

WOLVERHAMPTON & DISTRICT CHESS LEAGUE
COMPETITION RULES: 2015-16

1. DIVISIONS

Prior to the Fixtures Meeting, the league is divided into divisions, which are chosen and arranged by the League's Constitution Committee (appointed at the AGM). A new club entering the league cannot enter a team straight into Division 1 and neither can any club re-joining after having left the league.

2. NUMBER OF MATCHES

Each team competing shall play where there are seven teams or less, home and away matches with every other team in their division. Where there are 8 teams or more in a division then each team shall play single fixtures with every other team in that division, unless otherwise decided at the A.G.M., or by the sub-committee appointed for this purpose.

3. FIXTURES

a) League fixtures are arranged at the Fixtures Meeting, convened before the start of the season. The results of all league matches to be with the Record Secretary by 28th April or not be recorded in the league tables. Matches to be played using the adjournment option must have their first sessions by 7th April.

b) On the request of either club, fixtures may be re-arranged up to 28 days before the arranged date, ideally to a new date to be within 28 days of the original, the re-arrangement to be notified to the Records Secretary. If the clubs cannot agree a new date, they may appeal to the Records Secretary to choose a date binding on both clubs.

c) Fixtures may be postponed if it proves impossible for either team to play on the date arranged. Bad weather or cancelled public transport are considered valid reasons, but difficulties in raising a team are not. Following a postponement the clubs should a) inform the Records Secretary, b) agree a new fixture date within 14 days, and again inform the Records Secretary. If not so informed, the Records Secretary chooses a new date binding on both clubs.

d) Any team defaulting a match will be penalised 1 league point and must give at least 24 hours notice to the opposition, or be penalised an additional 1 league point in an away match, or an additional 2 league points in a home match. Should a home team default and cause a team a wasted journey on 2 occasions, they shall be expelled from the league for that season. Any team defaulting 3 matches in a season shall be expelled from the League for that season. A defaulted match should be defined as any match where less than 50% of a team play.

e) When a club has more than one team in a division, inter-club fixtures must be the first to be played, in each half of the season where applicable, or as soon as possible if it is not practical.

4. NUMBER OF GAMES PER MATCH

a) League matches shall have teams containing these numbers of players in each side: Division 1-6 a side; Division 2-6 a side; Division 3-5 a side; Division 4-4 a side, one game being played at each board.

b) A won game shall score 1, a drawn game ½ and a lost game 0 points.

c) A won match shall score 2, a drawn match 1 and a lost match 0 points.

5. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS [Sec's note: Items d) – i) have been re-numbered from previous]

a) The players of each club shall be registered and no player shall be registered with more than one club. A player may change his registration to another club at any time during the season subject to the provisions of 5(c) hereof. The change shall be effected by registration whereupon the earlier registration shall automatically be cancelled. Any player changing clubs shall inform the Records Secretary and his previous club in writing.

b) All players registered for a club shall be a bona fide paid up member of such club, unless said player is an honorary member of the club, and also be a Direct Member of the ECF, unless there are exceptional circumstances [Sec's Note: 'exceptional' -was understood to include e.g. players of very few games; v. late registered players etc.]

c) The secretary of each club shall supply to the Records Secretary the names and addresses of players it desires to register on a registration form supplied by the league. The Records Secretary may query the registration of any player, and if not satisfied, shall reject the registration of that player. The registrations shall not be accepted until any amendment has been made. Registrations must be done in writing five clear days (from the date of postmark) before the commencement of league or competition play. All juniors (any person under the age of 18 years on the 1st September in that season) marked with a 'J' in the column provided and show their date of birth. Failure to comply with the latter's request could result in a club's registrations not being accepted. Any extra registration shall be on a form provided or on a sheet of paper suitable for filing. No player shall be registered after 1st March. A copy of the registration form should be sent to the treasurer when sending the club's league fees.

d) Any club failing to pay their league fees by the 31st October, shall lose all points gained so far. They will continue to do so until the fees are paid. There will be no rearranging of matches under any circumstances, until fees are paid.

e) When a club has more than one team competing in the league not less than six players in Divisions 1 & 2, five players in Division 3, or four players in Division 4, shall be registered for each team. These players should be registered in decreasing order of playing strength and allocated, as far as is practicable, to teams in order from the highest placed team to the lowest. If a club has more than one team in a division, the teams must be labelled A,B,C... in strength order (A-high), and players registered in accordance with the previous requirement.

f) i) When registering players at least half of a team's minimum registered players (**currently 6 in divisions 1 and 2, 5 in division 3 and 4 in division 4**) must be either 'new' or 'active' players. A 'new' player is someone who was not registered for the club **at the start of the previous season**. An 'active' player is someone who was registered for the club in the previous season and played **at least five league matches**.

ii) The remaining players shall be registered for the lowest division in which the club is playing.

iii) When a club has more than one team in its lowest division the required players must be registered for each 'higher' team. The remaining players should all be registered in the 'lowest' team.

g) No player shall play for a 'lower' team than that in which he is registered. A player who has not played more than 3 times for his registered team may be re-registered for a lower team by writing to the Record Secretary. The player cannot play for his new team until the club has received written confirmation from the Record Secretary of the suitability of the re-registration. No further re-registration of this player is permitted. Re-registered players may not play in a higher division.

h) A player may play a total of three times for **each** higher team, including those in the same division, than that in which he is registered first but on playing a fourth time in any of the higher teams than that he was first registered, he shall be deemed to be tied to the team in which he was played on the fourth occasion for the rest of the season. **A tied player can still play for a higher team than the one he is now tied to.**

i) 'Any team which includes a player who is not validly registered, or who is disqualified from playing for that team, shall lose the offending board and all boards below, but player scores will be retained for grading purposes.'

6. MATCH PROCEDURE

a) Before the commencement of a match the captains of the respective teams shall exchange lists of:- six in Divisions 1 & 2, or five in Divisions 3, or four in Div. 4, eligible players in order of *playing strength whether or not the players are present, and shall decide upon the adjudication or adjournment time. Should a team play any player deliberately out of order they shall lose the offending board and all boards below and in addition two points from the league table. The Records Secretary may query the registration of a teams board order. If a captain be aware that any player(s) in his team will be defaulting then the default(s) will be placed on the bottom board(s).

*[*For this purpose a grading difference of up to 10 points will be regarded as acceptable]*

b) The away team shall have the WHITE pieces on the odd boards.

c) Play in all match games must start at either 7.15 or 7.30 pm and each club must state in the league information sheet which they use for home matches. A continuous period of at least two and a half hours must be allowed for the first session of any match and at least two hours for any adjourned session.

d) Games in all divisions that are unfinished can be decided by adjournment as provided in Rule 8. In such an event, i) If both players agree to an adjournment the normal venue shall be the home player's club room., or alternatively as may be mutually agreed, ii) if one player insists on adjournment then that player shall travel to his opponent's club room, otherwise the game will be adjudicated as provided for in Rule 9.

e) If, at the call of time, any game is unfinished, the results may be agreed by the captains or by one other member of their team authorised by them.

f) Each club/team must separately make the result of the match known to the Records Secretary within SEVEN days of the date on which the match was played. If a match result is not received within SEVEN days, then on the first offence the club is warned, and on each subsequent offence a team league point is deducted. Match cards should specify any games adjourned or adjudicated by the letter "A". The Records Secretary must be notified of all adjourned game results within TWO days of their completion. If a game is not completed within 28 days of the original match date, the Records Secretary must be informed.

g) Both players in every game shall keep an accurate record of the game using a recognised system of notation.

7. GAMES IN DEFAULT

a) A game shall be scored to each player for whom no eligible opponent is provided. Any club failing to keep an appointment shall lose the match by default.

b) Where a clock is provided, no game shall be claimed by default until the defaulting player's time to the relevant time control shall have expired.

c) Where a clock is not provided, a game shall not be claimed by default until seventy five minutes have elapsed from the starting time.

d) Any club winning a match by default shall send in a match card to claim the match within FIVE days. Failure to do this will result in a double default. The defaulting team should also notify the Records Secretary at the same time.

8. ADJOURNMENTS

a) A game shall not be adjourned for a first time before 36 or 42 moves, depending on the rate of play, have been made by each player and the agreed session time has been completed.

b) If a game is adjourned the player having the move MUST put his move in unambiguous notation on his score sheet, put this score sheet and that of his opponent in the envelope, seal the envelope and stop the CLOCKS. The envelope must be kept in safe custody by the player who has not sealed, who must produce the envelope on resumption of play. Failure to produce the envelope by the custodian shall result in him forfeiting the game.

c) An adjourned game must be finalised and the result notified to the Records Secretary within twenty-eight days of the match being played. Failure to do so will result in both players being given a loss. Any game commencing after 31st March must adhere to the deadline set by Rule 3a (28th April).

d) The game shall be resumed at the club room of the player as provided for in Rule 6(d) or as may be agreed by the two players.

e) The date for resumption shall be agreed at the time of the adjournment and for this purpose the player with choice of venue, which need not be at his club room, shall offer at least three dates.

f) Failure to keep an appointment shall result in the loss of the game, subject always to the fact that the players can agree a result at any time

9. ADJUDICATIONS

a) The position to be adjudicated should be noted on a diagram or scoresheet by each player separately and annotated with i) "claim" for win or draw, ii) side to move, iii) move number, iv) if either can castle, v) if e.p. is allowed, vi) identity of players and teams, vii) board no, viii) date of match, ix) match no, x) sent by.

b) Each club separately must forward the position to the Records Secretary to arrive within SEVEN days of the match, otherwise the other side receives their "claim". Should both sides positions not arrive within SEVEN days, BOTH shall lose. *[NOTE: Clubs are reminded to check the requirements of these Rules and to retain a copy of any adjudication claim and position submitted-Rules & Disputes Sub-Committee 2007]*

c) No position shall be sent for adjudication unless 36 or 42 moves, depending on the rate of play, have been made by each player.

d) In all cases of positions sent for adjudication no money shall be sent with the positions. A claim will be made at the end of the season by the treasurer for all outstanding monies. Adjudication fee £4

e) The Records Secretary shall inform each concerned club's secretary of the adjudication results in writing.

f) Either club may appeal the adjudication decision in writing within SEVEN days of the decision, enclosing a deposit of £10.00 to be returned if the appeal succeeds. If based on the chess position, grounds for appeal should include chess analysis. The Records Secretary must inform the opposing club an appeal has been made. Appeals shall be decided by a county adjudicator whose decision shall be final.

10. CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION, RELEGATION and WITHDRAWAL

a) For each division the title of Champion and the positions of i) runners-up and ii) lowest two teams, shall be decided by the total match points for the season. The winner of Division 1 shall be known as League Champions.

b) If any team retires during the season from any division, its results shall be ignored in calculating the final positions for that division if less than half of its fixtures have been played. If half or more of its fixtures have been played, its unplayed fixtures shall be scored as won by default by its opponent(s).

c) In the event of a tie on match points for any of these positions, the team which has defaulted no matches, or the least, shall be declared the higher.

d) If there is still a tie, the Records Secretary will inform teams that a Play-off match is necessary to break the tie.

e) The Champions shall be, and the runners-up of each division shall have the right to be, promoted to the next higher division for the following season. The two lowest teams in each division at the end of the season will be relegated to the next lower division for the following season.

f) Any other promotions or relegations for the purpose of adjusting the numbers in each division, can only be made with the consent of the clubs concerned.

g) Should any club withdraw a team from the league, that team shall be the one in the lowest division. When taking into account promotion and relegation the team dropped out shall count as one of the relegated teams.

11. PLAY-OFF MATCHES

a) The Record Secretary will arrange the time, date, and venue for the match; and notify teams not less than two weeks in advance

b) These matches shall be regarded as part of the playing season [...] and only bona fide players for their respective teams will be allowed to play in them. Any player of the club who has been tied to another team during the playing season will NOT be eligible to take part in the play-off.

c) Clocks shall be started at the time fixed for the commencement of play. **The time limits shall be 30 moves in 75 minutes, followed by a 15-minute quickplay finish.**

d) A match referee, appointed by the Records Secretary, will be present and act as arbiter. His/her decision will be final.

e) If the match is drawn, the following tie-break procedure(s) shall be applied, in order:-

i) **The Board Count method**:-Each team shall add together the numbers of the boards at which it won games. The team with the lowest total shall win, *and if there is still a tie:-*

ii) **The Elimination Rule**:-Games shall be eliminated from the match from the bottom board upwards until the respective team scores become unequal. The team then with the higher total of game points shall be the winner

iii) **If it is still drawn the team with black on board 1 will win.**

12. CHESS LAWS

All matches shall be played in accordance with the rules laid down in the authorised edition of the laws of chess published by the International Chess Federation and the tournament rules of the English Chess Federation unless otherwise provided by these rules. No persons should act in a way to disturb the players during a game.

13. USE OF CLOCKS

1. The use of clocks shall be compulsory, and the time limits shall be one of the following options:-

(1) 30 moves in the first 75 mins, followed by a 15 minute quickplay finish.

OR

(2) if both teams agree before the start of the match, 36 moves in 75 minutes, followed by 28 moves in the next 60 minutes, followed by a 15-minute quickplay finish.

2. In matches played to the time limit in 13.1.(2), both captains may agree to change the first time period from 36 moves in 75 minutes to 42 moves in 90 minutes.

14. QUICKPLAY FINISHES (Claiming a draw in the last 2 minutes; no arbiter present; no flag fallen.)

a) When a draw is claimed by a player on the basis that his opponent A) cannot win by normal means or B) has been making no effort to win by normal means, he must immediately stop the clock. This concludes the game.

b) If his opponent disagrees with the claim, the final agreed position shall be copied on the adjudication diagram provided by the league, which must be completed in full. In case B) also, the scoresheet must have been completed before play ceases. The basis of the claim shall be clearly stated on the diagram and the diagram shall be headed:-**Position occurring in the last 2 minutes of a Quickplay Finish.**

c) Claims shall be made by each player separately. These claims shall be sent for adjudication to, and be handled by, the records secretary in complete accordance with Rule 9. ADJUDICATIONS, parts b), d), e), and f) only. For this purpose, in case B) only, 'position' shall be taken to include the scoresheet.

15. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS

a) Smoking will be banned both at the board and in the immediate playing area. Each club must define its 'playing area' and home team captains must inform visiting teams of its boundaries.

b) Mobile phones must be turned off during play. If a player's phone rings, he should be asked to switch it off and a warning given. If it rings again the player automatically loses the game.

16. DISPUTES

In the event of any dispute between clubs the matter shall be referred to the rules and disputes sub-committee in accordance with the league constitution.

17. GRADING OF RESULTS:-

a) Individual chess game results, including those played in both league and cup competitions, are referred to the ECF for grading. Games won in default are not referred.

b) Games decided by completed adjudication procedure (Rule 9) shall be referred for grading.

18. COMPETITION RULES

These rules cancel and replace all previous competition rules of the league.

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TOURNAMENT RULES **ROLE OF TOURNAMENT SECRETARY:**

To be responsible for :

1. Ensuring that only active members of League teams play in these competitions.
2. Collection of entry fees to Rock/Bidgood Cups
3. Ensuring a prompt start to the Rock/Bidgood competition, by completing entries by the end of September and having the draw sent out within one week (i.e. first week in October)
4. Carrying out the draw for each round of competitions, except for the Preliminary Round of the Pittaway Cup competition, which will be carried out by the Records Secretary.
5. Informing players/clubs of the draw, and issuing details of their opponents, result forms/cards and copies of the appropriate rules.
6. Ensuring games/matches played in accordance with the rules.
7. Promptly informing Bulletin Editor of all scores and results, for prompt print in the Bulletin, to ensure swift grading.
8. Ensuring winners receive appropriate trophies and prizes

PITTAWAY CUP **COMPETITION RULES**

1. The competition shall be open to any club which is a member of the WDCL and shall be played for annually on a 'Knock Out' basis. Players in this competition must be registered members of the club.

2. The competition shall be under the control of the League Tournament Secretary, who shall be responsible for making the draw for each round.

3. Each round must be played by the date given and the result notified to the Tournament Secretary, with the score of the match on the card/form provided, by the winning club secretary within three days. Failure to do this will result in the disqualification of both teams.

4. The 'Home' club is responsible for contacting the visiting club, by the date given by the Tournament Secretary, suggesting at least two alternative dates for the match. If the 'Away' team's secretary is not contacted by this date he shall contact the Tournament Secretary claiming the match.

5. Should the clubs not be able to agree a date, Home secretary must inform the Tournament Secretary. A date and a venue will be fixed by the Tournament Secretary which will be binding on both clubs.

6. Any club failing to keep an appointment after the date has been mutually agreed shall forfeit the match.

7. The time limit shall be **30 moves in the first 75 mins, followed by a 15 minute quickplay finish.**

8. A player can only play in the competition for the club for which he is registered for League play.

9. Handicap: If teams from different divisions play each other the team from the higher division shall give 2¼ points start per division to the lower team, i.e. a Division 1 team playing a Division 3 team gives 4½ points to the Division 3 side. [Assuming 3 Divisions only]

10. Teams shall be 8 to each side with no person playing for more than one club in any one season.

11. The draw shall be made by ballot, no team shall have two successive 'Away' matches unless their opponents also played 'Away' in their previous match.

12. Before commencement of play the Captains shall exchange team lists in order of playing strength and toss for colour, the winner taking White on the odd boards. If a player be absent at the end of the first hour from the agreed time of start, his opponent, if present, shall score the game as a win unless a substitute be put in before the time of forfeit. A clock, once started, shall not be stopped or put back except in compliance with the Laws of Chess.

13. Should the match be drawn, the result shall be decided by the Board Count method. If it is still drawn, the Elimination Rule shall apply. **If it is still drawn the team with black on board 1 will win.**

14. The neutral venue for the final shall be fixed by the Tournament Secretary.

15. All games shall be played in accordance with the F.I.D.E. Laws of Chess and the E.C.F. Tournament Rules, unless provided by the rules above. Any matter affecting the conduct of a match shall be referred to the Tournament Secretary in the first instance.

16. No handicap shall be conferred until a club shall have been a League member for at least 3 years previously.

HUMPHREYS TROPHY **COMPETITION RULES**

1. The competition shall be open to any club which is a member of the WDCL. and shall be played for annually on a 'Knock Out' basis. Players in this competition must be registered members of the club.

2. The competition shall be under the control of the Tournament Secretary who shall be responsible for making the draw for each round.

3. Each round must be played by the date given and the result notified to the Tournament Secretary, with the score of the match on the card/form provided, by the winning club secretary within three days. Failure to do this will result in the disqualification of both teams.

- 4.The 'Home' club is responsible for contacting the visiting club, by the date given by the Tournament Secretary, suggesting at least two alternative dates for the match. If the 'Away' team's secretary is not contacted by this date he shall contact the Tournament Secretary claiming the match.
- 5.Should the clubs not be able to agree a date, the 'Home' secretary must inform the Tournament Secretary. A date and a venue will be fixed by the Tournament Secretary which will be binding on both clubs.
- 6.Any club failing to keep an appointment after the date has been mutually agreed shall forfeit the match.
7. The time limit shall be **30 moves in the first 75 mins, followed by a 15 minute quickplay finish.**
- 8.A player can only play in the competition for the club for which he is registered for League play. He must be graded U-130. Any Ungraded players can only be played with the prior consent of the Controller. Any team failing to comply shall lose that game and one additional game point, but the game result shall stand for grading purposes.
- 9.Teams shall be 4 to each side with no person playing for more than one team in any one season.
- 10.The draw shall be made by ballot, no team shall have two successive 'Away' matches unless their opponents also played 'Away' in their previous match.
- 11.Before commencement of play the Captains shall exchange team lists in order of playing strength and toss for colour, the winner taking White on the odd boards. If a player be absent at the end of the first hour from the agreed time of start, his opponent, if present, shall score the game as a win unless a substitute be put in before the time of forfeit. A clock, once started, shall not be stopped or put back except in compliance with the Laws of Chess.
- 12.Should the match be drawn, the result shall be decided by the Board Count method. If it is still drawn, the Elimination Rule shall apply. **If it is still drawn the team with black on board 1 will win.**
- 13.The neutral venue for the final shall be fixed by the Tournament Secretary.
- 14.All games shall be played in accordance with the F.I.D.E. Laws of Chess and the E.C.F. Tournament Rules, unless provided by the rules above. Any matter affecting the conduct of a match shall be referred to the Tournament Secretary in the first instance.

ROCK AND BIDGOOD CUPS

ELIGIBILITY The Rock Cup is an individual knock-out tournament, open to all registered members of clubs playing in the WDCL, for the individual championship. Everyone, with the exceptions listed below, plays at least two games, as Round 1 of the Rock Cup will be seeded, and first round losers are automatically entered for the Bidgood Cup. Winners will hold the Cups for one year. In future, both winners and runners-up will also receive appropriate trophies to keep, rather than cash prizes. The entry fee is £3 per player and cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the Wolverhampton & District Chess League. Closing date for entries is the 30th September. Results will be published in the Bulletin and on the internet at www.wdclchess.org.uk. The following players will not be eligible to compete in the Bidgood Cup: A) Any player who, during the previous season, played on one of the top ten boards in a County (1st team) match B) Any player defaulting in the first round of the Rock Cup

RULES

- 1.Each round must be played within the stated time and the results notified by the winner to the Tournament Secretary by the last day of the month. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of BOTH players.
- 2.The HOME player is responsible for suggesting at least 3 alternate dates to his opponent within a week of receipt of the pairing notices, in default of which the AWAY player shall claim the game.
- 3.If the dates offered are unacceptable, the AWAY player must reply within a further 7 days offering at least 3 alternative dates, in default of which the HOME player shall claim the game.
- 4.If the date is still not agreed, the HOME player must notify the Tournament Secretary, who will fix a date and venue which shall be binding on both players.
- 5.Any player failing to keep an appointment after the date has been mutually agreed shall forfeit the game.
- 6.The HOME player has black. In the event of a drawn game, colours and venue shall be reversed and the game played in the same month. All results in this round (including draws) shall be notified to the Tournament Secretary.
- 7.Clocks shall be used. The HOME player is responsible for providing same.
8. The time limit shall be **30 moves in the first 75 mins, followed by a 15 minute quickplay finish.**
- 9.The date and venue for the final will be fixed by the Tournament Secretary.
- 10.All games shall be played in accordance with the F.I.D.E. Laws of Chess and the E.C.F. Tournament Rules, unless provided by the rules above. Any matter affecting the conduct of a match shall be referred to the Tournament Secretary in the first instance.

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