

LCBA LEAGUE RULES: 2017-18

1 LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

1.1 The League Secretary [hereinafter LS] is the Competition Controller responsible to the LCBA Executive Committee (the Tournament Organiser) for the proper administration of the LCBA League in accordance with EBU rules and guidelines.

1.2 He shall seek to operate the League to the benefit of the members of the LCBA.

1.3 He shall exercise these responsibilities in consultation with the League Subcommittee [hereinafter LSC].

1.4 The LS shall organise between one and three meetings of a League Forum each year to discuss long term and overall League management, structure and policy, and to keep the LSC informed of grass roots views. Each Affiliated Club [hereinafter Club] shall be entitled to send up to one delegate per team entered and each other participating body/group [hereinafter Group] one delegate to meetings of the forum. This entitlement to attend is additional to LSC members who are ex-officio members of the Forum. The second and third meetings may be cancelled with the express consent of both the LSC and a majority of the Club Delegates.

2 LEAGUE STRUCTURE

2.1 Applications, incorporating details of proposed venue and captain, from existing or prospective teams to participate in the League season 2017-18 must be sent to the LS by 30 June 2017, together with the entry fees. A surcharge of £5 per team may be applied to any late entries accepted.

2.2 The League shall be organised in a single hierarchy of Divisions by the LSC acting in accordance with the document 'Determining the League Structure for the Season 2016-17' published as an addendum to these rules. In each Division teams will normally play two matches against each other on a home and away basis. The LSC shall have discretion to organise the match schedule in a Division differently if it deems this appropriate.

2.3 The LSC shall aim to publish the League structure by 29 July 2017, and after allowing five days for any appeal (see 2.5), the LS to then publish the full fixture list by 20 August 2017.

2.4 Only in exceptional circumstances may the LSC later amend the League structure.

2.5 Any appeal against the LSC decision shall be to the LCBA Executive Committee and shall be submitted within five days of the publication of the League structure, or amendment made thereto in accordance with 2.4. Appeals will not be entertained if they are based upon information that should have been submitted to the LS at the time of entry. Appeals shall be accompanied by a deposit of £40.00 which will not be returned if the LCBA Executive Committee determines that the appeal is frivolous or otherwise without merit.

3 TIE BREAKS

3.1 Teams ending the season with the same number of VPs are considered to be tied. Ties will be resolved where necessary (e.g. to determine promotion, relegation, the destiny of trophies) in accordance with the following rules:

3.1.1 A tie between two teams shall be resolved (a) by the combined results in VPs of the matches between the two teams, failing that (b) by any difference in IMPs over these matches, failing that (c) by the total number of matches won by each team (draw = half win), failing that (d) by their net IMPs over the whole season, failing that (e) by random ballot.

3.1.2 If the tie is between three or more teams then the equivalent tests (a) to (e) involving all tying teams shall be applied until at least one team is removed from the tie. At this point, if the necessary resolution has not occurred, then the tie splitting process shall revert to stage (a) in 3.1.1 in respect of the teams remaining tied.

4 ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

4.1 All regular players must be Player Members of the EBU who meet the general LCBA conditions for participation in the Association's Members-only competitions for the year 2017-18. However if a Club/Group is unable to fulfil a fixture by playing only such LCBA members then:

4.1.1 In divisions 1 - 3 inclusive up to two 'other persons' may if necessary be introduced in order to complete a team, without penalty subject to all payments necessary to make such persons, retrospectively and thereafter, eligible being made within 14 days of the Club/Group being aware that this had happened.

4.1.2 In division 4 any such 'other persons' may be introduced to play in one match without any penalty or payment being due. If however any such 'other person' plays in any further match then all payments necessary to make them retrospectively and thereafter eligible must be made within 14 days of the Club/Group being aware that this had happened.

4.2 If any such payments remain outstanding 14 days after the Club/Group was notified by the LS; then he is authorised to apply a late-payment surcharge of £5, and shall issue a final warning that unless payment is received within 14 days thereafter all matches in which the player(s) concerned played will be deemed lost by default and scored as in 8.

4.3 No-one may play for two Clubs/Groups in a season without the prior approval of the LSC.

4.4 Each Club having two or more teams in the League must nominate eight players for each team, other than its lowest. Nominees must be expected to play in at least five matches for the team for which they are nominated. They may not play for any lower ranking team; that is one identified by a later letter of the alphabet.

4.5 The nominations should be sent to the LS prior to the first match of the season; if none are received those playing in the opening match will be deemed nominated. Nominations may only be changed with the consent of the LSC. The LS will aim to warn a Club with two or more teams if any of its nominated players appear unlikely to meet the five match criterion in 4.4. The LSC may require a Club to nominate additional, or replacement, players.

4.6 (1) If any team includes anyone barred from playing for that team by the provisions of 4.3 - 4.5 then the match(es) in which that person played whilst barred will normally be deemed lost by default and scored as in 8. (2) If however the infringement is under the provision of 4.3, and the LSC is satisfied that the player and the team concerned were both quite unaware at the time of playing that the player was barred from participation in the match, and that the player was not of a higher standard than the norm for that team or division, then the match score as played shall stand, but a fine of 2 VP shall be deducted from the overall VP score of that team for the season.

5 LAWS, SYSTEMS, CONVENTIONS

5.1 Matches shall be played in accordance with the 2017 Laws of Duplicate Bridge and supplementary regulations laid down by the Laws & Ethics Committee of the EBU. The home team should provide at least an authorised copy of the 2017 Laws, a copy of the 2017 Blue Book which took effect on 1 August 2017, and the LCBA Guide for League Playing Directors, together with a copy of the 'On the Night' LCBA League Rules for reference as necessary during the match.

5.2 Each player must provide a completed EBU 20/20A/20B style system card and hand this to the opponents for their use throughout each stanza. Pairs not having completed such cards should be furnished with EBU 20B style LCBA Simple System Standard English Cards (or alternatively in division 4 only an LCBA Simple System Basic Acoll Card) and required to play in accordance with these until alternative personal EBU cards are completed. WBF style cards may not be used.

5.3.1 In divisions 1 - 3 inclusive pairs with properly completed (2 paged) EBU 20 style system cards, may employ EBU Level 2 Permitted Agreements, as detailed in Section 6 of the 2017 Blue Book. However pairs wishing to include Agreements only permitted at Level 4, as detailed in Section 7 of the 2017 Blue Book must complete full (4 paged) EBU 20A or preferably 20B style system cards.

5.3.2 In division 4 pairs with properly completed (2 paged) EBU 20 style or (4 paged) EBU 20A/20B style system cards may employ EBU Level 2 Permitted Agreements [N.B. Multi 2D is not permitted.], as detailed in Section 6 of the 2017 Blue Book.

6 MATCH ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Matches are scheduled to begin at 7.15 p.m. unless the captains have agreed upon a different time.

6.2 Teams shall consist of 8 players. Reserve players may be brought in at the end of a stanza. A planned substitution at any other time requires the consent of the opponent captain.

6.3 Matches shall normally consist of 24 boards, but captains may agree to reduce a match to 20 boards.

6.4 Each pair/reserve of the visiting team shall be allowed a choice of stationary seats; each pair/reserve of the home team shall then, subject to the provisions of Rule 7, play an equal number of boards at each table, and alternate stanzas NS and EW respectively. New opponent pairs may, but are not obliged to, compare their scores in the previous stanza at the start of the second and fourth stanzas.

6.5 Before play commences the captains should if possible agree upon an experienced Director (or failing that, an experienced player), to act as Director should a ruling be needed. Without such agreement the captain of the away team, or his nominee, shall act as Director.

6.6 If a psychic bid is reported to the Director, he shall, on request, record the details of the board on which it occurred, and report the matter to the LS for the attention of the Laws & Ethics SC of the LCBA. The Director may also record and similarly report any departure from the system that he considers should be brought to its attention.

6.7 The net aggregate score on each board of a match shall be converted to an IMP score using the standard scale, and the net IMPs for the match shall be converted to a VP score using the scale shown on the Match Result Form

6.8 The team captains should each countersign their opponent's Match Result Form at the end of the match and enter result and players on the EBU League Management System without delay.

7 LATENESS & PARTIAL ABSENCE PROVISIONS + FOULED OR UNPLAYED BOARD PROVISIONS

7.1 When a Captain has been made aware that a player/pair **will not** be able to play in the match, that Captain should make every attempt to find a replacement player/pair. If this is possible but the substitute(s) will arrive late then see Late Arrival below.

7.2 If no replacement is possible then the 'non-offending' Captain can elect to either:

Play the match as a Teams of 4.

Request a rescheduled match. In the event of a rematch the 'non-offending' team will have a choice of venue and the 'offending' team will, if it is necessary, cover any costs incurred. In whichever format the match is played both teams will retain their score, the 'offending' team will, however, be penalised 1.5 V.P. Where both teams are at fault, both will be deducted 1.5 V.P. (For clarification, this is a league fine and not a match fine i.e the fine will be deducted from the end of season score not the match score).

7.3 Late arrival. At the start (*this shall not be any later than 7.25pm*) of any match where either team is incomplete the non-offending captain – or both captains if both teams are incomplete – must agree to either play the match as a team of 4 match or abandon the match if the team/s remain incomplete after the first 6 boards of the match – when the match will be deemed to be a 'no show'. In the case of both teams being incomplete, if no agreement is reached between the captains, the team of 4 option **will apply** with both captains rotating their pairs.

7.4 As soon as a Captain is aware that a player(s) will be arriving late or is made aware of a no show and has secured a substitute(s), he should inform the opposition of the likely length of the

delay at which point the Captains should agree the time at which the match shall start (depending on circumstances, it would not be unreasonable to delay the start by up to 10 minutes). Play will commence at this time and at the point that both the 2 complete tables (tables 1 and 2) have finished 3 boards, 2 boards will be removed from play from the incomplete table(s) (3 and 4). If the missing player(s) arrive prior to the completion of three boards then all boards shall be played. The sharing table of the incomplete table should play no more than 2 boards (*to avoid removing boards that have been played*). After tables 1 and 2 have completed 5 boards a further 2 boards are removed. For every board removed (not played) the offending team will be deducted 3imps from their final total. The resultantimps score will be used to assess the VP score for that match.

7.5 Once tables 1 and 2 have completed six boards **and** 45 minutes from the start of the match (*6 boards at 7.5 minutes a board*) has elapsed, the match will be classified as a 'no show'. At this point the match can be abandoned **or** played as a team of 4 match depending on the Captains' prior agreement as in 7.3.

7.6 No board shall be played at 3 tables. In the event of the match becoming a Teams of 4 match, any boards played at an incomplete set of sharing tables shall be scrapped and redealt so that they can be played in full in the second half of the match.

7.7 Teams of 4

7.7.1 Where a match has not commenced and the non-offending side elects for a Teams of 4 the match shall be played over 24 boards in stanzas of 6 boards, with the away team being seated and the home pairs changing.

7.7.2 The non-offending Captains can nominate which of their players they play with the proviso that the same two pairs cannot play against each other in consecutive sets. The offending Captain must alternate his available pairs (so as not to play the strongest pairs and thus gain a potential advantage from an issue of their making).

7.7.3 Scoring shall be done after 12 and 24 boards using a Teams of 4 imp table (appendix)

7.7.4 Where the match has commenced and the non-offending Captain has elected to play a Team of 4 the scores of the 6 boards already played by both teams shall stand. The rest of the match shall take place as above. Any boards played in the incomplete stanza shall be re-dealt to allow all pairs to be eligible for the rest of the match.

7.7.5 A 1.5VP penalty against the offending team(s) will be applied to both these types of match. The V.P. score will be entered according to the actual result and the LS contacted to apply the penalty. The offending Captain has the opportunity to appeal the fine by contacting the LS who will present the case to the League sub-committee.

7.8 If for any reason the second half of a match is not started within 1 hour and 45 minutes of the scheduled match start time (i.e. normally by 9.00 p.m.) a captain may require each later stanza to be reduced by 1 board.

7.9.1 A board unplayed at one or more tables due to the absence of one or more players shall be scored as indicated above.

7.9.2 If it is unplayed for any other reason at one or more tables then these Fouled Board regulations shall apply:

a) If the board is fouled at either of the two tables sharing the boards in any stanza then the score at the other of these tables shall be cancelled, and the IMP conversion for this board shall initially be that for the net score at the other two tables.

b) However if the fouling is due solely to the actions of one team then a second artificial IMP score of +3/-3 in favour of the non-offending team shall be added to this. If both teams offend no such score is added.

c) It should be noted however that if a board is i) played twice with the same team NS in the earlier of the two stanzas in which it is due to be played this need not be treated as a fouled board; the situation can be retrieved by the other team playing NS twice in the later stanza.
ii) otherwise fouled in the earlier stanza, it can always be played and scored normally in the later one, re-dealing if necessary.

8 SCORES FOR UNPLAYED AND DEFAULTED MATCHES

8.1 For the non-offending team the best score (any fraction being rounded up) from:

- (a) their own average VPs for completed matches over the whole season;
- (b) the converse of the offending team's average VPs for completed matches over the whole season;
- (c) their own average VP score in the match(es) actually played between the two teams, if any, in the season;
- (d) 7 VPs, together with the minimum positive IMPs difference corresponding to this score;
- or (e) in the case of a match later defaulted under the provisions of 4.2 or 4.6 the actual score, both in VPs and IMPs, obtained in the match.

8.2 For the offending team: 0 VPs, -82 IMPs

8.3 If both teams are offending each shall score 0 VPs, -82 IMPs.

8.4 However if a team fails to complete at least half of its fixtures, then 8.1 – 8.3 shall not apply and all scores against that team shall be cancelled.

9 POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES

9.1 The LCBA expects League matches to be played on, or before, the date shown in the League programme whenever possible.

9.2 If a captain realises in advance that no home venue, not necessarily just the usual one, will be available on the scheduled date he shall notify both the LS and the opponents of this. Instead of offering alternative dates, as in 9.3, the away captain may choose to offer to play the match on the scheduled date either at their home venue or to arrange an intermediate one. The home captain is expected to accept such an offer. Irrespective of where the match is actually played the team designated as the home team in the original league programme shall remain deemed the home team and retain the other responsibilities and status of the home team in accordance with these rules in respect of the match; and likewise the away team. The captains may, but need not, choose to make a venue change for a return fixture part of their agreement.

9.3 However if a captain realises in advance that his team is unable to fulfil a fixture on the scheduled date (e.g. because there are (predicted) extreme weather conditions or he cannot raise a team by utilising the dispensations allowed under 4.1) he shall notify both the LS and the opponents of this. The opponent captain is expected to offer to rearrange the match to any of a minimum of three dates of his team's choice. The offered dates must include at least one Wednesday, not be all in the same week, and not include any date clashing with another LCBA event in which a regular member of either team might wish to take part. If, exceptionally, the postponement of the final scheduled match of the season is allowed, the rescheduled match must be played within seven days thereafter.

9.4 Both captains shall report the outcome of their negotiations re 9.2 or 9.3 to the LS before the scheduled date wherever possible and otherwise within seven days thereafter. Any agreement in 9.3 to play the match at a later date will be subject to the approval of the LS. Any difficulty or dispute in agreeing a rearrangement must be referred to the LS within 14 days. The LS shall seek to expedite the playing of the match but has, in consultation with the LSC, the power to default one or both of the teams.

9.5 Any necessary net extra expenses resulting from the rearrangement of a fixture shall be met by the team seeking the rearrangement.

9.6 No player from the Club seeking the rearrangement may play in two matches that were originally scheduled for the same date, except with the specific prior approval of the LS. Any breach of this rule will incur an automatic 2 VP procedural penalty being applied in respect of the match played second.

10 DISPUTES, RULINGS & APPEALS

10.1 When a bridge law related problem or question arises at a table the Director (see 6.5) should make a ruling.

10.2 A captain wishing to appeal, or preserve the right to appeal, a ruling must record this on the Match Result Form, notify the Director and seek to ensure all parties have clear factual records.

10.2.1 The actual appeal should be made on an LCBA League Appeal & Psyche Form and sent within 3 days of the match, together with all required documentation as detailed on that form, to the LS for transmission to the L&E. Normally a single Appeal Form should be fully completed on the night with an agreed statement from the two captains of the facts, (including the original claim, the name of the Director and the ruling he gave), as well as making clear the claim(s) now made. If however separate Appeal Forms are submitted, or a team wishes to make a further statement, copies must be sent to both the opponent captain and the Director, simultaneously with the submission to the LS.

10.2.2 Any appeal against a decision of the L&E must be submitted, within 14 days of receipt of that decision, to the LS for the attention of the National Authority (EBU Laws & Ethics Committee) accompanied by a deposit of £75 and in accordance with section 1.7 of the 2017 White Book. (a copy of this section is on the LCBA Website).

10.3 Any appeal against a decision of the LS or LSC can only be made to the LCBA Executive Committee. A representative of each team involved will be invited to the meeting hearing this appeal. The outcome may not be further appealed.

10.4 Any serious misconduct allegation, associated with an appeal under 10.2 or 10.3 or otherwise, lodged with the General Secretary of the LCBA will be referred to the Investigatory Committee and then if appropriate either to the LCBA Conduct Committee or the National Authority, which bodies shall determine any sanctions to be applied.

Appendix: Imp scale for a Teams of 4, 24 board match

Imp Difference:	VP Scale
0-4	6 – 6
5-13	7 - 5
14-23	8 - 4
24-35	9 - 3
36-48	10 – 2
49-63	11 – 1
64+	12 - 0