

**LEAGUE RULES**  
**Incorporating highlighted changes made at the 2017 AGM & EGM**

**1. DIVISIONS, PROMOTIONS AND RELEGATIONS**

- 1.1 There will, where possible, be one first Division, up to three second, up to six third, up to nine fourth, and sufficient fifth Divisions to accommodate existing teams and additional clubs and teams. Each division shall be divided into such sections as the Committee shall decide are appropriate and each section may, where possible, contain up to fourteen (14) teams, each team containing five (5) players. If there are insufficient teams to make up an appropriate number of sections in Division 5, then Divisions 4 and 5 may be combined although consideration will first be given to reducing the number of teams to eight (8) in some or all sections of Division 5 only with each team playing each of the other teams 3 times during a season.
- 1.2 At the end of a season the top team in each section of Division 2 & 3 and the top 2 teams in each section of each lower Division will be offered promotion. In Division 3, the 2<sup>nd</sup> placed teams at the end of the season shall be offered the opportunity to take part in play-off matches, to be published before the start of the season, for promotion to the relevant Division 2 sections. The number of teams relegated from each section of each Division will be such number as is required to accommodate
- (i) all promoted teams and
  - (ii) any changes to the number of teams in each section of each division.
- 1.3 The overall winners of each division (other than Division 1) will be decided by play-offs between the winners of each section. The dates of the play-offs will be as shown on the Fixture List and the venues will be decided by the Committee.
- Any team declining promotion may be refused entry to the play-offs and may be subject to a penalty in the following season, which will be determined by the Committee.**
- 1.4 Promotions and relegations will be subject to the proviso that no club shall have more than two teams in the same section of a division each except in the bottom two divisions where up to 3 teams may be allowed.

**2. SCORING**

- 2.1 The winner of a rally scores 1 point and serves to begin the next rally.
- 2.2 Each game in Divisions 1, 2, and 3 shall be played to 11 points, except that if the score reaches 10-all, the game continues until one player leads by 2 points.
- 2.3 Each game in all other Divisions shall be played to 15 points, except that if the score reaches 14-all, the game continues until one player leads by 2 points.
- 2.4 A tie between 2 players shall be the best of 5 games unless otherwise decided by the Committee.
- 2.5 A team will be awarded one point for each game won; and the team winning the match on ties will be awarded five bonus points. If a team concedes a tie as a walk-over, the other team will be awarded 3 points for that tie as if it had won by 3 games to nil. If any match is conceded as a walk-over, the winning team will be awarded 3 points for each tie plus five bonus points.
- 2.6 Any team playing a player who at the date of the match in question is (i) under 19 and (ii) registered with the League as under 19 will be awarded one extra point per league match for each such player. **Junior Bonus Points will not be awarded in Division 1, 2 and Play-off matches**

### 3. EQUAL POINTS

- 3.1 In the event that at the end of a season two or more teams have the same number of points, the teams shall be placed in order by reference to the number of matches won so that the team which has won more matches shall be placed higher.
- 3.2 If any of the teams concerned have also won the same number of matches, those teams shall be placed in order by reference to the number of points scored against them so that the team which has had fewer points scored against shall be placed higher.
- 3.3 If any of the teams concerned have the same number of points both for and against and promotion or relegation is at stake, Rules 3.1 and 3.2 shall be applied to the matches between those teams so as to determine which team shall finish higher. A play-off will only take place if the application of this rule to matches between the teams concerned results in any of those teams still being equal on all counts.

### 4. TEAMS

- 4.1.1 Clubs must select and play available players in order of merit and in accordance with the clubs' playing order.
- If a player moves up or down in a club's playing order by 5 or more positions from the previous week or the players' last match, then the club MUST provide a written (or by email) explanation for that players' selection within 48 hours of the match to the Match Secretary. The Committee or one of its sub-committees will decide on whether any penalty should be applied to the players' team, as well as the club's lower teams.
- 4.1.2 Any player who would be selected on merit and in accordance with the clubs' playing order, but is not available to play on Tuesday in Division One, may also be ineligible to play for any other team on the following Thursday and will require the permission of the Match Secretary.
- 4.1.3 If any team in a club shall not have a match on the relevant day, the club in question shall select available players for that team as though it has a match so that the order of merit of other teams is maintained. Players, who have not played in the past 4 league matches, should not to be included, unless permission has been given by the Match Secretary.
- 4.1.4 A Player, who has played all or greater than 75 percentage of his or her matches for a higher team, shall not be allowed to play for a lower team when the higher team does not have a match without the permission of the Match Secretary.
- 4.1.5 Where any team plays a league fixture on a different day in any week, no players in that team shall be eligible to play for another team during that week without the prior permission of the Committee, the General Secretary or the Match Secretary.
- 4.1.6 The Committee may require any club to produce its selection of available players for the team which does not have a match.
- 4.1.7 In Rules 4.1.2., 4.1.3. and 4.1.4., if a club fails to ask the Match Secretary for permission for a player, then the offending player's match will be declared void, along with all the matches below the position that the player played in the match.

- 4.2 Squads
- 4.2.1 Clubs with two teams in the same section of a division may apply no later than two weeks (or such other period as the Committee may specify) before the start of the relevant season to play two separate squads of players in that section. Any such application must identify each of the players in each squad and the order in which they are to play.
- 4.2.2 The squad for the higher ranked team must contain a minimum of 5 ranked players and the squad for the lower ranked team a minimum of 7 ranked players. The players in the squad for the higher ranked team are not allowed to drop down and play for the club's lower ranked team. Players in the squad for the lower ranked team can play for the higher team, but must play in the club's order of merit as defined by the League's ranking order at the time of the match. Only the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or other lower ranked players in the squad for the lower ranked team are allowed to play for the club's next lowest team in a lower division or a different section of the same division.
- 4.2.3 The initial application to play squads shall be considered and, if appropriate, approved by the Committee. Each club must also submit at such other times during a season as may be specified by the Committee from time to time a revised playing order for such squads with an explanation for consideration by the Committee and, if such explanation is accepted, approval. If no revised playing order is submitted at such times, the Committee will treat the previously approved playing order as having been re-submitted for approval.
- 4.3 In Divisions 1 and 2 each club must submit a playing order for its team before the start of the season for approval by the Committee. Where a club in Division 1 has no team in a section of Division 2, that club must also submit a playing order for its second team. Where a team's proposed playing order is different from that of the League's ranking list, the club must provide an explanation for consideration by the Committee as to why it is different and, if such explanation is accepted, approval. Each club may also submit at such other times during a season as may be specified by the Committee from time to time a revised playing order with an explanation for consideration by the Committee and, if such explanation is accepted, approval. If no revised playing order is submitted at such times, the Committee will treat the previously approved playing order as having been re-submitted for approval. The players in each team in Divisions 1 and 2 must play in the order specified in the playing order approved by the Committee from time to time. Permission must be requested from the Division 1 Representative for any player whose name does not appear in the approved playing order to play in a Division 1 match.
- 4.4 Captains must present a list containing their respective team orders to their opposite numbers before the commencement of a match. If a team is known to have a missing player before a match starts, the remaining players in the team shall move up in position in the playing order. If a player does not turn up after the start of a match, where still possible the remaining players in the team shall move up in position in the playing order.
- 4.5 If a player does not turn up after a match has started and it is no longer possible to move the remaining players up in position in the playing order or for any other reason a tie is not played or completed, the

Committee must be informed. The Committee will decide on the allocation and/or deduction of points, any fines that may be imposed, and also any penalty that may be applied to the lower teams of the offending club.

## 5. MATCH DATE ALTERATIONS

- 5.1 Match dates may only be altered for bona fide reasons outside the control of the clubs concerned and these reasons may not include failure to turn out a full team except in the case of bad weather hindering travel between clubs.
- 5.2 Teams wishing to alter a match date must first obtain the permission of their respective division representatives and the General Secretary or the Match Secretary. If teams fail to obtain permission, the non-offending team will be awarded the match. Where a match date is altered, the teams shall be selected for the new date on the basis of the clubs' bona fide playing order current at the new date. The fact that a player may have played for another of his club's teams on the original date shall not affect his eligibility for the new date. If the clubs fail to agree on a mutually agreeable date to play the match within 28 days of the original date, then the date shall be decided by the General Secretary or the Match Secretary. (Clubs are advised to contact their division representative re the eligibility of their players.)
- 5.3 Division 1 matches will be played on a Tuesday starting at 7.30 p.m. More than one court must be made available.

## 6. MATCH WALK-OVERS

- 6.1 A walk over is defined as a fixture for which one side fails to raise more than two players.
- 6.2 In Divisions 1 and 2 walk-overs will not be allowed and any team failing to raise more than two players for any fixture will be relegated. In all other divisions (except the lowest division) a team conceding two or more walk-overs in a season will be relegated.
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- 7.2 No player may play more than once in the same league match or in more than one match in any recognised England Squash (S.R.A.) league on the same day. Players playing in Division 1 on a Tuesday night are NOT eligible to play again for a lower team on the Thursday night of the same week.
- 7.3 Any team in Division 1 must play at least three Home Players in each league match. A Home Player shall be defined as a player who, on the date the league match takes place, either
- (i) is eligible to play for Cheshire, Lancashire or Merseyside; **or has been born in one of these Counties;** or
  - (ii) has been a bona fide member of the club which he or she represents in the relevant league match and has also resided either (a) within the County of any club in Division 1 or (b) within a radius of 15 miles of that club in each case for a continuous period of more than 12 months immediately preceding the time at which the relevant league match takes place (such periods for qualification to apply, for the avoidance of doubt, to both membership and residence).
  - (iii) **Any player who has qualified as a home player for any club in the NWCSL for a minimum of 2 seasons can retain that status when moving to a new club in the NWCSL the following season.**  
**NOTE: To retain home player qualification, a player must be playing continuously in the NWCSL on a year by year basis, as well as playing a minimum number of matches in a season, which will be decided by the committee at the start of each new season.**
- 7.4 No player may play for more than one club in a league match in any one season without the permission of the General Secretary, the Match Secretary, the Committee or one of the sub-committees duly designated for that purpose.
- 7.5 No player may play in a league match after 31<sup>st</sup> December in any season without the permission of the sub-committees duly designated for **determining the eligibility of players**, unless he or she has already played in a league match during that season. This rule will not be applied to a club's lowest team where its application would mean that the team concerned cannot raise five players.
- 7.6 No player may play in the last three league matches of a division or the play-offs for that division unless he or she has played in at least three league matches in that division, or a lower division, for that club earlier in the season. In extenuating circumstances **permission can be granted by** the sub-committee **duly designated for determining the eligibility of players** a player who does not meet the above criteria to play for a lower team in his/her club during the last three matches of the season, provided that the club's playing order is maintained in accordance with rule 4.
- 7.7 The sub-committee **duly designated for determining the eligibility of players** shall be entitled to require any player, Member or Associate Member to provide such evidence as may be called for the purpose of establishing, or otherwise, the eligibility of any player to play in any league match.
- 7.8 **In Rules 7.5 and 7.6, where applicable, if a club fails to ask for permission for a player, then the offending player's match will be declared void, along with all the matches below the position that the player played in the match.**
- 7.9 **All junior players (up to age 19 years) are required to wear eye protection (to British Standard BS7930.1.) and this will be enforced by Match Referees / Markers. Failure by any junior to wear eye protection on court will result in their match not being played and forfeited to the opponent. The Committee will decide on the allocation and/or deduction of points, if a match is not played.**

## **8. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS**

- 8.1     i) Where a match has been played, both teams must send their scorecards including full details of the results of the match in writing signed by both match captains; and  
       (ii) where a match is a walkover under Rule 6, the team claiming the walkover must send full details of the circumstances of the walkover;
- in each case to the appropriate divisional representative and, in the case of (ii) only, also to the Match Secretary, so as to be received by the divisional representative and, where also required, the Match Secretary within 6 days after the match has been or ought to have been played, unless agreed with either the Divisional Representative and, where appropriate, the Match Secretary. Scorecards in relation only to matches played can be returned on a less frequent basis, when a team is entering its results every week on the website within 72 hours of the match being played. Any team not notifying the divisional representative within the prescribed period may be awarded no points and may be liable to a fine, both at the discretion of the Committee or any one of its duly designated Sub-committees.
- 8.2     If a match is postponed under Rule 5, the appropriate divisional representative must be notified of the postponement before the original date on which the match is to be played and of the rearranged date within 6 days after the original date of the match. If neither team notifies the divisional representative of the postponement of the match before its original date and of the date of the rearranged match within the prescribed period, no points will be awarded to either team and both teams may be liable to a fine at the discretion of the Committee or any one of its duly designated Sub-Committees.
- 8.3     The Committee may relax the timescales prescribed in Rules 8.1 and 8.2 if in its discretion it considers that there are special circumstances relating to any failure to comply with this Rule.

## **9. STARTING TIMES**

- 9.1     Clubs must make their courts available from, and matches must commence by 7 p.m. At least three players from each side should be present by this time.
- 9.2     Clubs can agree to start a match at 7.30pm provided that the home club makes two courts available for the duration of the match. At least four players from each side should be present by this time.
- 9.3     There is no prescribed order for the matches to be played in. Once play has commenced, it shall be continuous until the completion of the last tie.
- 9.4     Failure to comply with this rule shall be regarded by the Committee as sufficient reason for awarding points to the other side or imposing a fine or both. In the event of a Club's late arrival every effort must be made to complete the match. No club or player has the right

## **11. MARKING**

- 11.1 All matches must be marked. The home team should provide the necessary marking equipment. Unless agreed otherwise by the opposing captains the home team shall be responsible for marking the one (1), three (3) and five (5) strings and the away team the two (2) and four (4) strings.
- 11.2 The appointment of Referees and the fees payable by either the League and/or the Clubs concerned shall be determined by the Committee.

## **12. TYPE OF BALL**

A ball approved by the Committee must be used in all matches unless agreed otherwise by the opposing Captains. The home team may use a non-marking variety of approved ball if it wishes.

## **13. APPEALS TO THE COMMITTEE**

- 13.1 Any requests to the Committee for a decision on the Rules or any other issues must be made by the Club Representative within seven days of the match or incident to which it relates and must be sent in writing (by letter and/or email) in such form as the Committee may from time to time require, at the same time providing any supporting documents and/or information, to the General Secretary or the Match Secretary with a copy to the appropriate divisional representative provided that the Committee may in its absolute discretion consider any such request notwithstanding that the period of seven days has expired.
- 13.2 The Committee shall decide any questions which may arise under the Rules and which may be referred to it under Rule 13.1 and may (except where the Rules specify the penalty) impose such penalties on a Club and/or individual as it deems appropriate (including, without limitation, the allocation of points and/or the imposition of bans and/or fines) and shall delegate its powers under this Rule 13.2 to a Disputes Sub-Committee which shall comprise not less than 3 members of the Committee and be selected at the first committee meeting after the Annual General Meeting in any year. Other members of the Disputes Sub-Committee may be co-opted during the relevant year as the Committee may decide necessary.
- 13.3 An appeal may be made against any decision of the Disputes Sub-Committee under Rule 13.2 either (a) to the Committee by sending a written request (by letter and/or email) and a fee (which will be set by the Committee at the start of each season) to the General Secretary within 14 days of being notified of the decision appealed against or (b) to England Squash where appropriate in accordance with the Rules or Regulations of England Squash applicable at the time of such appeal. In the case of an appeal to the Committee the Committee shall appoint an Appeal Sub-Committee comprising members of the Committee who were not involved in the decision against which the appeal is made and such Appeal Sub-Committee shall have all the powers of the Committee under this Rule 13 to impose those penalties which it considers appropriate. Where a fee has been paid for an appeal to the League, the Appeal Sub-Committee shall consider, when making its decision, whether or not the fee should be refunded.

#### **14. AFFILIATION FEES**

- 14.1 Each club must pay to the League before 1<sup>st</sup> July in any calendar year an affiliation fee per team for the playing season starting in or about September of that year, the amount of such fee to be determined by the Committee. If affiliation fees are paid after 1<sup>st</sup> July, then additional fees, set by the Committee, shall be payable.
- 14.2 Each team in Division 1 shall deposit with the League prior to 1<sup>st</sup> July such sums of money as shall be decided by the Committee. Fines and/or fees imposed by the Committee or the Disputes Sub-Committee shall be deducted from this sum and the balance refunded to the teams concerned at the end of the season.