

LEAGUE RULES

Incorporating changes made at the 2011 AGM

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 promoted. In Division 3, the 2nd placed teams at the end of the season shall take place 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 the first division) 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.
- 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 lowest division where up to 3 teams may be allowed.

2. SCORING

Points will be one for each game won with five bonus points for winning the match. In the event of a match being conceded by default the bonus will still be allowed.

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 Clubs must select and play available players in order of merit and in accordance with the clubs' playing order. If any team in a club shall not have a match on the relevant day, the club in question shall select players for that team as though it has a match so that the order of merit of other teams is maintained. 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 or the General Secretary. The Committee may require any club to produce its selection of players for the team which does not have a match.
- 4.2 In the 1st & 2nd Division each club must submit a playing order for its team before the start of the season for approval by the Committee. 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 the 1st & 2nd Division must play in the order specified in the playing order approved by the Committee from time to time.
- Permission must be requested from the 1st Division Representative for any player whose name does not appear in the approved playing order to play in a 1st Division match.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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 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 General Secretary. 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. (Clubs are advised to contact their division representative re the eligibility of their players.)
- 5.3 First division 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.
- 6.3 All the scores recorded in the matches of any team conceding one walkover in Divisions 1 and 2 or two or more walkovers in other divisions may be cancelled.
- 6.4 Club teams lower to the one conceding a walk-over shall be deducted either a minimum of 10 points or the points won in the relevant matches, if that is more than 10 points. Their opponents may be awarded up to a maximum of 20 points.
- 6.5 Any team conceding a walk-over, apart from a club's lowest team(s), shall be fined £25.

7. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

- 7.1 Any person playing in a league match ('a player') must be a bona-fide member of the club for which he or she plays and must be registered on the League's web site or with the General Secretary no later than 7 days after the first match in which he or she has played for the club in question. If he or she is not so registered, the team for which he or she has played will be deemed to have played with a missing player and Rule 4.3 will apply.
- 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 the 1st Division 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 the 1st Division 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
 - (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 Lancashire Cheshire or Merseyside or (b) within a radius of 15 miles of that club for a continuous period of, in the case of (a) more than 12 months, and in the case of (b) more than 5 years, in each case 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).
- 7.4 In any one season any team in the 1st Division may only play a maximum of four players who are not Home Players.
- 7.5 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 Committee or one of the sub-committees duly designated for that purpose.
- 7.6 No player may play in a league match after 31st December in any season without the permission of the General Secretary, the Committee or of one of its sub-committees duly designated for that purpose, 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.
- 7.7 No player may play in the last four league matches of a division or the play-offs for that division unless he or she has played in at least four league matches in that division, or a lower division, for that club earlier in the season. In extenuating circumstances the General Secretary, the Committee or any one of its sub-committees can permit a player who does not meet the above criteria to play for a lower team in his/her club during the last four matches of the season, provided that the club's playing order of merit is maintained in accordance with rule 4.1.

- 7.8 The General Secretary, the Committee or any one of its sub-committees 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.

8. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

- 8.1 Both teams must send full details of the results of each match in writing signed by both match captains to the appropriate divisional representative so as to be received by the divisional representative within 6 days after the match has been played, unless agreed with the Divisional Representative, scorecards can be returned on a less frequent basis, when the team is entering their 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 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.
- 9.3 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 to claim a tie, only the committee can make that decision.

10. AVAILABILITY OF COURTS

If the visiting team has travelled more than 20 miles, the home club should try to make two courts available for the match.

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 must be made by a Club Representative and within seven days of the match or incident to which it relates and must be sent in writing (letter and/or email) to the General 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 (letter and/or email) 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.

14. AFFILIATION FEES

- 14.1 Each club must pay to the League a fee of £37 per team payable on or before the Annual General Meeting. The Committee may change the affiliation fee providing that the clubs are notified (letter and/or email) at least thirteen (13) weeks before the Annual General Meeting.
- 14.2 Each team in the first division shall deposit with the League prior to the Annual General Meeting 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.