

Warwickshire Pairs League Online (WPLO)
Rules & Conditions of Competition
Current for 2023/24 Season Only



These rules should be read in conjunction with the WCBA Common Rules and the Warwickshire Online Club Guidance/Rules. Rulings and Appeals will be per the WOC Guidance/Rules.

0. Changes

- a. Changes to support having no substitute pairs and no pair off option (mainly in Non-Attendance and Appendix II).
- b. Leave of Absence added again.

1. Summary of Competition

- a. This is a pairs competition across two or more* Divisions run in a Swiss Pairs format with promotion/relegation between them. Two Series consisting of five Sessions each are run each season with promotion/relegation at the end of each Series.
** Following consultation with players the Competitions Committee will aim to run three or more divisions whenever possible, where necessary amending the format to accommodate this.*
- b. The event is held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from September to June.
- c. The event is run online using the RealBridge platform. Pairs are asked to be online at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start time.
- d. The first Match in each Series will be assigned at random. The remaining Matches in the Series will be assigned on a Swiss basis, with the Swiss being reset after Session 3 of 5 in each Series.
- e. Pairs may use a substitute player in a Session or they may sit out (see Substitutes below). For the purpose of these rules 'sit out' or 'sitting out' refers to a missing pair.
- f. Pairs not competing in a minimum of 4 Sessions (including the use of a substitute player on two occasions), will be relegated or, in the lowest Division, will not be eligible for promotion.
- g. The event is subject to the rules contained herein, as well as the Warwickshire Online Club (WOC) Guidelines.

2. Eligibility

- a. Players, including substitutes, must be members of WOC.

3. Entry

- a. Entry is as a pair only and must be made to the Event Organiser.
- b. Entry must be by email on or before the 31st August for Series 1 and 31st January for Series 2. An acknowledgement from the Event Organiser must be received to confirm entry. No assumption can be made about entry until explicit (email) confirmation is received.
- c. Payment for the Series or for the Season should be made when entry is confirmed.
- d. Pairings may change between Series, but a change in pairing may be subject to relegation to a lower Division. If non-relegation is sought, the Event Organiser must be contacted at least two weeks prior to the start of the next Series to discuss the proposed changes.
- e. Entry applications received after the published date will not be guaranteed.
- f. New pairs will normally be placed in the lowest Division but may be placed in a higher Division at the discretion of the Competitions Committee. New pairings seeking placement to a Division other than the lowest must contact the Event Organiser.
- g. There is no appeal against the Competition Committee's placement.
- h. Entrants to this event commit to:
 - i. Playing themselves
 - ii. Fielding a suitable substitute player (suitable means the substitute must be suited to the Division they are asked to substitute in, eg it would be totally inappropriate to ask a player just out of lessons to substitute in anything but the lowest Division).
 - iii. Sitting out by notifying the Tournament Director in Charge (TD I/C) that they are unable to attend, ideally by midnight on the preceding Friday.

4. Non – Attendance

- a. A pair unable to play may field a substitute player or notify the TD I/C that they will not be playing. Pairs who sit out will score 8 VPs per match if they notify by midnight on the preceding Friday, or 5 VPs per match if they notify after that. Any pair who does not notify at all but fails to attend the Session will score 0 VPs per match and may also be referred to the Conduct Committee.

- b. The TD I/C must be notified, and a confirmation email received by the player, of any substitutes. Please note if there is any doubt about notification of a substitution you will be required to produce the confirmation email from the TD I/C.
- c. Pairs fielding a substitute player must notify the substitute's name, EBU number and email address to the TD I/C in advance of the Session, and the substitute must register, or have registered, for WOC on the [WCBA website](#).
- d. Failure to provide details of substitutes, unless in an emergency, will result in a penalty of 1 VP being applied to the pair's overall score.
- e. No player already playing in the event may act as a substitute.
- f. Sitting out for the last Session could, in some circumstances:
 - i. be used as a way of guarding against relegation. For this reason a default score of 8 VPs per match will be applied but may be adjusted to maintain the pair's ranking in their Division prior to the last Session.
 - ii. be used to protect a promotion position if the 8 VPs per match could be sufficient to gain promotion. Should such a situation arise, it may be subject to an adjusted score.
- g. In the event that there are missing pairs for a Session, the RealBridge software will take appropriate action.
- h. Where a half table exists at the start of a Match, a substitute pair may be used if available. If a substitute pair is not available then a pair will be required to sitout for the match. The pair chosen to sitout will rotate from the bottom pair in each Division, C, B then A. This is with the proviso that no pair should sit out more than once per Series.
- i. A pair required to sitout will score their average VP score to date prior to the sitout match +2 VPs, subject to a minimum of 12 VPs.
- j. A substitute pair's score will not be applied to any pair. The scores of pairs playing against this pair may, in the event that the pair is of a significantly higher or lower standard than that of the Division in which they play, be subject to a Director's Mismatch.

5. Format

- a. There will be 2 Series per season, each of 5 Sessions, in all Divisions.
- b. A Swiss movement will be used. Where possible assignments will be within a pair's own division (an artificial score will be applied to pairs to ensure this occurs when possible). However, where there is a half table, or an issue with the Swiss (eg too few pairs available) a pair, or pairs, ranked at or near the bottom of a higher Division playing a pair

- ranked at or near the top of the next lower Division.
- c. The Swiss be reset after 3 Sessions which will mean that it is possible to play the same pairs in the last 2 Sessions as you did in the first 3 Sessions.
 - d. Each Session will comprise either 3 head-to-head short Matches or 2 head-to-head long Matches. Short Matches will be around 8 boards and long Matches will be around 12 boards. The Match structure may vary by Division, by Session and by Series. The details of this will be confirmed before the start of each Series.
 - e. RealBridge does not provide the robot facility which means that, in the event of a missing pair, one pair will have to sitout for that Match (see 4h above).
 - f. The RealBridge Self-Alert option will be used.

6. Time Regulations

- a. Any boards not started after the allotted time has elapsed in each Match (55 minutes for 8 board Matches, 85 minutes for 12 board Matches) may be removed and imp penalties applied.
- b. Subject to the provision of d. below, an adjusted score of -2 IMPs will be awarded to each pair on any board yet to be started.
- c. The TD may, at his/her discretion, extend the round time at any point during a Session. Should the TD start a round early (because all tables have finished), due regard may be given the time remaining from the previous round.
- d. Players concerned that their opponents are likely to cause a time problem must inform the TD immediately.
- e. Scoring of incomplete/unplayed boards:
 - i. If one pair is deemed by the TD to be solely responsible for boards not being played within the allotted time then they will score average- and their opponents average+ for each unplayed board.
 - ii. If one pair is deemed by the TD more responsible than another pair for boards not being played within the allotted time then they will score average- and their opponents average (0 IMPs) for each unplayed board.
 - iii. Average+ will be +2 imps or the pair's average score over the played boards in the Match whichever is the greater. Average- will be -2 imps.
 - iv. Whilst the TD will entertain any reasonable objection to an awarded score, once the TD I/C's final decision is given, it

shall be final.

7. Systems and Conventions

- a. All Divisions will be played at EBU level 4.

8. Scoring

- a. RealBridge will provide the VP scores for each Match. These will be in continuous format, ie to 2 decimal places, on a scale of 0-20. For those who like to understand the calculations used to derive the VP score, see Appendix I. Overall scoring will be based on total VPs.
- b. The OFFICIAL score is the VP score which is published on the WCBA website shortly after each Session.

9. Ties

- a. In the event of a split tie in total VPs at the end of a Series the tie will be split according to EBU regulations.

10. Late or Non-Arrival

- a. Any player who is going to arrive late is, where possible, expected to notify the TD I/C (Darren Evetts, 07977 481399) to allow a decision to be made on how to proceed with the Session.
- b. A pair who has notified their late arrival may not play their first Match.
- c. Any pair or player who fails to attend for the individual Session without prior notification (*) and without a valid reason, more than once will be deemed to have withdrawn from the Event. A future application from the pair or player to play would have to be considered by the Competitions Committee.
- d. **(* Please note that unacknowledged emails do not constitute 'prior notification'. Please see section 15 for contact information. Confirmation of a message is always required.**

11. Results

- a. Results will be posted on the WCBA website.
- b. Scores on RealBridge cannot be wrong. However, it is still possible for players to make/accept a flawed claim.
- c. A request for a ruling on a board where a flawed claim was made/accepted must be made, by email (wpl@warwickshirebridge.co.uk), to the TD I/C within 5 minutes of the end of the Session.
- d. Pursuant to Law 9 of the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge, the right to request a ruling on any other matter will expire 5 minutes after the

Session ends. No rulings will be considered after this time. For the avoidance of doubt, this time period is provided for players who may not consult the hands until after the Session ends, whereupon they may become aware of a possible infraction (NB it is not possible to revoke or lead/bid out of turn on RealBridge). This clause does not allow for rulings to be requested relating to infractions that were identified earlier.

- e. There will be no local appeals, the TD I/C's ruling in any matter shall be considered final.
- f. Until all score queries and rulings have been resolved, the results will be provisional. Results will normally be confirmed 24 hours after the Session, unless the website states otherwise.
- g. All score queries and requests for rulings must be made to the TD I/C. In the absence of the TD I/C these can be made to another TD noted in the Contact section below.
- h. Please note that email communications will not be deemed received unless acknowledged by the recipient. If acknowledgement has not been received then the TD I/C (or in his absence one of the other TDs) must be contacted by phone. If contact has not been made within the prescribed period then the request will not be actioned.

12. Master Points/NGS

- a. Master Points will be awarded according to EBU scales.
- b. NGS will apply to this event.

13. Prizes

- a. No prizes will be awarded.

14. Promotion/Relegation

- a. Promotions and relegations take place at the end of each Series (January & June).
- b. Three pairs from each Division other than the top Division will be promoted to the next higher Division. Three pairs from each Division other than the bottom Division will be relegated to the next lower Division.
- c. The structure of the Divisions is at the discretion of the Competitions Committee which has the right to promote and/or relegate more or fewer pairs to create what it considers to be the optimum structure. No Division may have more pairs than any lower Division for more than one Series. Players will be informed of Division restructuring no later than before the penultimate Session of the current Series, eg before the December Session for changes to happen after the January Session.

- d. Once any new entrants have been placed, if a vacancy still exists in a Division other than the bottom Division (let's say Division X), it will be filled as follows using data from the preceding Series:
 - i. The difference in VPs between the highest placed pair relegated from Division X and the pair immediately above them will be compared to the difference in VPs between the highest placed pair not promoted from the next lower Division and the pair immediately above them, ie the 4th pair to be promoted. The pair with the smallest difference in VPs will be promoted to Division X.
 - ii. An example might be – with 20 pairs in Division 1 and promoting & relegating 4 pairs, the pair who finished 17th in Division 1 scored 6 VPs less than the pair finishing 16th; the pair finishing 5th in Division 2 scored 2 VPs less than the pair finishing 4th. So the pair finishing 5th in Division 2 would be promoted to the vacant place in Division 1.
 - iii. In the event that the VP difference is the same then priority for promotion will be given to the highest placed relegated pair.

15. Leave of Absence

- a. Pairs residing in a Division other than the lowest Division may, in exceptional circumstances, request a leave of absence, ie to withdraw from the event and to later be permitted to return to the Division from which they were granted leave. Such a request must be made prior to the closing of entries for the Series from which the leave of absence is sought.
- b. Any such request must be sent in writing to the Event Organiser. The Event Organiser's decision on whether to grant the request will be sent in writing and shall be final.
- c. When the pair wishes to return to the event they must inform the Event Organiser in writing before entries close for the Series they wish to return to.

16. WPL Online Notification - Contacts

- **Tournament Director I/C: Darren Evetts (07977 481399)**
& Event Organiser Email: wpl@warwickshirebridge.co.uk

- **Tournament Directors: Sarah Amos, Rachel Oliver**

Email: wpl@warwickshirebridge.co.uk

(Please note that unacknowledged emails do not constitute prior notification).

- **Entries:** competitions@warwickshirebridge.co.uk

Appendix I – VP Scale

The basic form of scoring is cross-imps (xIMPs) – see Appendix III below. Cross-imps is basically like scoring normal teams, but with multiple teammates (ie, each NS's score is impeded against all other EW scores). Each board is then factored as follows :

$$\text{Factored_IMPs} = \text{total cross-IMPS} / \sqrt{(\text{num_tables} * (\text{num_tables} - 1) * 0.5)}$$

This is then rounded to the nearest integer and converted to VPs using the following tables :

1. IMP to VP Table

8 Board Matches

IMPs	VPs	IMPs	VPs	IMPs	VPs
0	10.00	15	15.23	30	18.37
1	10.44	16	15.50	31	18.53
2	10.86	17	15.75	32	18.68
3	11.27	18	16.00	33	18.83
4	11.67	19	16.23	34	18.97
5	12.05	20	16.46	35	19.11
6	12.42	21	16.68	36	19.24
7	12.77	22	16.90	37	19.37
8	13.12	23	17.11	38	19.50
9	13.45	24	17.31	39	19.62
10	13.78	25	17.50	40	19.74
11	14.09	26	17.69	41	19.85
12	14.39	27	17.87	42	19.95
13	14.68	28	18.04	43	20.00
14	14.96	29	18.21		

12 Board Matches

IMPs	VPs	IMPs	VPs	IMPs	VPs
0	10.00	18	15.15	36	18.28
1	10.36	19	15.37	37	18.41
2	10.71	20	15.58	38	18.54
3	11.05	21	15.79	39	18.66
4	11.38	22	15.99	40	18.78
5	11.70	23	16.18	41	18.90
6	12.01	24	16.37	42	19.02
7	12.31	25	16.55	43	19.13
8	12.61	26	16.73	44	19.24
9	12.90	27	16.91	45	19.34
10	13.18	28	17.08	46	19.44
11	13.45	29	17.24	47	19.54
12	13.71	30	17.40	48	19.64
13	13.97	31	17.56	49	19.74
14	14.22	32	17.71	50	19.83
15	14.46	33	17.86	51	19.92
16	14.70	34	18.00	52	20.00
17	14.93	35	18.14		

Appendix II – VP Conversion for Director’s (WPL) MisMatch

To be applied when a substitute pair is deemed to be significantly stronger or weaker than the Division in which have been placed.

- a) The non-substituted pair has their VP score calculated as follows if the substitute pair is deemed to be stronger:

5VPs + 75% of the VPs actually scored.

- b) The non-substituted pair has their VP score calculated as follows if the substitute pair is deemed to be weaker:

VPs actually scored – 25% of (VPs actually scored – 5VPs)

Adjustments will affect Masterpoints, but not NGS, which is applied pre the alteration.

Example :

The non-substituted pair playing against a stronger substitute pair score 4VPs for the Match.

Their score is adjusted to 5VPs (25% of 20VPs) + 3VPs (75% of 4VPs) = 8VPs.

The non-substituted pair playing against a weaker substitute pair score 16VPs for the Match.

Their score is adjusted to 16VPs – 25% x (16VPs-5VPs) = 16VPs – 2.75VPs = 13.25VPs.

Appendix III – Cross IMP Scoring

Your net cross IMP score on a board is the total of your IMP scores with the pairs playing in the opposite direction at all the other tables. This means that both good and bad scores will be magnified.

Here is a typical board scored at Game All in Division A:

NS	EW	Contract	By	North/South	
				+	-
1	9	3NT +1	N	630	
2	10	3NT +2	N	660	
3	11	3NT +3	N	690	
4	12	3NT =	S	600	
5	13	4♥* -4	E	1100	
6	14	2NT +3	S	210	
7	15	3NT -2	S		200
8	16	6NT =	N	1440	

Pair 1	IMP 1	IMP 2	IMP 3	IMP 4	IMP 5	IMP 6	IMP 7	Cross IMPs
Score with EW Pair	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
IMPS	-1	-2	+1	-10	+9	+13	-13	-3

The IMP scores for pair 1 are calculated as:

- With Pair 10 (630-660) = -30 = -1
- With Pair 11 (630-690) = -60 = -2
- With Pair 12 (630-600) = +30 = +1
- With Pair 13 (630-1100) = -470 = -10
- etc.

The Cross IMP score for the board would therefore be the total of these scores = -3. The total of all the Cross IMP scores for the Match is the Match Cross IMP score which is used to convert to Victory Points (see Appendix I).