Regulations for HBA Competitions

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**PART 1 The HBA, its Competition Structure and General Rules for Competitions**

The Hertfordshire Bridge Association organises each year a range of competitions, including Leagues, for the benefit of its members and affiliated clubs. This document describes these competitions and sets out the regulations governing them. They are published with the authority of the HBA Executive Committee and may be found on the HBA website where they are corrected and updated as necessary. Consequently they may be considered an authoritative statement of the regulations.

“Notes for Guidance” for Tournament Directors, Appeals Committees and Master Points Secretaries having been noted by the HBA Executive Committee can also be found on the website.

**List of HBA Competitions**

A Championships with Heats in Clubs

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A1 Humble Cup: Premier championship for teams: knock-out competition

A2 Championship Pairs: Premier championship for pairs: heats & two-session semi-final & final.

A3 Marjorie Lukyn Charity Cup: heats & single-session final for pairs.

A4 Cadet Pairs Championship: heats & single-session final for pairs.

B Inter-Club Championships

B1 Desmond Flockhart Trophy: two-session competition for teams of eight.

B2 Club Winners Cup: single-session pairs competition for club champions and runners-up.

B3 Club Cadet Teams Championship: single session for teams.

B4 Eccles Cup: single session for four pairs of restricted rank.

C Direct Entry Championships

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C1 Hertfordshire Rose Bowl: two-session competition for teams of four.

C2 Mixed Pairs Championship: single session for pairs

C3 Mixed Teams Championship: extended session for pivot teams

C4 Cadets & Intermediates Pairs Championships (stratified): extended session.

C5 Seniors Pairs Championship: extended session with lunch.

C6 Seniors Teams Championship: extended session with lunch.

D Simultaneous Pairs

D1 HBA Simultaneous Pairs: prepared hands are played on the same day in participating clubs.

E Victor-Ludorum

Awards for the best overall performance in Cadets, Intermediates and Open categories.

F HBA League

**Laws and Regulations**

In the conduct of its competitions the HBA is bound by the “The Laws of Duplicate Bridge 2007” as promulgated by the World Bridge Federation. The HBA also accepts, unless otherwise stated in these regulations, the rules of the English Bridge Union. Those of interest to players are contained in the “Orange Book - Handbook of EBU Directives and Permitted Agreements” whilst the more technical aspects of interest to organisers and tournament directors are contained in the “White Book - EBU Tournament Directors’ Guide”. The authority for the award of master points is the “EBU Licensing & Master Point Handbook”.

**Tournament Committee & Tournament Directors**

The EBU is the Regulating Authority for England as described in Law 80A. The EBU has not assigned its powers to counties but has recognised the HBA as a “Tournament Organizer” with the powers and duties as set out in Law 80B. The HBA Executive Committee, as such, approves the rules for its competitions but has then delegated all the other powers and duties to its Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee is thus responsible for organising all competitions, including the leagues. It appoints Tournament Directors, arranges for scoring and publication of results and makes suitable arrangement for Appeals. The responsibilities and duties of a Tournament Directors are detailed in Law 81.

The Tournament Committee is not directly charged with investigating misconduct though these often arise from incidents under its control. These are the responsibility of separate Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

**Conduct of Meetings**

The Tournament Director is the official representative of the Tournament Committee and is required to manage the events in the way, such as the speed of play, required by the Tournament Committee. The HBA expects a high standard of behaviour but believes that this is best achieved by persuasion and exhortation. Nevertheless it recognises that TDs are fully entitled to penalise or suspend a contestant for all or part of a Session (Law 91A). Additionally (as recommended in EBU White Book 91.6) it has given a TD prior approval to disqualify for cause (Law 91B). The TD is required to report any action under Law 91 to the Tournament Committee.

**Membership of HBA and EBU**

Affiliated clubs pay an annual fee to the EBU specifying the County of Allegiance and also include a Pay‑to‑Play levy in the table money for all sessions. Their members become members of the EBU at no extra charge.

New members are assigned the County of Allegiance of the first club to register them with the EBU but members may amend this. Membership of a county association is not exclusive. Those with allegiance elsewhere may if they wish also join the HBA by paying a separate subscription direct to the HBA. This allows them to participate in most HBA events. Direct Members of the EBU may also specify Hertfordshire as their county of allegiance.

**Entry Requirements**

There are no membership requirements for Heats of HBA Events and simultaneous competitions held in clubs. Competitors in the inter-club representative events need only be bona fide club members.

HBA membership is required for participation in most other HBA events. Additionally, for the later stages of the Humble Cup or the Championship Pairs, a competitor must have Hertfordshire as the County of Primary Allegiance.

Some competitions are only open to those of restricted Master Point Rank.

Cadets: Below the rank of Master (i.e fewer than 5000 master points).

Intermediates: Below the rank of Premier Regional Master (i.e fewer than 50 green points).

Eccles Not above 5\* Master, 5\* Premier Master or 5\* Tournament Master

These categories are based upon the number of master points awarded up to 1 September preceding the competition. It is immaterial for this purpose whether or not the points have been registered. It would be improper for players who have competed with success without registering their master points to claim a rank lower than they would have achieved had they registered their master points.

**Permitted Agreements**

Conventions for club heats are determined by the promoting clubs.

In the Cadet Pairs, Cadet Teams and the Eccles Cup, methods above Level 2 are not allowed.

Level 4 methods are allowed in all other events.

**Seating Rights in Head-to-Head Matches**

A match between teams of four players will be played in two equal stanzas with the pairs of the “away” team changing tables at half time. For the first stanza the home team is required to declare the disposition of its players first whilst the “away” team has the privilege of placing its pairs later than the opponents (i.e it has the seating rights).

When more than four players are allowed to compete in a match a Team Captain may require the match to be played as four equal stanzas. The home captain chooses a stanza in which his team has seating rights or passes that choice to the other captain. The captain not having this choice then selects two other stanzas in which his team has seating rights. Other reasonable arrangements are permitted where there is a genuine agreement between the captains. Should any dispute arise not covered by the above rules each captain is required to declare its team’s deployment without knowing the deployment of the other team.

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**Matches Played Privately**

League matches, the final of the Humble Cup and possibly some of the earlier matches of the Humble Cup are played privately when no TD is available to give an immediate ruling should an irregularity occur.

In the event of an irregularity, the players at the table, including dummy, must together perform the function of a TD in determining the facts, ensuring that all are heard, deciding upon the relevant Law and selecting the correct rectification. The more experienced, in offering their expertise, should ensure that the interests of the less assertive are not overlooked. As a TD would not make a value judgement without first consulting other experienced players and directors, so the players should consult with others, particularly the team captains, before doing so.

Team Captains will be provided with the contact details of TDs from whom they can obtain help and advice A TD will advise upon the substance and interpretation of the Laws and Regulations but will be wary of giving a firm ruling if there is any uncertainty about the reported facts. If the Team Captains cannot agree they should make a detailed record of the facts, both agreed and disputed and request a ruling from the County TD.

**Appeals**

The right to request or appeal a Director’s ruling expires 48 hours after the publication of the results of an event. The HBA has specified this long correction period because the results may not be available until several hours after an event. Nevertheless, wherever possible, the TD should be advised as soon as possible of the intention to appeal before evidence is lost. Results can only be confirmed as final after the correction period has expired and any outstanding appeals have been resolved. Subject to the above, the procedures of appeal shall be in accordance with Law 93, and a deposit required as specified in the EBU regulations.

All requests or appeals should be made to the Tournament Director. Wherever practicable the TD will ask an appeals committee to adjudicate before the participants depart. An alternative method (Appeal after the Event) will be employed when there is insufficient time for proper consideration, when suitable adjudicators may not be available and for appeals arising later. The Tournament Committee will then arrange for an appeals committee to deal with the matter by email, telephone or written submission. Whatever method is used, the TD will implement the decision of the appeals committee and inform the participants.

The HBA encourages experienced players to participate in settling appeals and will provide them with detailed guidance upon the role of appeals committees and the procedures to be adopted.

**Appeals from Clubs**

Requests from Clubs to assist in resolving problems in their own competitions (except HBA heats) are strictly not a part of these regulations. Clubs are the Tournament Organizers and decide how they run their own events. But the HBA is willing to advise with a ruling or arbitrate as the club wishes.

**HBA Representation**

Where the HBA issues invitations to represent Hertfordshire to the winners and leading contenders in some competitions, the HBA and not the recipients of the invitation will decide upon substitutes if any are required. The HBA will pay the entry fees.

**PART 2 Regulations for Club Heats**

**Organisation of Club Heats**

The tournaments listed in Section A of the ‘List of Tournaments’ above have preliminary heats. No membership qualification is required for entry to a heat even where it would be necessary for further progression in a competition. The HBA invites clubs to include these heats in their normal calendar of events so as to provide a choice of times and venues for competitors throughout the County. Whilst the HBA hopes that clubs will welcome visitors they are under no obligation to do so

The HBA is formally responsible for the heats but, in practice, the clubs organise them according to their normal procedures

**Limitation upon the Number of Heats and Playing without Standing**

A player may not compete, with standing, in more than one heat of the Humble Cup nor in more than one heat of the HBA Championship Pairs. Players attempting to compete with standing in more than one heat will not be eligible for the later stages but in the Humble Cup, the first team in which an offender played may recruit alternative eligible member/s if they qualified to compete in the next round. Teams fielding a player who has already competed with standing in an earlier heat will be treated as playing without standing and the non offending members of that team will be eligible to play with standing in another heat subject to a later heat being available and open to them. Before the start of a heat, a player who has played or intends to play in another heat of the same competition (no other reason is acceptable) must inform the club tournament director running the heat of his intention for his team/pair to play without standing in the competition. That team/pair is then not considered part of the HBA event (e.g. in determining the number of qualifiers or minimum numbers).

Players who have allegiance to another county are to be treated as competing with standing unless they have already competed in another club heat or are prohibited from joining the HBA. Those who have elected to play without standing do not receive master points but the club is required to include them in its P2P return.

There are no restrictions in other championships.

**Entry Fees for Heats**

The HBA imposes a levy, additional to normal table money, on the club heats of the Marjorie Lukyn and the HBA Simultaneous Pairs as shown in “Entry Fees to HBA Competitions”.

**Qualifiers from Club Heats**

A club heat of an HBA competition must comprise at least three full tables of players all of whom are competing with standing. The proportion of qualifiers is shown in the description of each tournament. In determining the numbers qualifying, all fractions are rounded up to the next whole number. Ties for the last qualifying places are not broken and all sharing the last qualifying places qualify for the next stage. Non-qualifiers are not promoted to take the place of qualifiers not wishing or not entitled to proceed further.

A single-winner movement (e.g Howell or switched Mitchell) is preferred for the qualifying heats of a pairs competition as this simplifies the selection of the qualifying pairs. If a two-winner movement is used this should not give rise to an extra qualifier. The numbers of qualifiers are allocated to the two streams in the proportion of the number of pairs playing with standing in each stream. If this does not resolve the matter the pair with the higher percentage score qualifies. In the unlikely event of equal scores the result when the pairs played each other shall decide.

**Master Points & P2P Registration**

Clubs should register a heat for P2P purposes and, except for the Humble Cup, arrange for the award of master points at the appropriate rate. The HBA will arrange for the award of Master Points for the whole Humble Championship including those gained during the club heats.

Club heats of the Championship Pairs attract master points at Regional Scale (3 x club scale)

Club heats of the Marjorie Lukyn attract master points at County Scale (2 x club scale).

**After a Club Heat**

The results of a heat should be sent to the Tournament Secretary within seven days of the event showing the full names of all competitors with the position and scores of qualifiers, non-qualifiers and those playing without-standing. There is no need to send the original travellers or score cards but these should be kept for a few weeks after the results are published in case there is a challenge. Where there is an HBA levy, payment should be made to the Tournament Secretary. Qualifiers from club heats are themselves responsible for submitting their own entries to the later rounds of a competition and for ensuring that they have the necessary membership qualifications.

**PART 3 Regulations for events organised directly by the HBA**

These regulations relate to the final stages of competitions with club heats and to Club Representative and Direct Entry Championships.

**Entry Procedures**

Pre-entry is required for all HBA events other than those run by the clubs.

Entry forms are included in the Competition Programme issued to all members at the start of the season or they are sent to club representatives as appropriate. Copies of all entry forms may be obtained from the HBA Website. Entries with the correct entry fee, should reach the Tournament Secretary by the published closing date. This is normally set at seven days before the event to allow time to check eligibility, to prepare lists of competitors and to ensure that suitable arrangements are in hand at the venue. Entry by email and payment by electronic transfer are available.

Current entry fees are shown in a separate table “Entry Fees for HBA Competition”. There may be a surcharge for late entries. The Tournament Secretary may refuse entry from those who have been formally excluded, are not entitled to compete or who are in debt to the HBA. Some events are limited in table numbers and the entry will close when capacity is reached. Exceptionally the Tournament Director will accept entries and payments at the event.

If a team or pair having entered and paid the entry fee for any event find they cannot take part, they are asked to notify the Tournament Secretary or the Tournament Director at the earliest opportunity when their entry fee will be refunded in full providing such notification is made at least two hours before the start of the event.

**List of Competitors and Starting Positions.**

There is a public draw for opponents before each session of the Humble Cup. In other competitions the Tournament Director assigns starting positions randomly including approved requests for fixed seats made at the time of entry to the Tournament Secretary. The Tournament Director at each event has discretion to modify the seating positions to accommodate player’s needs that have arisen post entry.

**Late Arrivals**

All competitors should be ready to start play at the advertised time. If late players are allowed to join the competition, the TD may at that time remove boards from play assigning adjusted scores. Boards once removed from a round must not be played even if the players later consider there is time. The same rule applies if boards are removed for other reasons, such as slow play.

**Duplicated Boards and Hand Record Cards**

Wherever suitable, pre-dealt boards are used and competitors are provided at the end of play with copies of the hands. Hand record cards are not used with such pre-dealt hands nor when a board is played only twice as in a head-to-head match.

**Refreshment**

There will be an advertised refreshment break of 45 minutes during a two-session event. Exceptionally the TD may vary the duration.

**Trophies and Prizes**

Perpetual trophies are held by the winners for one year. Presentations of trophies and any prizes will be made at the AGM. Recipients who are unable to be present themselves should make arrangements for collection. It is also the responsibility of the team captain (or first named of a pair) to ensure that the trophy is returned to an HBA Officer about four weeks prior to the next AGM. If a result of a championship is still provisional, usually only for an event held on the day of the AGM, then the presentation of a trophy might be delayed or made conditionally.

**PART 4 Regulations specific to each Championship**

**A1 Humble Cup**

The Humble Cup is the HBA premier championship for teams. The competition comprises club heats followed by up to six rounds of a knockout competition. After the club heats, participants require HBA Membership with Hertfordshire as the County of Allegiance.

Players competing with standing in more than one qualifying heat of the Humble Cup will not be eligible for the later stages but a team in which an offender played may recruit alternative eligible member(s) to compete in subsequent rounds. Not more than six players may compete for any team including any disqualified player*.* The Tournament Secretary's approval is required to register additional team members after Qualifinal 1

A club heat must comprise a minimum of three teams playing with standing and should be played as a multiple teams movement with the top 50% of teams playing with standing qualifying for the next stage

Matches are played during the two sessions of each of the two qualifinals. Until the Qualifinal 2 matches are of 24 boards and only four members of a team may play in any one match. Thereafter matches are of 28 boards and a team may deploy up to 6 players. The toss of a coin at the end of the semifinal determines the home team for the final which has a play-by date of the following 1 May.

The final will consist of 42 boards unless both captains agree to play only 36 boards and is to be played in 6 or 7 equal stanzas and otherwise to follow the EBU’s Crockfords Cup regulations for choice of seating rights.

If necessary, some teams play matches privately between the Qualifinals so that a maximum of eight teams remain in the competition.

Players eliminated in Round 1 are eligible for the Humble Plate, a multiple teams competition scheduled for the 2nd Session of Qualifinal 1.

Triples are introduced into the first round where necessary so that the rest of the competition can be played as head-to-head matches. The three teams in a triple play half the number of boards against the other two teams in a multiple-teams movement. Two teams from a triple qualify for the next round. If each team in a triple wins one match then the team with the lowest IMP score is eliminated. If required at any time the Split-tie Procedures in the EBU White Book will be used.

There is a draw for opponents before each session. The team drawn first is considered the “Home Team” for seating rights. The draw for any round will ensure that qualifiers from the same triple do not meet in the immediately following round. The winners of the double matches drawn early for Session 2 of Qualifinal 1 will play in private matches if these are necessary.

The winning team will be invited to represent Hertfordshire in the Pachabo Cup and if they wish to supplement the team with additional members at that stage, this must meet the EBU’s requirements for entry to the Pachabo. If that team is unable to accept the offer within 14 days of the Humble Cup Final the HBA will select a team from the two finalists according to the procedure set out by the EBU.

**A2 Championship Pairs**

This is the HBA premier championship for pairs. The competition comprises club heats, a two-session semi-final and a two-session all-play-all final. The club heats are open to all, but participants thereafter require HBA Membership with Hertfordshire as the County of Primary Allegiance.

A player must have the same partner throughout the competition*.*

A club heat must comprise a minimum of six pairs playing with standing and should be played as a single-winner movement with the top 50% of pairs playing with standing qualifying for the next stage. (See “Qualifiers from Club Heats” above if a two-winner movement is played).

The leading 24 pairs from the semi-final qualify for the final with any pair dropping out being replaced by the next available pair. Should there be a tie for the final qualifying positions; the Split-tie Procedures in the EBU White Book will apply.

The HBA will select the leading four available pairs in the Final rankings (down to a limit of 8th place and otherwise meeting the EBU entry requirements) to represent Hertfordshire in the Corwen Trophy.

**A3 Marjorie Lukyn Charity Cup**

This is a competition for pairs with club heats followed by a single-session final. A surcharge (see separate table) is made in the heats in addition to normal table money.

A club heat should be played as a single-winner movement with the top third qualifying for the final (See “Qualifiers from Club Heats” above if a two-winner movement is played).

**A4 Cadet Pairs Championship**

The competition comprises club heats followed by a single-session final for cadet players. (see “Entry Requirements above”).

A heat may be played with cadets in a separate section or mixed with others. In a mixed field the cadet pairs take their scores from the full competition. Whether the cadets play in a separate section or not, 50% of the eligible pairs qualify for the final.

A club heat should be played as a single-winner movement. (See “Qualifiers from Club Heats” above if a two-winner movement is played.)

**B1 Desmond Flockhart Trophy**

This is an inter-club competition for teams of eight. All competitors must be bona fide members of the club that they represent and the composition of the teams is entirely the concern of the clubs. There is no direct limit upon the number of teams that a club may enter. Should there be insufficient space Team 1 of each club will be accepted in order of application, followed by Team 2 etc. In consequence, a club will not know the number of its teams that have been accepted until the closing date for entries.

The competition is played in two sections with the same multiple-teams movement and the same hands in each section. Each team of eight has a foursome in each section. The same line-up is kept throughout the competition The net score of each encounter between two teams of four is converted to IMPs before the two IMP scores are added and converted to Victory Points.

The HBA will invite the winning team to represent Hertfordshire in the Garden Cities Trophy where the rules for eligibility may not necessarily be the same as the DesmondFlockhart.

**B2 Club Winners Cup**

This is a single-session pairs competition for the winners and runners-up (or the next in line down to fourth place) of the most recently preceding annual principal pairs competition run by clubs. Competitors must be bona fide members of the Club.

**B3 Club Cadet Teams Championship**

This is a single-session, multiple-teams competition scored by net IMPs for cadet players. Competitors must be bona fide members of the Club. A club may enter any number of teams.

**B4 Eccles Cup**

This is a single-session competition for teams made up of four pairs with no player above 5\* Premier Master. Competitors must be bona fide members of the Club.

The aggregate rank of players in a team is restricted to a maximum of 50 points on the following scale:

Club Master (or below): 2

Area Master, District Master: 3

County Master: 4

Master:, Premier Master. 5

Advanced , 1\* Master or 1\* Premier Master: 6

2\* Master or 2\* Premier Master: 7

3\*, 4\* ,5\* Master or 3\*, 4\*, 5\* Premier Master: 8

Tournament Master up to 5\* Tournament Master 8

For an unranked player, we ask clubs to use their discretion and knowledge of that player’s experience and recent and long term success in their events when selecting the most suitable category to ensure that the spirit of this competition is respected.

No player may be above 5\* Master, 5\* Tournament Master or 5\* Premier Master,

e.g, a Premier Tournament Master is not eligible.

The competition is organised as two sections. The pairs of each team, assessed according to the above scale, are assigned.

Pair1 Section 1 NS

Pair2 Section 1 EW

Pair3 Section 2 NS

Pair4 Section 2 EW

The pairs of a team start at the same numbered table. An unswitched Mitchell movement is played in each section with Round 1 omitted so that pairs of the same team do not meet. The same boards are played in each section (for the interest of players only) but as each section is scored separately and there is no arrow switching four excellent ranking lists are produced.

A team’s position is determined by the sum of the ranks of its best three pairs. A tie is broken by comparing sum of the ranks of all players in the teams and if necessary the total percentage scores of all pairs. There is no overall winning pair.

**C1 Hertfordshire Rose Bowl**

This is a two-session multiple teams-of-four competition scored by net IMPs. The highest placed team (down to a limit of 3rd place) of which all players are current HBA members will be invited to represent Hertfordshire in the Beck Cup.

**C2 Mixed Pairs Championship**

This is a single-session competition, scored by match points, for pairs comprising one lady and one gentleman. A Flitch prize is awarded to the married couple with the highest rank other than the winner.

**C3 Mixed Teams Championship**

This is a pivot-team competition, scored by net IMPs, for teams of four where each includes at least one lady and at least one gentleman. The competition is played in three stanzas in an extended session of 28 boards. Players within a team have different partners for each stanza.

**C4 Newcomers & Intermediate Pairs Championships**

This is a stratified competition. Both Newcomers and Intermediates compete as a single field and are eligible for the Intermediate Championship. The same ranking list is used to determine the Newcomers Championship.

**C5 Seniors Pairs Championship & C6 Seniors Teams Championship**

These are extended-session competitions with integral lunch breaks for players above a qualifying age. In setting the age limits the HBA follows those used by the EBU for its seniors’ competitions.

**D1 HBA Simultaneous Pairs**

This is a single-session pairs competition with the same deals played simultaneously in participating clubs. The competition is open to all. A surcharge (see separate list) is made in addition to normal table money. Pre-dealt boards are provided and clubs should make arrangement for collecting and returning them.

A club may use a single-winner or a two-winner movement. Further boards may be added to complete the selected movement but these are not included in the simultaneous competition. Each pair must play at least 18 of the simultaneous boards. Competitors will receive a copy of the hands with a commentary.

E Victor Ludorum

Awarded in three categories (Open, Intermediate and Newcomer) to the players who attain the highest aggregate points in the final rounds of HBA events (excluding Club Representative, Seniors Events and the Leagues) on a scale pre-determined by the Tournament Committee.

The categories are defined in “Master Point Categories” above. The winner of a trophy is not eligible for a lower category award.

**PART 5 HBA League**

*This part of the Regulations defines the Rules for the HBA League. It is presented in the form that is issued to the Team Captains at the start of each season. For their convenience it includes extracts from other parts of these regulations*.

**Hertfordshire Bridge Association League Rules**

**COURTESY AND HOSPITALITY**

It will help to ensure everyone’s enjoyment of the Hertfordshire Bridge League if the following points are borne in mind:-

The dates for playing matches are given for guidance to help in spreading the matches through the season and to ensure that they are completed on time. Matches should be arranged in good time and there is certainly no objection to playing matches before the allotted dates.

To avoid excessive travelling every effort should be made to play matches within the County’s borders. If it is not possible to arrange a home venue within the County then try to arrange, amicably, to play at your opponent’s venue or at a Club within the Hertfordshire border.

As a matter of courtesy, every effort should be made to arrive in time for a prompt start to matches - (see rule 2.4(e) about late arrival).

Slow play can be a source of irritation and can lead to unduly late nights. Eight boards per hour is a reasonable rate of play which should always be maintained (i.e. 90 mins for 12 boards).

Reasonable playing conditions should include adequate heating, lighting, seating and tables.

It is accepted practice for the home team to provide refreshments at half time but these need not be on a lavish scale. Tea and/or coffee with biscuits are quite adequate.

**1 GENERAL**

The HBA Executive Committee has delegated to the Tournament Committee the responsibility for organising all competitions, including the leagues. It has nominated a League Director. The Tournament Secretary as chairman of the Tournament Committee and the League Director administer the HBA League

**2 HBA LEAGUE**

**2.1 DIVISIONS**

The HBA League consists of Division 1 and Division 2. The number of teams in each Division will be adjusted each season by the Tournament Committee.

Entry into Division 1 is by promotion from the second division. The winning team and the runners up of the second division will be promoted to Division 1 (subject to 2(e) below) and the lowest two teams from Division 1 demoted to the second division. Teams may be adjusted between the two divisions at the discretion of the Tournament Committee to equalize the number.

Entry into the second division is by relegation from Division 1. New teams may

apply to enter Division 2 at least one month before the start of a new season.

In the event of a tie in VPs for promotion or relegation the tie will be split in the first instance in favour the winners of the match between the two teams during the season. If this match was drawn then the tie will be split based on net IMPs over the complete season. (see EBU White Book for precise details).

Promotion is not mandatory and may be refused by any team, in which case they will be replaced by the next highest in that division. However, a team refusing promotion will not be eligible for any prize in the following season. Relegation is mandatory.

Should a team resign during a season without playing all of its matches the results of any matches which it has played will be declared void, as will its outstanding matches. Entry fees will not be refunded.

A team must contain at least two players from its previous year’s registered members to maintain its divisional status. Should a team be disbanded, status will be held by the majority of its members or, if the numbers are equal, by the half containing the previous year’s captain.

**2.2 TEAMS**

Teams consist of not more than six members, all of whom must be registered with the League Director before playing a match. All players must be members of the HBA.

At least four members of the team must be registered with the League Director before any matches are played. Transfer of members between teams during a season is not allowed.

A team should field registered players wherever possible but, in an emergency, a team may include an eligible substitute. The substitute may be a player from a team of a lower division. The prior agreement of the opposing captain and the League Director is required A team may only invoke this procedure once in a season.

**2.3 ENTRY FEES**

Entry fees will be decided annually by the HBA Executive Committee.

**2.4 ARRANGEMENT OF MATCHES**

Away captains must offer three dates (not all on the same day of the week) at least three days before the period allotted for the match to be played. In the event of failure by the away captain to do so, the right to offer dates will revert to the home captain.

If it is not possible to arrange matches before the end of the allotted period the League

Director must be notified and the two captains may, by mutual agreement, arrange an alternative date. If an alternative date cannot be agreed, the deadlock will be referred to the Tournament Secretary, with all pertinent data, for his arbitration.

A team postponing a match at less than 48 hours notice must then accept one of three dates offered by the other team or forfeit the match. The three dates offered should not all be on the same day of the week.

All matches must be played by the end of April and results should be notified to the

League Director within seven days after each match has been played. Failure to do so may result in the offending team forfeiting any points due to them for their performance in late matches or where results are notified late. Permission to play matches after the end of April will be at the discretion of the League Director.

Should a team arrive more than 30 minutes after the agreed starting time, its opponents have the right to curtail the match by two boards for each 15 minutes of lateness, and may exercise or renounce this right at half-time. If the right is exercised, the second half of the match will be reduced by two boards for each 15 minutes delay when the non-offending side may claim 3 IMPs per board not played. Where a team is more than 60 minutes late, its opponents may claim the match. For the avoidance of doubt, “a team” mean all four members being present and ready to play.

Where it is found necessary to award a match, the offending team(s) will not receive any Victory Points for the match. The non-offending team(s) will be given the higher of either the average of its Victory Points won over the season or the average of Victory Points lost by the opposing team over the season.

**2.5 CONDUCT OF MATCHES**

Matches in Divisions 1 and 2 consist of 24 boards.

*(For convenience the regulations on “Seating Rights are repeated here).*

A match between teams of four players will be played in two equal stanzas with the pairs of the “away” team changing tables at half time. For the first stanza the home team is required to declare the disposition of its players first whilst the “away” team has the privilege of placing its pairs later than the opponents (i.e. it has the seating rights).

When more than four players are allowed to compete in a match a Team Captain may require the match to be played as four equal stanzas. The home captain chooses a stanza in which his team has seating rights or passes that choice to the other captain. The captain not having this choice then selects two other stanzas in which his team has seating rights.

Other reasonable arrangements are permitted where there is a genuine agreement between the captains. Should any dispute arise not covered by the above rules each captain is required to declare its team’s deployment without knowing the deployment of the other team.

Any hands which are misboarded must be redealt and replayed, except where a misboard is discovered only when scoring up after the final session, when the board (or boards) will be cancelled.

Permitted Agreements as defined by the EBU shall be used subject to the proviso that in

Divisions 1 and 2 methods up to Level 4 are permitted.

All players must have fully completed convention cards before the start of play of a

match.

**2.6 IRREGULARITIES**

(For convenience the regulations on “Matches Played Privately” are repeated here).

In the event of an irregularity, the players at the table, including dummy, must together perform the function of a TD in determining the facts, ensuring that all are heard, deciding upon the relevant Law and selecting the correct rectification. The more experienced, in offering their expertise, should ensure that the interests of the less assertive are not overlooked. As a TD would not make a value judgement without first consulting other experienced players and directors, so the players should consult with others, particularly the team captains, before doing so.

There is a particular responsibility upon dummy. During play, Dummy acts as declarer’s agent, may ask declarer about a possible revoke, may try to prevent an irregularity and not much else. Dummy is entitled to give information, in the Director’s presence, as to fact or law. In the context of a private match, this is interpreted as the right to participate in the resolution of an irregularity but only after it has been raised by others. Because of the obvious conflict between the restrictions upon dummy and the welcome contribution to the consensus, it behoves dummy to behave impeccably.

The relevant law indicates the action required for play to continue, e.g. “the offender must pass when next it is his turn to call”. But rectification of any damage to the non-offending side must also be addressed. For this purpose, Law 12 Awarding an Adjusted Score should be the guide. An extract from the Laws of Contract (Rubber) Bridge, where most matches are effectively played privately, might be apt

“The Laws cannot cover every situation that might arise nor produce equity in every situation covered. Occasionally the players themselves must redress damage. The guiding principle: the side that commits an irregularity bears an obligation not to gain directly from the infraction”

Team Captains will be provided with the contact details of TDs from whom they can obtain help and advice A TD will advise upon the substance and interpretation of the Laws and Regulations but will be wary of giving a firm ruling if there is any uncertainty about the reported facts.

If the Team Captains cannot agree they should make a detailed record of the facts, both agreed and disputed and request a ruling from the County TD.

**2.7. RESULTS**

Matches will be scored by International Match Points. The difference in IMPS is

converted to Victory Points using the scale supplied to the captains.

Results should be sent by the winning captain to the League Director within one week of the

match being played in accordance with rule 2.4(d). Results may be either emailed to the League Director with a copy to the losing Captain or mailed on the result cards provided and signed by both captains or their appointed deputies. The result must contain the IMPs won by both Teams, the VP split, and the names and initials of all players (together with the number of boards played by each if more than four players competed for a team).