

CONSTITUTION AND RULES UPDATED TO 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

MERSEYSIDE CHESS ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

1 NAME

The organisation shall be called The Merseyside Chess Association.

2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Association shall be to promote, encourage and administer the game of Chess within the area of Merseyside without prejudice of race, colour, religion or other interest.

3 MEMBERSHIP

The Association, acting through the Executive Committee, upon payment of the appropriate fees, may accept for membership such individuals or clubs inside or outside the boundaries of Merseyside as the Association may decide.

4 OFFICES

The Principal Offices of the Association shall be:-

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

County Captains

Other offices shall be determined by the AGM, and all appointments to such offices and of general committee members shall be made by the AGM, and shall apply until the next AGM.

Life Vice Presidents may be appointed by the AGM from time to time, being persons who have given exceptional service to the Merseyside Chess Association.

5 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The business of the Association shall be managed by the Executive Committee which shall consist of the Principal Officers of the Association, Life Vice President(s) and a maximum of twenty-four other members. The Executive may co-opt additional members but such members will have no voting rights.

Seven members of the committee shall form a quorum. If present the President will take the chair. Otherwise those present will vote one of themselves as Chairman. Any matters requiring resolution will be determined by a simple majority of votes. The Chairman may vote only when a casting vote is required to break a tie.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to invite individuals to attend committee meetings in an advisory capacity.

The Executive shall be convened by the Secretary on the instructions of the President, or upon the request in writing of four of its members, or as these Rules otherwise provide.

Each member of the Executive Committee shall receive at least seven days notice of each meeting. If at any meeting of the Executive Committee the number of members present does not form a quorum within 30 minutes of the announced time of starting, the meeting shall automatically stand adjourned to a date within 15 days of the original date, when the original business only shall be discussed. At this resumed meeting, the rule regarding a quorum shall not apply.

6 ASSOCIATION YEAR

The Association year shall be from 1st May to the 30th April inclusive.

7 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held in May or June and shall be open to private members of the Association, all members of associated clubs and others subject to the discretion of the meeting. It shall be the function of the meeting to:

- . receive a report from each Officer
- . consider the inspected accounts of the Association
- . determine the non- principal offices
- . elect all Officers and other members of the Executive Committee
- . fix all membership and other fees, and when these are due
- . fix the date of the next AGM, (the Executive Committee may vary this date in the event of exceptional circumstances)
- . appoint the Financial Inspector for the following year
- . deal with such other business as may be required, due notice having been given on the agenda for the meeting.

The only persons entitled to vote at the AGM shall be the members of the Executive Committee and from each club one delegate for each team entered in the main League competition and each person shall have one vote. A member of the Executive Committee may not be a club delegate. No private member may have a vote. Resolution will be decided by a simple majority of votes as otherwise specified within these articles of constitution. The Chairman may vote only when a casting vote is required to break a tie.

The presence of ten persons entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum. If there is not a quorum within 30 minutes of the announced time of starting, the meeting shall automatically stand adjourned to a date within 15 days of the original date, when the original business only shall be discussed. At this resumed meeting the rule regarding a quorum will not apply.

The Secretary shall give 14 days notice of the meeting to the secretaries of the associated clubs, to the Executive Committee and to private members.

8 SPECIAL MEETING

A Special General Meeting may be called at any time by the President. The Secretary shall give 14 days notice of the meeting to the Secretaries of the associated clubs, to the Executive Committee and to private members. A Special General Meeting must be called if three associated clubs require such a meeting and inform the Secretary in writing of the reasons for calling such a meeting, which reasons shall be specified in the notice convening the meeting.

Persons entitled to attend and vote at a Special General Meeting and the quorum rules relating thereto shall be the same as for the Annual General Meeting.

9 ALTERATION TO RULES OF CONSTITUTION

No alteration to the Rules of Constitution shall be made, except at a General Meeting of which 14 days notice in writing giving details of the proposed alterations have been duly given to club secretaries, members of the Executive Committee and private members. No such alteration shall be effected unless the motion proposing it is passed by an affirmative vote of not less than two thirds of persons present eligible to vote. No alteration to the Rules of Constitution shall be made unless a quorum of ten voting members is present.

Any alterations effected must be notified to Club Secretaries, Members of the Executive Committee and Private Members within 14 days of the meeting at which the alterations were made.

10 RULES OF COMPETITIONS

Rules governing competitions shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

End of Constitution

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RULES GOVERNING ALL COMPETITIONS

These rules (1-12) apply across all competitions unless otherwise stated.

1 OBSERVANCE OF LAWS

All games played under the auspices of the Association shall be played in accordance with the Laws of Chess as recognised by the Federation Internationale Des Echecs (FIDE) and as modified by the English Chess Federation (ECF), excepting as otherwise laid down in these rules.

2 ALL COMPETITION ENTRIES

All entries shall be made on the Competitions Entry Form to be supplied to associate clubs by the General Secretary not later than 1st June. All entries shall be received by the General Secretary not later than 1st July. The Executive Committee or the General Secretary shall have discretion to waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances.

No club may compete in MCA competition in a future year until fees from prior years have been paid. No individual player who has failed to pay his due MCA or ECF fees in a previous year may compete in any MCA competition until his fees from the prior year have been paid.

3 NON-TRANSFERENCE

A player shall not play, in any season, for more than one club in any MCA Tournaments except as permitted elsewhere in these rules.

4 INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

a. A player may be ineligible because he has played for more than one club or he has contravened the rules of a particular tournament.

b The playing of one or more ineligible players in a match shall be penalised by reducing the score of the offending team in that match by a game point for each ineligible player so played, and in addition each ineligible player shall be deemed to have lost their game.

c The penalty in the preceding paragraph shall apply to a club's first contravention and in the case of a further contravention by that club in the same season, the appropriate Competition Controller may refer the matter to the Executive Committee who may impose a more severe penalty or remove the offending team from the Competition.

d. All players competing in MCA competitions are expected to be ECF members. Membership must be completed before any player has played more than three games. Clubs may be charged game fees for all games of non-members and an administration fee may be added.

5 ALTERATION OF VENUE

Where travelling facilities are inconvenient the match venue may be altered by mutual agreement.

6 HOURS OF PLAY

Each club must publish the starting time of its home matches, which is expected to be between 7.00 pm and 7.45 pm.

The home team may start clocks any time after the published starting time. If the visiting team is present and play has not started by the published starting time, the visiting team may request the home team to concede time on its clocks to ensure the match is finished no later than three hours after the published starting time. If such a request is made, it must be accepted. If the home team fails to comply, the match will be forfeit.

7 TEAM DECLARATIONS

The Captains of the opposing teams shall, before the commencement of a match, exchange lists of their teams arranged in board order, which shall also be in the order of playing strength. This list giving players' names and initials shall be entered on a match scorecard. On completion of the match, team captains shall enter results of individual games and the total match score and sign both scorecards.

The away team shall take white on board one and the colours on the remaining boards shall alternate accordingly, except that if a cup match is played at a neutral venue the Captains shall toss for colours, the winner taking white on board one and colours alternating on other boards.

One or more reserves may be substituted for any players who have not arrived within thirty minutes of the start of the game, otherwise the game(s) shall be forfeit.

At the start of play any Captain who knows that he will be unable to field a full team will be obliged to default on the lowest board or boards. Any team which defaults on any other than the lowest board or boards will have one point deducted from its match score unless it can satisfactorily explain the default to the Controller.

If the Controller is not happy with a team's board order he may ask the club to justify its order.

Any team deliberately violating the board order rule or any other part of this rule may be deducted a game point by the Controller.

8 RATE OF PLAY

Every player shall keep a record of the moves in each game. The use of the Monroi or other approved scoring device is permitted unless the opponent objects before the game starts. It is the duty of the home team to provide sufficient clocks to complete its fixture (including adequate reserve clocks in case of failure on the match night). If the home team fails to notify the away team (no later than five days) before the fixture that there are insufficient clocks, the away team can claim the match (if no clocks are available) as a defaulted win. If the home team informs the away team before the fixture that it has insufficient clocks, then the away team can be asked to fulfil the match without prejudice.

The rate of play shall be an hour and a half for all moves without any intermediate time-control. Alternatively, if both captains agree, all games may be played in 1 hour 15 minutes for 35 moves followed by 15 minutes to complete the game. The first player whose flag falls shall lose, excepting if his opponent has insufficient material for checkmate, or other circumstances set out in the FIDE Laws of Chess.

In Divisions One and Two of the main leagues only, if both players agree before the start games may be played to a Fischer time control of 75 minutes plus 15 seconds per move. Other boards will be played to the normal time controls, as above.

9 NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

The League Controller must be informed of the match result within fourteen days, A team captain may either send his signed scorecard so it will be received by the Controller within fourteen days

or

communicate all the information on the scorecard to the Controller by electronic means within the same period. In the latter case the team captain must retain the signed scorecard in case there is any discrepancy or dispute.

If a team captain wishes to claim a match, it is important for him to lodge his claim with the League Controller within fourteen days.

10 JUNIORS

A team consisting of only junior players (except in exceptional circumstances) can elect:

(1) To play all matches at their home venue, but would be designated the “away” team for the appropriate number of games for the allocation of colours.

(2) To play all games to a single time control of 61 minutes for each player.

A junior playing for a “normal” (adult) team can insist on the same time control (61 minutes each) provided the other team is advised in advance.

11 GRADES

For all competitions in which a player’s Grade is important, the Knotty Ash Cup, the Grade- restricted Leagues and for listed players in the Main League Competition, the Player’s Grade at the start of the season will apply for the whole season.

12 APPEALS

In circumstances defined in these Rules, League and Tournament Controllers are given powers to make certain decisions. If a club considers a Controller’s decision is incorrect or unjust, it has the right to appeal to the Executive Committee within fourteen days. The decision of the Executive Committee will be final.

RULES GOVERNING THE MAIN LEAGUE COMPETITION

1 ARRANGEMENT OF TEAMS

The competing teams shall be arranged in divisions according to their estimated strength, or in sections according to locality or other considerations.

2 NUMBER OF TEAMS

An associated club may enter more than one team.

3 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

A team shall consist of: Eight players in Division 1; Seven players in Division 2; Six players in Divisions 3 and 4; Five players in any lower Division.

4 FIXTURES

In each Division, each competing team shall play two matches with every other team in that Division (home and away) unless arranged otherwise by the Executive Committee.

5 MATCH POINTS

A team winning a match shall score two points and in the event of a tie each team shall score one point.

6 DIVISION WINNERS

The team in a Division which scores more match points than any other team in that Division shall be the winner of the Division and shall be entitled to hold for twelve months the trophy allocated to that Division and to promotion.

If two or more teams in a Division score the same number of match points the relative position of these teams shall be decided by the total number of games won by them in the Division, drawn games counting as half the value of won games. If there is still a tie the positions shall be decided by eliminating the game-points scored on all the bottom boards of the teams concerned and so on until a definite result is achieved.

In the event of a team withdrawing from the league having played not more than 50% of its fixtures, individual players from that team will be eligible to play for other teams in that club or other clubs during the season.

7 LISTED AND INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

Where a club enters two or more teams in the Main League Competition, the following rules shall apply:

a, The Club Secretary shall, before the first league match in which the Club is concerned, send to the General Secretary a list of seven members (listed players) for each team of eight, six members for each team of seven, five members for each team of six and four members for each team of five, who will always be invited to play for that team and have indicated that they expect to be available for the majority of games. Such listed players shall be ineligible to play in any lower team of that club during the season. Listed players must have indicated that they expect to be available for the majority of league matches. If when 50% of the fixtures have been played a listed player has failed to play in at least 3 matches then the club will be expected to list an additional player unless it can convince the Controller that the player in question will complete his obligation. All listed players must be ECF Registered. Ungraded players may be listed, but an estimated grade must be provided for each ungraded player. The estimated grade must be agreed in advance with the MCA Grader.

The General Secretary shall then send a copy of these listed players to each of the League Controllers. There is no need to send a list for the only or lowest team of any club.

b, If a club fails to send in a list of restricted players before the first league match then the players appearing in the first match shall be considered listed, ie the top seven boards in a first division match, etc.

c. Any College or University team shall have until 8th November to comply with (a) above otherwise rule (b) applies.

d. Where a club has two or more teams competing in the same Division, the interchanging of players between these teams shall not be permitted. This rule is suspended for teams playing in Divisions 3 and below, where the normal rules relating to the interchange of players between a higher and a lower team shall apply.

e. Listed players or other players who customarily play in a lower team may play any number of games for a higher team or teams except as provided in Paragraph f, below.

f. If a player (whether listed for a lower team or not) who sometimes plays for a higher team or teams is graded higher than any of the listed players in the team for which he plays he is limited to a total of three games for these higher teams, regardless of whether the lower-graded listed players play in the same match, or not, and irrespective of board order. If he plays more, he will no longer be eligible to play for the lower team.

If it is necessary to change or add a player to the listed players during the season, such that the lowest listed player now has a grade lower than the original lowest listed player, then the lower limit comes into effect for subsequent matches, but has no bearing on those played before the change was made.

8. ARRANGEMENT OF FIXTURES

The dates of fixtures in the League Competitions shall be fixed by the Fixture Secretary or such other person or officer of the Association as the Executive Committee may appoint. Each club shall have the opportunity to make representations to the appointed person to indicate unsuitable dates for fixtures through such as shift working, annual holidays, etc. As far as possible, the fixtures will give effect to such representations.

The list of fixtures shall be communicated to each club not less than fourteen days before the starting date of that club's first fixture.

9 POSTPONEMENT & REARRANGEMENT OF FIXTURES

Under rule 8 clubs are asked to indicate to the fixtures secretary any dates which are unsuitable. Realising that not all arrangements can be known before the fixtures are compiled, clubs have until 15th September or 2 weeks after the fixture lists are issued (whichever is later) to request rearrangements on the basis that team members have other prior commitments. Such requests shall be granted.

After this time a club may request a rearrangement but the other club concerned has the right to decide whether the request is acceptable or not, that is both clubs must agree on the postponement. If the two clubs agree to the rearrangement, they must as soon as possible and in any case before two weeks agree a new date which is before the end of the season and notify this to the appropriate league controller as soon as possible. If the two clubs agree to the rearrangement but cannot agree a new date then the matter shall be referred to the League Controller. If the clubs do not agree to a rearrangement then the club requesting postponement must either fulfil the fixture using reserve players or default the match.

If the club requesting a rearrangement defaults the match it may appeal to the Controller. If the Controller considers that the reason(s) for the request were outside the control of the team and its players and that a default would be inequitable then he may order that the match be played or give such direction as he thinks fit in the circumstances.

10 NON-OBSERVANCE OF RULES

If any club fails to play a match in accordance with these rules the matter shall be referred to the Executive Committee whose decision in the matter shall be final. If any team in any given season defaults 50% or more of their matches, all games played by that team in that season shall be declared void.

In the event of any fixture not being fulfilled on the due date both sides shall inform the appropriate Controller of the circumstances. If the fixture is still unfulfilled at the end of the season the Controller may at his discretion impose a penalty on either or both teams concerned. In the case of a further contravention by that club in the same season, the Controller may impose a more severe penalty or remove the offending team from the competition.

11 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

For each division of the league an award shall be made to the player of the year. The player of the year shall be the player with the greatest number of wins gained from league games played during the season. A default or forfeit win counts as a win and a draw as half a win.

Where a player appears for more than one team in the same division then the player shall be considered as separate individuals for this award. The winning team must be named in a defaulted match to qualify for a point. In the event of a tie the award shall be shared.

12 DISPUTES

Any dispute under these rules shall be referred to the Executive Committee.

RULES FOR THE JOHN RIPLEY HANDICAP KNOCK-OUT CUP

1 HANDICAPS

When deciding the handicap to be applied in any particular match the divisions of the Main League Competition the two teams are in should be looked at. Where there is a difference of:-

1 division - 1½ points to the team in the lower division

2 divisions - 2½ points to the team in the lower division

3 divisions - 3½ points to the team in the lower division

4 or more - 4½ points to the team in the lower division.

2 NUMBER OF TEAMS

A club may enter any number of teams in the John Ripley Tournament but no player may play for more than one team in a season. The handicaps will be based on the club's highest-placed league team.

3 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

The number of players per team shall be six.

4 DRAWN MATCHES

Matches can only be drawn between teams from the same division. In this event the tie is first resolved on board count. If this fails to resolve the tie then the elimination rule is applied. To apply the board count rule, add up the board numbers won by each team. The team with the lowest total is the winner.

5 FIXTURES

The timing of rounds of matches will be determined by the Tournament Controller.

6 RESULTS

The results shall be sent promptly to the Tournament Controller. It is important that where a match is not played because one of the teams withdraws, the other team should notify the Tournament Controller to claim a win.

RULES FOR THE KNOTTY ASH KNOCK OUT CUP

1 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Each team shall consist of five players.

2 ELIGIBILITY

Entry is restricted to players from any division graded below 130 in the current grading list.

Ungraded players shall be eligible to play so long as their estimated playing strengths are below a grade of 130 and they are not regular members of a team playing in the first two divisions. (i.e. they are not listed and have played fewer than 4 games in total in these divisions). If an ungraded player has earlier experience of competitive chess, before the player's first match, the player's team captain must give all relevant information to the Tournament Controller who will decide the player's eligibility after discussion with the Grader.

Any team that plays an ineligible player shall be disqualified providing the Tournament Controller is informed of the infringement within eight days.

If a club enters two or more teams in the competition, no player shall play for more than one of these teams.

3 DRAWN MATCH

In the event of a drawn match, the tie shall be decided on board count. If this fails to resolve the tie the elimination rule shall apply. In the event of all five games being drawn then the team having most black boards shall be deemed the winners.

4 FIXTURES

All rounds shall be played as directed by the Tournament Controller. The date and venue for the Final will be decided by the Tournament Controller in consultation with senior officers of the Prescot and Knotty Ash Chess Club.

RULES FOR THE GRADE-RESTRICTED LEAGUES

ELIGIBILITY

The aim of these competitions is to provide more opportunities to play chess. Players from the main league, whether listed or not, can play in any of these leagues. Apart from the grade limits, the only restriction is that if a club has two teams in the same league someone can only play for one them.

600 LEAGUE

Teams shall comprise four boards, with grades totalling a maximum of 600 with no player to be graded over 175.

The minimum individual grade is 120. (Players below 120 can play, but count as 120 towards the team total). Ungraded players are counted as having a grade of 120, unless there are reasonable grounds for using a higher figure. If an ungraded player has previous experience of competitive chess, before the player's first match, the player's team captain must give all relevant information to the League Controller who will decide an appropriate nominal grade for the player after discussion with the Grader.

Defaulted boards are counted as 120 towards the team total.

440 LEAGUE

Teams shall comprise four boards, with grades totalling a maximum of 440 with no player to be graded over 135.

The minimum individual grade is 80. (Players below 80 can play, but count as 80 towards the team total). Ungraded players are counted as having a grade of 80, unless there are reasonable grounds for using a higher figure. If an ungraded player has previous experience of competitive chess, before the player's first match, the player's team captain must give all relevant information to the League Controller who will decide an appropriate nominal grade for the player after discussion with the Grader.

Defaulted boards are counted as 80 towards the team total.

PENALTIES

If a team total of grades exceeds the defined limit, one point shall be deducted from the team score. If an ineligible player plays, his or her game is deemed to be lost and one additional point is deducted from the team score.

RULES FOR THE TEAM LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

1 LAWS

Where applicable the Laws of Chess as recognised by FIDE and as modified by the English Chess Federation (ECF), should be observed excepting:

- a. Any player making an illegal move shall lose the game.
- b. Any other variant that may be deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.

2 NUMBER OF TEAMS

An associated club may enter more than one team.

3 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Each team shall consist of four players and a reserve listed in board order; the reserve being played at the Captain's discretion. Board order may not be altered during the tournament.

4 MOVING

The rate of play shall be one move every 10 seconds. Each player must move on the time signal. Any player failing to do so shall lose the game.

5 TIME LIMIT

The time limit shall be twenty five minutes each round.

6 UNFINISHED GAMES

In the event of any unfinished game, the method of deciding the result shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Controller.

7 TOURNAMENT SYSTEM

The system used (American or Swiss) shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Controller and may depend on the number of entries.

8 GAME POINTS

Each player shall score one point for a win and a half point for a draw.

9 TOURNAMENT WINNERS

The team achieving the highest number of game points shall be the winners of the tournament.

10 RESOLVING TIES

In the event of a tie on game points, the relative position shall be determined on match points (drawn matches counting as half a win). If still drawn the sum of opponents' team's scores shall resolve the tie.

11 ELIGIBLE PLAYERS

There is no restriction on players in the lightning tournament. Players may represent a different club than in the League.

MERSEYSIDE INDIVIDUAL TOURNAMENT

The title "Merseyside Individual Champion" shall be awarded to the Merseyside player finishing highest at the Liverpool Congress or other competition to be designated by the Executive Committee.