

The Chester Cup (Teams of Four League)

1.1 The event is a friendly summer teams of four league where the emphasis is on enjoyment. The event is intended to encourage teams of four, including those relatively new to this form of bridge, to enjoy a pleasant time playing bridge with friends. All players are expected to behave in that spirit.

1.2 Teams shall consist of not more than six nominated players, all of whom must be members of the Association but not necessarily have Oxfordshire nominated as their County of primary allegiance.

1.3 Matches are played over 24 boards.

1.4 The event shall be organised in one or more divisions according to the size of the entry. The composition of each division of the league, should there be more than one, shall be determined by the Competitions Sub-Committee (see 1.14, 1.15 and 1.16).

1.5 There shall be between three and seven teams in each division.

1.6 Once the composition of the divisions has been determined, the President's and Chester Cup Secretary (PCS) shall furnish all team captains with the details of the draw and opposing captains, play-by dates and in which matches the team is deemed to be the home team.

1.7 It is recognised that the Chester Cup is a social event. In practice, it is encouraged that dates be arranged amicably and it is common for home captains to send out a list of available dates. Such a list should be e-mailed around the opposing captains within four weeks of the initial draw date or within two weeks of the draw for any final stages (see 1.17).

1.8 If agreement is not reached, within 6 weeks of the initial draw, or within 3 weeks of any subsequent draw, the privilege of offering dates reverts to the away captain, who must offer the home captain a choice of three dates for play before the specified date (see 1.17), of which not more than two shall be in the same week or on the same day of the week. Where the home captain belongs to a single club which holds a single weekly duplicate, he may request that that day does not constitute an eligible offer.

1.9 Captains shall inform the PCS of the agreed match dates, by the deadline for such agreement (see 1.17).

1.10 The venue shall be decided by the home captain who shall also provide suitable accommodation and necessary playing equipment. In this competition, hospitality is a key factor and is expected to be of a superior kind (i.e. not just tea and biscuits).

1.11 Each match, other than the final, shall be played in two sets of twelve boards (unless the captains agree to play sets of six); any final or semi-final shall comprise four sets of eight boards. Scoring shall take place at the end of each set, but not until play is complete at both tables. Partnerships may be changed only after each set.

1.12 At the start of the match the captains may toss a coin to determine who shall have the right to seat or place the players for the first set. Thereafter the captains shall seat and place their players alternately.

1.13 Scoring shall be by IMPs for each board, and the final score shall be converted to show the result for the whole match in VPs according to the following table:

Difference in IMPs	VPs
0 - 3	6 - 6
4 - 10	7 - 5
11 - 19	8 - 4
20 - 30	9 - 3
31 - 44	10 - 2
45 - 62	11 - 1
63 +	12 - 0

1.14 If up to seven teams enter, there shall be one division, and the competition is run on an all-play-all basis; the winner is the team with the highest number of VPs.

1.15 If eight or nine teams enter, then two divisions are formed by random draw. The top two in each division then play the "other two" in a separate mini-league; the previous result against the other team going forward will count, thereby preventing teams playing each other twice. Only a team from this four will be eligible to win the Chester Cup. The remaining teams will continue in their own mini-league, with the same principles applying; although none of these will be able to win the trophy, the winning team shall be eligible for a prize at twice the standard rate.

1.16 If 10 or more teams enter, then two or more divisions are formed by random draw. The number of divisions is set such that no division has more than six teams and the number of teams in each division is spread as evenly as possible.

A If two divisions, the winners play off in a single 32 board final.

B If three divisions, the highest-averaging 2nd place also qualifies and there is a semi-final and final, each of 32 boards; the highest-averaging 2nd place plays against the highest-averaging winners in the semi-final.

B If four divisions, there is a semi-final and final each of 32 boards; opponents are determined by random draw.

1.17 Play-by dates Captains should adhere to the following timetable:

No. teams	Initial stages		Later stages	
	Agree dates by	Play by	Agree dates by	Play by
Up to 7	June 1	Sept 30	N/A	N/A
8-9	June 1	Sept 15	Sept 30	Nov 30
≥ 10	June 1	Sept 15	Sept 30	Nov 30

If a match is played by agreement of both sides and with the consent of the PCS after the September cut-off date then the following reduced scale shall apply.

Difference in IMPs				VPs	
0	-	3		5	5
4	-	10		6	4
11	-	19		7	3
20	-	30		8	2
31	-	44		9	1
45	+			10	0

1.18 The captain of the winning team, or in the event of a draw the home captain, shall notify, in writing (which may be by e-mail), the PCS of the result, within ten days of the match being played. Details of all players should be supplied with the result.

1.19 In all semi-final and final matches, the PCS shall determine which team shall be the home team and inform both captains of the decision.

1.20 If there is a tie in the final a further four boards shall be played, and a further four, should the tie still not be broken.

1.21 In the event of a default or an unplayed match, Wessex League rules apply (WL1.41 etc.)

1.22 In the event of a captain not offering or accepting any dates, thus not arranging any matches, that team shall be withdrawn from the competition. Entries from such teams in future years shall be accepted only if, in the opinion of the Competitions Sub-Committee, (a) there were extenuating circumstances and (b) the team is committed to playing its matches in the forthcoming season.

1.23 If a team withdraws from the league without completing its matches, the following rules shall apply:

A if the withdrawal occurs before half the scheduled matches have been played, the result of all its played matches shall be cancelled for both the team and its opponents;

B if half or more of the scheduled matches have been played, the results of those matches shall stand, and the results of unplayed matches shall be calculated as in section Wessex league 1.16. No withdrawing team may win its division in the league or progress to further stages.

1.24 The team scoring the most VPs in each division shall be deemed to have won the division.

1.25 County level masterpoints will apply and will be awarded at the end of the competition..

1.26 The winning team shall hold the Chester Cup for one year and shall receive a team prize equivalent to the value of four times the basic rate.