

CHESHIRE SQUASH LADIES LEAGUE RULES

1. DIVISIONS, PROMOTIONS AND RELEGATIONS

The league shall be open to all squash clubs in Cheshire and the surrounding area (by prior application to the League Committee) who are affiliated to England Squash. The league will be run by the League Secretary under the direction of the CSRA.

The League will be arranged in Divisions according to the number of teams applying, with a maximum of 14 teams per Division. An appropriate number of promotions/ relegations will be decided, and communicated to all Clubs, prior to the start of each season.

In the event of two or more teams at the end of the season having the same number of points for, the teams having the fewest points against shall be placed higher. If the points against are equal and promotion or relegation is at stake, then there shall be a play-off.

Play-offs: Play-offs will be held on the Monday following the end of the season (holidays permitting). No re-arrangement of matches will be allowed. If a winning team is unable to compete, a walkover will be given.

2. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

All players must be current members of the Club which they represent and must be registered to the Club on the League website before they play. Teams shall consist of five female players who shall play in strict merit order. No player may play more than once in the same league or in more than one match on the same day.

Where a Club has two teams in the same Division it must play its teams in order of merit.

No player may play in a league match after 31st December in any season unless they have already played in ONE ladies' league match for that club during that season. Permission to waive this rule may only be given in exceptional circumstances, by the League Committee.

This rule will not be applied to a club's lowest team where its application would mean that the team concerned cannot raise 5 players. However any player brought into a lowest team must be at the No. 5 position and must rank lower than the other members of the team. (The club must inform their league representative of inclusion of the new player prior to the match, and register them.)

A bona fide member of the club who for reasons of pregnancy, injury etc, will be unavailable before 31st December may apply to the league at the start of the season for permission to play after that date. Such players must be registered by the club at the beginning of the season and their reason for being temporarily unavailable explained to their league representative .

Players may not play for a team in the last four league matches or the play-offs unless they have played at least 3 matches (Division 1 and 2) or 2 matches (Division 3) for that Club earlier in the season. **NB** This rule will not apply to bona fide club members rejoining the team in the second half (as per the preceding paragraph).

Players may not play in the Divisional Play-offs unless they have played at least 2 matches for that **team** during the season.

Players may normally only play for one club during a season. However, the committee will consider written application to waive this rule within the first 4 weeks of the season. (NB Transfer thereafter is unlikely to be approved)

Ranking List/Team Order All Clubs must submit a ranking list showing true merit position of all their players to their League representative before the first match of the season. The ranking list should indicate those players who are club grade (or higher) qualified markers). Bracketed Rankings will not be allowed (players cannot be given an equal ranking position).

Changes in team order The team position outlined in the ranking list are to be maintained throughout the season unless:

(a) A player has shown she is capable of holding a higher position. (NB a one-off win does not necessarily represent true merit position).

(b) When the No. 1 player on the lower team substitutes at the No. 5 position on the higher team, the team must move up accordingly.

Updated ranking lists must be submitted to the Divisional Rep by 5pm on the Sunday before the match.

Changes may not be made to team order to compensate for lack of agility in a player through injury. A player with an obvious disability who would not be able to complete a match should not be considered for inclusion in the team.

Pregnant players If any team includes a player who is more than five months pregnant, the Team Captain must ring the opposition at least a week in advance to see if they will agree to play against that player. If the opposition do not agree, that player must not be included in the team that week and positions must not be changed so that she can play on a higher or lower team – the player concerned must play in her normal ranking position or not at all. (This Rule exists for the benefit of players concerned about harming the mother-to-be/unborn baby, not to stop teams playing a good player.)

THE LEAGUE SECRETARY WILL MONITOR THE RANKING LISTS AND THE PLAYING ORDER ON MATCH NIGHT

3. TEAMS

Captains must present a list containing their respective team orders to their opposite numbers before the commencement of a match. All substitutions made shall be in strict merit playing order. If a team is known to have a missing player before a match starts, or if a person does not turn up, the remaining players shall move up in position in the playing order and walk-overs shall be awarded in the lowest positions. If the lower strings have already played, their points will be forfeit and the lower teams may be penalised at the discretion of the Committee. Teams may not play with less than five players and leave lower teams with five members. No team may play a match with less than three players.

4. MATCH PLAY AND SCORING

Matches shall consist of five games and shall be played on Monday evening as arranged on the fixture list. Match play should be in the order 5,4,3,2,1 unless specifically arranged with the opposing Team Captain prior to the match starting time. Play should be continuous, if not, strings unplayed and any lower strings will be forfeited. Points will be one for each game won with four bonus points for winning the match. Results must be posted by the winning team on the internet within 4 days of the match date. Any queries with the results posted on the internet, must be raised to the nominated league representative.

Both teams are required to keep a written record of the match scores as these may need to be referred to in the case of a dispute.

5. MATCH DATE ALTERATIONS

Match dates may only be altered for bona fide circumstances outside the control of the clubs concerned such as bad weather/ road closures. These circumstances may **not** include inability to turn out a full team for reasons such as holidays/ injury etc.

If a match has to be postponed for the legitimate reasons listed above, the Divisional Representative must be informed and the rearranged date must be within a month of the original fixture. If a mutually acceptable date cannot be agreed upon, then the date shall be decided by the League Secretary.

Both teams must send their team list for the original date to the Divisional Representative on that day. Clubs may not play a stronger team on the rearranged date. If a Club is unable to field the team originally selected then permission to play substitutes must be sought from the League Secretary before the match can be played.

6. MATCH WALK-OVERS

A walk-over is defined as a fixture for which one side fails to raise more than two players. Any team conceding a walk-over must explain the full circumstances to their Divisional Representative at the time.

If a team pulls out during the first half of the season then all scores recorded in matches it has played will be cancelled. If a team pulls out after the first half of the season then scores recorded in the first half will stand but any scores recorded in the second half will be cancelled.

In the event of a conceded match, full match points (19) will be awarded to the opposing team and the match result must be recorded on the website by the team to whom the match has been awarded.

7. STARTING TIME AND AVAILABILITY OF COURTS

At least three players from each team should be present 10 minutes before the match starting time which is notified in the pre-season Club information.

Clubs must have their courts available from between 7.00 pm and 7.40 pm and to avoid late finishing more than one court, per team, must be available by 8.30 pm. Teams should make every effort to adhere to the stated start time and should warn the opposition in advance if any players are likely to be late.

* It is not in the spirit of the game to claim matches because of late arrival of your opposition. All matches must be played wherever possible. Any penalty arising from late arrival will be at the discretion of the Ladies League Committee.

8. MARKING AND TYPE OF BALL

It is the responsibility of the home team to provide a light supper on completion of play. Any player not intending to stay for supper **must** inform her Captain well in advance to enable the meal to be cancelled – this is particularly important for away matches.

11 AFFILIATION FEES

The league fee will be set annually by the Cheshire Squash Ladies Committee and ratified by Cheshire S.R.A. Fees become payable at the A.G.M.

12. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Committee formally adopted the England Squash Code of Conduct – see Rule 17 attached. –at the 2012 AGM. All players are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE RULES SHALL BE REGARDED BY THE COMMITTEE AS SUFFICIENT REASON FOR AWARDED POINTS FOR THE TIES CONCERNED TO THE OTHER SIDE OR IMPOSING A FINE OR BOTH.