

Introduction

The conditions of contest for the M&CBA County Teams league comprise these conditions of contest and the general regulations of the EBU concerning matches played privately. In the event of any conflict between the EBU regulations on matches played privately and these regulations then these regulations shall prevail.

For any issues relating to the league, these regulations, match arrangements or any other matter please contact the league secretary Chris Raymond at drcjr56@gmail.com

General league arrangements

The M&CBA league is a county run teams league played by teams of 4 with participants being EBU members having either primary or secondary allegiance to M&CBA. In exceptional circumstances non EBU members may be accepted provided at least 75% of a team consists of EBU members. All players must be registered with the league prior to playing a match. Registration of players occurs at the start of each season and will usually carry on into subsequent years but can be changed. Players may also be added to a team during the season by notification to the league secretary but no person may play for more than one team during the same season.

The league will be organised into divisions and the season will run from September to July with the exact start and end dates set each year by the Tournament Committee and league secretary. Promotion and relegation (usually 1 up / 1 down) between divisions will occur between the season end and subsequent restart but will be managed taking into account any teams withdrawing and new ones joining. The exact start and end dates and the match schedule for each season will be determined by the number of teams entering and will be managed by the league secretary with advice from the county tournament committee. All teams initially and new teams subsequently will be positioned in the league at the discretion of the league secretary acting in conjunction with other members of the county tournament committee.

Teams are requested to play each match within the time frame specified by the league schedule which will usually be a minimum period of three weeks but are free to play outside this time window with the agreement of both captains. Matches can be arranged to start at any time by agreement between the captains and on any day of the week and any difficulties regarding this issue should be directed to the league secretary. Matches may be played online on any suitable platform or face to face at any suitable club or private location by similar captains' agreement but in the event of any difficulty arising from this then the default presumption will be that the match should be played online on BBO.

Where necessary to determine matters of promotion and relegation, ties in terms of Victory points will be split firstly by the result in VP's between the matches between the tied teams and then by total IMPs over the season.

Entry will be free to all teams during the first season of the league. Where captains agree to play a match face to face or online but not using the BBO platform then any expenses associated with this will be the responsibility of the home team.

Local masterpoints will be issued on the appropriate scale at the end of each season once the league is finalised.

Team arrangements

A team may have a maximum of 8 players

No player may play for more than one team in any one season.

Captains can add players during a season but must also notify the league secretary before the new team member takes part in any match.

By registering to play in a team in this league, all team members agree to their names and contact details being held in a database managed by M&CBA and to receive regular or periodic emails about county events or other bridge matters.

Match arrangements (general)

The league is intended to be a friendly and amicable competition and it is assumed that matches will be arranged by mutual agreement between captains in this spirit.

Matches should be played as far as possible according to the schedule produced by the league secretary. Any captain(s) who encounter difficulty in arranging matches should contact the league secretary who will advise as far as possible. If a match cannot be played by the end of the season, the league secretary (with advice from other county tournament committee members where necessary) will award a score as he deems appropriate.

Either captain may start the match arrangement process though the onus is on the home captain to initiate this. When arranging a match the date, start time and playing platform or venue should be clearly specified. It is also recommended that for online matches, captains should exchange phone numbers in case of internet problems etc

Matches are to be of 20 boards. These can be played as a single stanza or two sessions of 10 with a change of opponents and this latter arrangement will be the default if captains cannot agree which format to use.

The home team is responsible for setting up the match and has choice of opponents / seating rights.

Level 4 conventions as defined in the EBU Blue Book are allowed in all divisions of the league. It is considered good practice for a pair to make available a convention card to the opposing captain prior to any match. Pairs playing unusual methods or conventions should be aware that the onus is on them to fully explain their system to opponents.

All players must abide by the EBU Best Behaviour at Bridge guidelines, Anyone who thinks that they have been affected by bad table behaviour should report the matter to the league secretary as soon as possible.

Match arrangements (online)

Online matches should be set up with Undo's allowed. Undo's for genuine mis-clicks in the bidding are allowed by the EBU and therefore undo requests during the auction should be allowed by the opponents. If an undo is granted and as a result of subsequent events the opposing team feel they have been disadvantaged then they should reserve their rights and consider seeking a ruling on the matter. Undo's during play are not allowed.

For matches on BBO if a board is lost in stanza 1 due to slow play then BBO will score it as 0 IMPs. In this case an extra board should be added to stanza 2 to bring the total scored boards to 20. If a board is lost due to slow play in Stanza 2 or in a single stanza match then the captain should set up another team match to play the missing board. As BBO will not allow team matches of less than 3 boards, set up a 3 board match and take the score from board 1 only (pass out the other 2 boards to speed up the process). If the lost board has been played at one table the score from this is still discarded.

If the match is abandoned for any reason after Stanza 1 has been completed then the remaining stanza may be played on another date by captain's agreement. If both captains agree not to play the remaining stanza then the match should be scored on the basis of boards played and the IMP result converted to VP's using the discrete 10 board scale.

If one captain wants to play the remaining stanza and the other does not then the entire match will be deemed as a default by the team which chooses not to play and will be scored according to the rules covering this issue.

All players must provide to the captain setting up the match their BBO names so the match can be set up in a timely manner. All players are strongly advised to be online and ready in the teams match lobby 10 minutes before the match start time.

Team captains should agree whether kibitzers are allowed or not. If captains are unable to agree on this issue then kibitzing should not be allowed.

Rulings

For matches on BBO note that although there is a call TD option in the onscreen menu, clicking this will not summon a TD in a private teams match.

If a ruling is required, the opposing pair and their team captain should be advised that a ruling is to be requested but the match should otherwise be continued to its conclusion. The league secretary should be informed within 24 hours that there is a possible issue concerning the match result.

A request for a ruling should be made within 24 hours to David Stevenson (chief county TD), giving full details of bidding and play and all players involved (including BBO names). David should be contacted by email (**please send to both addresses**) laws1@blakjak.uk & bluejak666@outlook.com . He is also happy to be phoned (1130 – 0030) to deal with simple queries on 07778 409 955.

Teams unhappy with the county TD's ruling may appeal to the EBU but unless it is a matter of bridge regulation they may decline to hear it.

Scoring and Reporting Results

Scoring will be by IMPs converted to VPs using the 20 board discrete VP scale as published by the EBU.

Full details of the match result should be uploaded to the EBU website within 24 hours by either captain. The information uploaded should include the IMP & VP score, winning team name and participating team members.

Substitutes

If fewer than 4 players are available for a pre-arranged match then the following options are available:-

Re-arrange the match

Register another player who is available to play and inform the league secretary of this as soon as possible.. Such a player must not have played for any other team in a match during the current season.

As a last resort, a player from another team can be engaged to play but this person must be from the same or a lower division. The league secretary should be informed as soon as possible if this option is used and before the match result is uploaded.

Defaults

All matches must be completed by the designated league season end date.

Any outstanding matches will be awarded a score as deemed fit by the league secretary. If it is determined that one team is at fault for an un-played match that team will receive 0 VPs. Where a team or teams are found to not be at fault a VP score will be awarded according to the Mould formula which is calculated as $10 + (\text{their VP average} - \text{opponent's VP average})$. This is subject to a minimum of 10 VPs and a maximum of 20 VPs in a default situation and a minimum of 0 VPs and a maximum of 20 VPs where there is no fault found. Artificial VP scores from other defaulted matches are not included in the calculation.

Any team disagreeing with the decision of the league secretary in respect of a finding of default may appeal this decision and any adjusted VP score awarded. The appeal will be considered by other members of the Tournament Committee but not including the league secretary.

Withdrawals

If a team withdraws from the league having played fewer than half its matches in the season (rounded up in the case of an odd number) then all results against that team will be cancelled.

If a team withdraws from the league having played at least half its matches in the season (rounded up in the case of an odd number) then results in the remaining matches are calculated using the Mould formula as described above.

The league secretary reserves the right to refuse entry in subsequent seasons to the league to some or all members of a team that consistently defaults from playing matches.