

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE & DISTRICT CHESS ASSOCIATION
PLAYING RULES

ARTICLE 1 RULES

All games played under the League's auspices shall be played according to the rules of the E.C.F. and to the F.I.D.E. Laws of Chess **except as specified within these rules.**

ARTICLE 2 REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

Rule 1 All persons playing for a club must be bona fide members of that club.

Rule 2 No player shall play for more than one club in the League in any one season, in any League competition including the cups, unless authorised to do so by the League General Secretary.

Rule 3a) All clubs must send to the league General Secretary before the end of October a list of all players attached to that club and liable **eligible** to play during the forthcoming season. Players may be added to the list at any time **provided that they have not played for any other club** during the season.

b) Every player must be a registered member of the English Chess Federation at least at bronze level before he/she can play a fourth game in any competition organised by the Association.

c) All games played by players who are not members of the English Chess Federation at any time in the season shall be liable to a charge for a game fee of an amount decided by the ECF per game played. This will be collected from the clubs represented by such players at the end of the season by the League Treasurer.

Rule 4 No player may play more than three graded games in NSDCA events unless they are members of the ECF. Any player fielded in contravention of this will be regarded as an ineligible player.

There shall be a discount allowed to each team that pays its League fees before a date set at the Annual General Meeting. The amount of the discount shall be reviewed annually.

Rule 5 There shall be a discount, the amount go be reviewed annually, for teams that pay their League fees before the 31st October. To qualify for the discount such fees must be in the hands of the treasurer before 1st November.

ARTICLE 3 TEAM COMPOSITION

Rule 1a All league and knock-out teams must be constructed in accordance with the grading constraints applying to the relevant competition. For league competition these are:

Div (Boards)	A	B	C	D
1 (5)	unlimited	N/A	135	N/A
2 (5)	725	120	135	N/A
3 (4)	520	105	120	N/A
4 (4)	460	90	105	N/A
5 (4)	400	0	90	125

A: Maximum total grade for all players in the team, after application of the minimum counting grade if appropriate.

B: Minimum counting grade. Players with grades or estimated grades below this value count as this for total team grade purposes. This also applies to defaulted boards.

C: Maximum sideways reserving grade. Players whose grade does not exceed this may play in more than one team in this division.

D: Maximum individual grade

For knock-out competitions see Article 10.

Each division counts as a separate competition. Players may compete freely in two or more divisions for their club subject only to the constraints in the table above.

Rule 1b An ineligible side is one that breaches the grading limit for the competition. The penalty for fielding an ineligible side is that the lowest board who, if replaced by a default would result in an eligible side, has their game automatically scored to the opposition.

If no such player exists two points are deducted from the teams match score.

Rule 2a Rule 1 Before the commencement of the match, the captains shall exchange lists of players in order of strength. All players names must be declared. If this is not possible the potential defaults must be on the lowest boards.

Rule 2ba A player may not play on a higher board than a player with a published E.C.F. grade fifteen points higher than his own except covered by Article 3, Rules 3 and 4. The "shadow" grading list as circulated by the League General Secretary should be consulted for ungraded players. **Until the current season's grading list is available, the previous season's list should be used.** Players with no grade on the circulated list should play in order of strength according to the team captain's own estimation of their grade.

The August grading list published by the ECF shall be used to ascertain players' grades. The subsequent January list will not be used EXCEPT to ascertain grades of players not in the August list.

Rule 2cb The penalty for breaking rule 2b is that the higher graded player playing on the lower board should be classed as ineligible.

Rule 3 If a player is absent when play is about to begin, the opposing captain may require all the remaining members of the team to move up to fill the gap whilst retaining the original order. The latecomer may be allowed to play on the highest available board at his time of arrival.

Rule 4 3 A captain may substitute any eligible player for an absent player (except in circumstances covered by Article 9 Rule 1) in order to avoid the risk of loss by default. Such substitution must take place before one hour has elapsed and is irrevocable.

Rule 4 The grading limits for teams in each Division shall be as follows:-

Division One	No. of players 5	Team total grades	Open
Division Two	No. of players 5	Team total grades	725
Division Three	No. of players 4	Team total grades	520
Division Four	No. of players 4	Team total grades	460
Division Five	No. of players 4	Team total grades	400

Minimum Counting Grades

Division One	Not applicable
Division Two	120
Division Three	105
Division Four	90
Division Five	Not applicable

The maximum grade for an individual player in Division Five shall be 125.

With the exception of in the lowest Division, a player may only play for one team in each Division in any given season. In the lowest Division, a player graded 90 or above may only play for one team in that Division.

ARTICLE 4 MATCH ARRANGEMENTS AND DEFAULTS

Rule 1 Each team is responsible for arranging its own home fixtures.

Rule 2 A team shall consist of five or four players, as appropriate. A team fielding less than the number of players required by the relevant competition shall be deemed to have defaulted any board not filled.

Rule 3 Clocks must be started by 7.40 p.m. If a match starts late as a result of the home team not being present at 7.40 p.m. then the away team may direct that the clocks be adjusted to read as if they had started at 7.40 p.m. to take account of the delay.

Rule 4 A game may not be claimed by default until one hour has elapsed from the starting time.

Rule 5 A game shall be scored to any player for whom no eligible opponent is provided. A club failing to keep an appointment shall lose the match by default.

Rule 6 The away team shall have white on the odd numbered boards except in matches played on neutral ground where the colour on the odd numbered boards shall be decided on the toss of a coin.

Rule 7 Both clubs are responsible for sending the results **including the grades and using the official NSDCA result sheets** to the Results Secretary, **the General Secretary, the Grading Officer and the Webmaster** within ten days **seventy two hours** of the match being played.

Rule 8 Scores of each game should be recorded in a recognised system of notation **either in English algebraic or English descriptive notation** by both players in case of dispute.

Rule 9 The use of clocks shall be compulsory and where available, digital ones should be used in all matches in the League and Cups.

A Fischer time control of all moves in 75 minutes plus an increment of 10 seconds for each move made shall be used in divisions one and two and the open cup whenever digital clocks are available.

This is also the preferred time control in other competitions, though the default control for these is all moves in 85 minutes with the game conducted in accordance with the FIDE Rules on Quickplay finishes.

Where analogue clocks are in use the hands shall initially be set at twenty-five minutes to five for each player and the default time limit used.

Fischer timings should be used in all matches in the League and in the Cups if possible with the time limit for the game being 75 minutes with an increment of ten seconds for each move made. The same Fischer timings should also be used in all other competitions conducted by the Association unless digital clocks are not available. In these cases, the clock shall initially be set at twenty-five minutes to five for each player. The time limit shall be all moves in 85 minutes for each player. The game shall be conducted in accordance with the F.I.D.E. Rules on Quickplay finishes.

Rule 10 The home team is responsible for providing clocks. If they are unable to do so, the secretary of the home club shall notify the official team contact of the visiting team in time to allow the provision of sufficient clocks.

Rule 11 A won game shall score one point, a drawn game shall score half a point and a lost game no points.

Rule 12 A match shall be considered to be five or four players as appropriate from each of two opposing sides taking part in games of chess at the same venue at a given time - games played at other venues or at the same venue on another date shall be considered void.

Rule 13 Smoking across the board and in the playing area shall not be permitted - if a player insists on smoking across the board his opponent may claim the game by default.

ARTICLE 5 FIXTURES

Rule 1 Once the composition of the league has been established, the Executive Committee **Annual General Meeting** shall appoint someone to work out a fixture list. This shall be submitted to appropriate League Officials for approval. **a Fixtures Secretary who shall publish a fixture list as soon as is convenient.**

Rule 2 The season shall normally run from the 1st October to the 31st May. Any league games unplayed by the 1st June shall be declared void for both teams concerned unless either club appeals to the General Secretary in the case of any special circumstances as per Article 7.

Rule 3 Where a club has two or more teams in the same division, all matches between these teams must be played before the end of January.

Rule 4 In the event that there is a tie for the Championship of any Division, the title shall be awarded to the team which has accumulated the highest number of game points. If this fails to resolve the tie then the Championship shall be shared.

ARTICLE 6 RE-ARRANGEMENTS

Any club wishing to alter a fixture date must notify their opponents official team contact at least seven **three** days beforehand. If less than seven **three** days notice be given (except in the case of inclement weather), the opposing team may insist on the match taking place on the original date. If this is impossible then the match may be claimed by default. Details of new dates for rearranged matches must be notified to the Results Secretary **and the General Secretary** by both teams concerned within seven days **as soon as possible**.

ARTICLE 7 DISPUTES

Any dispute must be notified in writing within fourteen days of the said dispute to the Association General Secretary. The General Secretary will decide, dependent on the urgency of the dispute, whether to call an immediate Executive Committee or to refer it to the **Honorary** President or Chairman or next Executive Committee meeting. Any dispute not notified within fourteen days will not be accepted unless evidence regarding the said dispute which was not previously available can be put forward. Both parties to the dispute will be invited to attend any resultant Executive Committee meeting and informed in advance of any complaint made against them.

ARTICLE 8 INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

The following count as ineligible players:

- A player contravening Article 3 rule 2 except as covered by rule 3 of the same article. *(15 point rule)*
- A player participating in their fourth or subsequent game in NSDCA events whilst not a member of the ECF.
- A player who has appeared for another club, unless so authorised by the general secretary.
- A player whose grade makes them ineligible to play in that team (see article 3 rule 1a columns C and D for league, article 10 for knock-out).

A team including an ineligible player **(i.e. a player who is tied to another club or whose grade makes him/her ineligible to play in that particular team or a player contravening Article 3, Rule 2a)** shall have one game point deducted from the team score in that match. This shall be in addition to the game of the ineligible player being scored to his opponent irrespective of the result.

ARTICLE 9 DEFAULT PENALTIES

Rule 1 Unless due notification is given to the official team contact of the opposing team, teams shall pay a penalty to the league for each board defaulted.

Rule 2 The nature of the penalties shall be reviewed annually and defined at the Annual General Meeting

ARTICLE 10 KNOCK-OUT COMPETITIONS

Rule 1 The Association shall annually hold the following competitions:-

- a) The Open Cup, an eight-man team knock-out limited to one team per club;
- b) The Major Cup, a five-man team knock-out limited to players graded under 150;
- c) The Intermediate Cup, a five-man team knock-out limited to players graded under 130.
- c) The Minor Cup for the Perry Trophy, a four-man team knock-out limited to players graded under 110.

A player may only play for one team in any Knock-out competition in any one season.

Rule 2 The rate of play shall be as in League Competitions.

Rule 3 In events (b), (c) and (d) a player's grade must be his last published one - not a provisional or shadow grade. If a player has more than one published grade in the season concerned then the higher grade counts. The Team Contact of a team containing an ungraded player should consult the League Grading Officer prior to a match in which he/she is to play, in order to obtain advice as to the board upon which he/she should play.

Rule 4 3 At regular intervals weeks shall be set aside for matches in the knock-out competitions. The final match shall be played before the end of April. The Association Results Secretary shall notify all teams of their next knock-out opponents, giving them as much notice as possible. Each home team then has the responsibility of confirming the date and venue with the opposing away team.

Rule 5 4 If a match in the knock-out competitions results in a draw, then a board count shall be taken. If this board count also results in a draw then the elimination rule shall be applied. If all games in a match are drawn, then the team with the lowest overall grade count shall be deemed to be the winners. Where the overall grade count is equal then board elimination shall be used until one of the teams wins on grade count.

ARTICLE 11 INFRINGEMENTS

Any infringement of the Association Rules or the Constitution by any player or member club shall be dealt with by the Executive Committee or by a sub-committee set up specifically for that purpose by the Executive Committee.