

Warwickshire Pairs League Online (WPLO)
Rules & Conditions of Competition
Current for 2025/26 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. Clarification on the use of Director's Mismatch (Non-Attendance).
- b. Clarification of Director's Mismatch scoring (Appendix I).
- c. The number of pairs to be promoted and relegated changed (Promotion/Relegation).

1. Summary of Competition

- a. This is a pairs competition across two or more* Divisions run in a 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 first 3 Sessions will be short Matches on a round robin basis. The remaining 2 Sessions will be long Matches on a Swiss basis.
- e. Pairs may use a substitute player or pair in a Session (Non-Attendance). They may no longer Sit Out.
- f. Pairs not competing in a minimum of 4 Sessions (including the use of a substitute player or pair 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. Membership of WCBA or EBU is not required.

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 or pair (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).

4. Non – Attendance

- a. A pair unable to play may field a substitute player or pair. Any pair who does not notify but fails to attend the Session will score 0 VPs per match and may also be referred to the Conduct Committee. **Responsibility for providing substitutes lies with the pair unable to play.**
- 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 or pair must notify the name(s), EBU number and email address of the substitute(s) 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. In the event that a substitute pair or player (whether pre-arranged or to replace a missing pair or player) is of a significantly higher or lower standard than that of the pair substituted, they may be subject to a Director's Mismatch (see Appendix I).
- g. In the final 2 Sessions it will be possible to request to Pair Off with another pair in the same Division. This request should be sent to wplo@warwickshirebridge.co.uk. The request will be sent to the other pairs in the Division and acceptance will go to the first pair to respond. **If no Pair Off is found then the requesting pair must provide substitutes.**
- h. Where a half table exists at the start of a Match due to an absent pair, a substitute pair may be used if available. In this event the substitute pair's score will not be applied to any pair.
- i. A pair required to sit out due to a missing pair will score their average VP score to date prior to the sit out match +2 VPs, subject to a minimum of 12 VPs.
- j. In the event that one or both players in a partnership has to leave part way through a Session due to an emergency, the following options will apply:
 - i. If a Match is part played then it will not be completed. If 50% or more of the boards for that Match have been played then it will be scored according to EBU rules. If fewer than 50% of the boards have been played then the pair with the emergency and their opponents will score, for this and any remaining Matches in the Session, as laid out in (h) above.

5. Format

- a. There will be 2 Series per season, each of 5 Sessions, in all Divisions.
- b. A round robin followed by a Swiss movement will be used. In both cases RealBridge will manage the assignments.
- c. The Swiss movement for the last 2 Sessions 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 (first 3 Sessions) or 2 head-to-head long Matches (last 2 Sessions). 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. The RealBridge Self-Alert and Screens options will be used. During play Private Chat should be used to communicate to an opponent not shown on video.

- f. For this event the use of video and audio is required unless this is not possible for technical reasons.

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 to 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. Overall scoring will be based on total VPs.
- b. After the first 3 Sessions all pairs' VP scores will be reduced by a third. This will allow the VP scores on a 0-20 scale in the final 2 Sessions of long Matches to be 50% greater than the scores for the previous short Matches.
- c. Scoring for each Division will be independent of the other Divisions.

- d. 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 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 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. Pairs from each Division other than the top Division will be promoted to the next higher Division. Pairs from each Division other than the bottom Division will be relegated to the next lower Division. The numbers of pairs promoted and relegated will depend on the number of pairs in the Divisions and will be announced prior to the start of each Series.
- 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 once all entries have been received for each Series.
- 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 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: Peter Abbott (07802 170900)
& Event Organiser** **Email:** wplo@warwickshirebridge.co.uk
 - **Tournament Directors:** **Sarah Amos, Rachel Oliver**

Email: wplo@warwickshirebridge.co.uk
- (Please note that unacknowledged emails do not constitute prior notification).**
- **Entries:** competitions@warwickshirebridge.co.uk

Appendix I – VP Conversion for Director’s Mismatch

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

- 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)

In both cases the substituted pair VP score will make the match total 20 VPs.

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 II – 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.