIONS

League positions shall be calculated on the basis of points gained. In the event of the points gained by two or more teams being equal, the team with the better shot differences between shots won (as reduced, if applicable) and shots lost shall take the higher place. If still the same then the team with most shots won will take the higher place.

After all games have been played for the season the two teams in first and second place in their Division shall be promoted to the next higher Division for the following season and the two teams in the last two places in their Division shall be relegated to the next lower Division for the following season.

If a team has withdrawn from the League during the season then only one team will be relegated from that Division. If two teams have withdrawn from the same Division during the season then no teams will be relegated from that Division for that year.

Fixtures for the following season will be published on the Association's website after the Association Annual General Meeting and advised to Club Secretaries.

(i) INTERPRETATION OF LEAGUE RULES

Any dispute in the interpretation of these League Rules then the League Secretary and Management Committee's decision shall be final.