

League Rules

Version 8.0 | Effective for the 2026/27 season | Cleared, adopted and operative

About these Rules

These Rules keep League competition fair, consistent and enjoyable for every club. Most problems can be avoided by talking early. If a deadline, fixture or player is likely to cause a difficulty, contact the Fixtures and Results Secretary before it happens. The Rules allow for agreed extensions and genuine emergencies. A quick guide to sanctions is on page 3.

Key dates

- 1 November:** insurance proof, player lists, starring and outstanding fixtures
10 days after each match: home team submits the result and scorecard photograph
31 December: same-club teams in one division have played each other twice
16 May: all fixtures completed

1 Definitions

Match	The full fixture between two teams.
Rubber	One pair against another pair, normally best of three games.
Game	One game played to 21.
Match score	The number of rubbers won by each team.
League points	Two for a win, one for a draw and none for a loss.
Ineligible player	A player not entitled to represent that team through registration, starring or another eligibility rule.

2 Clubs and Deadlines

- 2.1** Each club maintains insurance and, by 1 November, submits proof of insurance, its player lists, its starring and any outstanding fixture information, unless the Fixtures and Results Secretary has agreed an extension.
- 2.2** Each missing item incurs a two-point deduction per affected team, unless an extension was agreed.
- 2.3** The 2026/27 fee is £10 for a club's first team and £5 for each additional team.

3 Registration and Eligibility

- 3.1** Players are bona fide members of the club they represent. A player cannot represent another club in the same discipline in the same season unless a transfer is approved.
- 3.2** Late registrations become eligible only after written acceptance by the Fixtures and Results Secretary.
- 3.3** A team wishing to use a starred or otherwise ineligible player in a lower division must obtain the opposition's written agreement before play. If agreement is refused, the player cannot take part officially.
- 3.4** Where agreement is given, each rubber involving that player is recorded 21-0, 21-0 to the eligible opposition, with no third game. The rubber may still be played socially, but the scores do not count. The player and the agreement are recorded on the scorecard.
- 3.5** Advance-agreed use carries no league-point deduction.
- 3.6** Undisclosed use forfeits the affected rubbers and incurs a two-point deduction. Possible deliberate concealment may also be referred under the Code of Conduct.
- 3.7** The Open competition is available to eligible players regardless of gender. Men may not play in Ladies matches.

4 Formats and Short Teams

Competition	Rubbers	Team
Open	Nine	Six players in three pairs
Mixed	Nine	Six players in three mixed pairs
Ladies	Six	Four players in two pairs, in the prescribed rotation

- 4.1** If one team is short, it forfeits the rubbers involving the missing pair or player.
- 4.2** If both teams in an Open or Mixed match have only two pairs, they may play a reduced match, provided the captains' agreement is recorded before play. Unplayed rubbers are then disregarded. Without that agreement, normal forfeiture applies.
- 4.3** The same treatment may apply where both Ladies teams are equally short, with the agreement recorded before play.

5 Scoring

- 5.1** Every rubber is best of three games, each game played to 21. At 20-all, a two-point lead is needed. At 29-all, the next point wins.
- 5.2** A win earns two league points, a draw one point each and a loss none.
- 5.3** A conceded Open or Mixed match is recorded 9-0 and a conceded Ladies match 6-0, with unplayed games marked as forfeited. The conceding team also has one league point deducted.

6 Confirmation and Cancellations

- 6.1** The home team confirms the date, time, venue, contact and shuttle choice with its opponents.
- 6.2** A planned cancellation or rearrangement requires eight clear days' notice.
- 6.3** Hall closure, severe weather or a genuine emergency is reported as soon as possible. The Fixtures and Results Secretary rules on exceptional circumstances.
- 6.4** A team that fails to attend without an accepted reason is treated as conceding the match (see 5.3).
- 6.5** The affected club may claim an unavoidable, documented court cost from the responsible club.

7 Start Times and Incomplete Play

- 7.1** Matches start no earlier than 6.30 p.m. on weekdays unless both teams agree otherwise. Players are ready to go on court within five minutes of the previous game ending.
- 7.2** If lateness means a game cannot be finished within the booked court time, the late team forfeits that game.

- 7.3** If time runs out and neither team is at fault, an unfinished game is disregarded. Where lateness caused the delay, 7.2 applies instead.

8 Results and Digital Trial

Step	Action	Responsible
1	Complete and sign the paper scorecard.	Both teams
2	Submit the result and a scorecard photo at www.cbllscoresheet.co.uk within 10 days.	Home team
3	Check submissions and resolve any discrepancies.	Fixtures and Results Secretary

- 8.1** The paper scorecard remains the official match record. The home club keeps it until 30 days after the end of the season.
- 8.2** If the website is unavailable, the home team emails the result and photograph within the same deadline and keeps evidence of doing so.
- 8.3** The photograph takes priority over conflicting typed data, unless both teams confirm a correction.
- 8.4** Late results (after 10 days) are counted per home team, per season. First: a written warning. Second: a one-point deduction. Third and each later one: a two-point deduction. The result still stands where the signed scorecard proves it. Agreed extensions and verified system failures are exempt.

9 Shuttles, Courts and Clothing

- 9.1** Open and Mixed Division 1 use approved goose-feather shuttles.
- 9.2** All other Open and Mixed divisions, and all Ladies divisions, use the home team's choice of approved feather, hybrid or plastic shuttle.
- 9.3** The home team notifies its shuttle choice when confirming the match, and no later than 48 hours before play. A later change is allowed only if the chosen shuttle is genuinely unavailable, with immediate notice to the opposition.
- 9.4** The Committee publishes the list of accepted shuttle brands separately.
- 9.5** The home team provides sufficient shuttles and access to drinking water. Courts require Committee approval and must be reasonably safe and suitable.
- 9.6** Players wear safe sports clothing and non-marking footwear. Minor issues are simply corrected. Games involving a player are forfeited only for a safety risk, a risk to the venue or refusal of a reasonable instruction. Safe religious, disability-related and medically necessary clothing is always permitted.

10 Starring

- 10.1** A club with more than one team in a competition stars four players for each higher Open or Mixed team and two for each higher Ladies team. A higher team is any team other than the club's lowest in that competition.
- 10.2** Starring reflects current playing strength, using recent results, previous division, known competitive level and selection order. The Fixtures and Results Secretary may request evidence or a correction.
- 10.3** Objections to starring are submitted within 14 days of publication, or within seven days of material new information.

- 10.4** Starred players may play down only with advance agreement under section 3.
- 10.5** A-team starred players should play at least 50% of scheduled matches, rounded up. Cancelled matches do not count. Injury or exceptional circumstances are reported to the Fixtures and Results Secretary.
- 10.6** Teams from the same club in the same division complete both of their fixtures against each other by 31 December, unless the Committee approves an exception. Otherwise, each team incurs a two-point deduction.

11 Fixtures and Season

- 11.1** Fixtures are arranged at the Fixtures Meeting. Any additional fixtures are due by 1 November unless agreed otherwise.
- 11.2** The season ends by 16 May unless the Committee approves an extension.

12 Structure, Promotion and Relegation

- 12.1** Earned promotion and relegation take first priority.
- 12.2** Between Open and Mixed Divisions 1 and 2, one team is promoted and one relegated.
- 12.3** Other adjacent divisions normally exchange two teams, but exchange one where either division has five teams. The numbers promoted and relegated always match, and the higher division's figure takes precedence.
- 12.4** Promotion cannot be declined simply by preference.
- 12.5** Placing a new Open or Mixed team above the bottom division requires recent comparable evidence for at least four of its six proposed players. A new Ladies team requires evidence for three of four.
- 12.6** Evidence includes previous division, results, ranking or comparable records. Committee members with a conflict of interest do not vote. The recommendation and reasons are circulated and ratified. A placement cannot displace earned promotion or relegation.
- 12.7** A new team without sufficient evidence enters the bottom division.

13 Tournament

- 13.1** If a tournament is held, entrants must have been paid-up club members for at least three months.

14 Competition Review

- 14.1** A club may request a review of a competition decision within seven days of being notified of it. Grounds are limited to procedural error, material new evidence or incorrect application of the Rules.
- 14.2** At least three people with no conflict of interest decide the review and give written reasons. Their decision is final. Disciplinary matters instead follow the appeal process in the Code of Conduct.

15 Amendments and Responsibility

- 15.1** Proposals to amend these Rules are submitted at least 31 days before the AGM. Late urgent proposals require Committee approval.
- 15.2** Club Secretaries make sure their players know these Rules and the Code of Conduct.

Chairperson

Date

League Secretary

Date

Quick Guide to Sanctions

What happens if something goes wrong, and how to avoid it

Most clubs will never need this page. It brings together every situation in which the Rules apply a sanction. If you can see a problem coming, contact the Fixtures and Results Secretary early: an agreed extension or exception usually means no sanction applies. Deductions are league points and apply to each affected team unless stated. No financial fines apply. If this page and the numbered Rules ever differ, the numbered Rules apply.

If...	What happens	Rule	How to avoid it, and exceptions
Deadlines and administration			
Insurance proof, player list, starring or outstanding fixture information not received by 1 November	Two-point deduction per missing item, per affected team	2.1, 2.2, 11.1	Ask the Fixtures and Results Secretary for an extension before the deadline. An agreed extension means no deduction.
Same-club teams in one division have not played both fixtures against each other by 31 December	Two-point deduction for each of the two teams	10.6	Arrange both fixtures early in the season. No deduction if the Committee approved an exception.
Player eligibility			
A starred or ineligible player plays in a lower division with the opposition's written agreement	Each affected rubber recorded 21-0, 21-0 to the opposition. No points deduction.	3.3 to 3.5	Agreement must be obtained before play and recorded on the scorecard.
A starred or ineligible player plays without disclosure and agreement, or after agreement was refused	Affected rubbers forfeited, plus a two-point deduction	3.3, 3.6, 10.4	Always ask the opposition first. Possible deliberate concealment may also be referred under the Code of Conduct.
A late-registered player plays before written acceptance	Treated as an ineligible player (see the rows above)	3.2, 3.6	Wait for written acceptance, or obtain agreement under 3.3.
A man plays in a Ladies match	Treated as an ineligible player	3.7, 3.6	Not permitted in any circumstances.
Match play			
A team concedes a match, or fails to attend without an accepted reason	Recorded 9-0 (Open, Mixed) or 6-0 (Ladies) to the opponent, and one league point deducted	5.3, 6.4, 6.5	Report hall closures, severe weather and emergencies as soon as possible. The opponent may claim documented court costs.
A match is cancelled or rearranged with less than eight clear days' notice, without an accepted reason	The Fixtures and Results Secretary decides. It may be treated as failure to attend	6.2 to 6.4	Give eight clear days' notice wherever possible.
One team is short of players	That team forfeits rubbers involving the missing pair or player	4.1	Check availability early and let your opponents know.
Both teams are short and no agreement is recorded	Normal forfeiture applies to each short team	4.2, 4.3	Agree and record a reduced match before play. Unplayed rubbers are then disregarded.
Lateness means a game cannot be finished in the booked court time	The late team forfeits that game	7.1 to 7.3	Be ready within five minutes of the previous game ending. No forfeit if neither team is at fault.
Unsafe clothing or footwear, a risk to the venue, or refusal of a reasonable instruction	Games involving that player forfeited	9.6	Minor issues are simply corrected. Safe religious, disability-related and medical clothing is always permitted.
Results			
A result is submitted after the 10-day deadline (counted per home team, per season)	First: written warning. Second: one-point deduction. Third and each later one: two-point deduction. The result stands if the signed scorecard proves it.	8.2, 8.4	Submit on match night if you can. If the website is down, email within the deadline. Agreed extensions and verified system failures are exempt.
Other League documents			
Fees unpaid after written notice and a reasonable opportunity to pay	Fixtures may be suspended or future entry refused	Const. 6.3	Talk to the Treasurer early if payment may be delayed.
A club misses the Fixtures Meeting without an accepted reason	The team may be withdrawn	Const. 9.2	Make sure a club representative attends, or explain any absence in advance.
Misconduct, abuse, dishonesty or another Code of Conduct breach	Non-financial sanctions, ranging from advice to exclusion	Code 10	Fines and administrative charges are not operative.