

# Rules of the Oxfordshire Chess Association League

(as amended by the Committee Meeting on 21 May 2009, for endorsement at the 2009 AGM)

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## 1. Organisation of the OCA League.

- 1.1 The composition of the League will be decided at the AGM. After the AGM, late adjustments may be made by the Committee.
- 1.2 In normal circumstances promotion and relegation of teams will be mandatory; however it may be necessary for other teams to be promoted or relegated in the interest of the League.
- 1.3 No club may have more than two teams in one division.
- 1.4 A club entering more than one team shall identify its teams as 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.; but two teams from the same club in the same division may be of equal strength. When a club has 2 teams in the same division, matches between them must be scheduled as the first match of the new season, and the first match of the new cycle after Christmas. The University should be allowed to postpone University 1 v 2 from October until a later date before Christmas if the League Secretary agrees.
- 1.5 Each team competing will play return fixtures with every other team in its division.
- 1.6 There will be six players in each team and one game on each board in a match.
- 1.7 Matches will be decided by the number of game points scored, with one point for a win, half a point for a draw and no points for a loss.
- 1.8 League match points will be awarded with two points for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss.
- 1.9 The team which scores the greatest number of League match points will hold the title of champion of their division.
- 1.10 Where teams in any division tie for first place, by scoring an equal number of match points, the championship will be awarded to the team scoring the greatest number of game points in the matches between the teams tying on match points. If these are equal, the championship will be awarded to the team scoring the greatest number of game points over the whole league season.
- 1.11 Where teams tie on match points at the bottom of the division and relegation is an issue, the team with the least number of game points in the matches between the teams tying on match points will be relegated. If these are equal, the team to be relegated will be the team scoring the least number of game points over the whole league season.
- 1.12 A new club entering the League will normally enter the lowest division.
- 1.13 Fixture lists will be produced and sent to all clubs as soon as possible after the AGM. Changes to the Fixture List may only be made by the Secretary. (Information, including results and tables, will be published on the OCA website.)

## 2. Eligibility of Players.

- 2.1 Except as permitted by 2.2 below, no player may play for more than one club in a season.
- 2.2 A player may transfer from one club to another in the course of the season, but only with the written consent of the former club duly notified to the Secretary.
- 2.3 Clubs entering more than one team must nominate or 'star' four players in each first division team, and four players for each of its teams in lower divisions. Starred players may not play for

a lower team in the course of a season, or play for another team in the same division. Clubs are not required to star players in their lowest team .

2.4 If any player participates in fewer than four games for the team for which he is 'starred', then his/her club will be required to provide an explanation to the Committee. Any Starred player not playing the required 4 league games may not be starred by that club the following season.

### 2.5 Playing for more than one team

2.5.1 Except as permitted below, a player who has played a total of four games for a club's teams in a particular division (or higher) ceases to be eligible to play for any team of that club in a lower division for the remainder of the season.

2.5.2 The restriction in 2.5.1 does not apply to players with an ECF standard-play grading (or an estimated grading) of 125 or below at the start of the season.

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2.5.3 Subject to rule 2.6 , (i) players with an ECF standard-play grading (or an estimated grading) between 126 and 140 at the start of the season may play in Divisions One and Two without affecting eligibility to play in lower divisions; and (ii) players with an ECF standard-play grading (or an estimated grading) between 141 and 150 at the start of the season may play in Division One without affecting eligibility to play in lower divisions.

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2.5.4 For the purposes of 2.5.2 and 2.5.3, clubs registering new players without an ECF standard-play grading must supply an estimated grade together with any known current or historical grading information about the player. The estimate presented will be subject to the approval of the OCA grader, who may, in the light of available evidence, overrule an estimate given by a club.

2.6 Any player who has represented a team three times ceases to be eligible to play for another team of that club in the same division for the remainder of the season.

2.7 Any game played by an ineligible player will be deemed lost by default. In addition, one match point will be deducted from the offending team.

2.8 'Visiting Players' are defined as players who are able to play for a short period of time only (such as university students able to play in vacation time only). Visiting Players with a ECF grading of 180 or above may only play in Division One, or a club's first team or its equal. Visiting Players with a ECF grading of 165 or above may only play in Division Two or above, or a club's second team or its equal or above. Visiting Players with a ECF grading below 165 may play in any division for any team.

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## 3. Postponements

3.1 Fixtures may only be postponed by consent of the Secretary.

3.2 The responsibility for the rearrangement of a postponed match is solely in the hands of the Secretary, who will inform the clubs of the new date. Postponements will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, such as extreme weather conditions or unavailability of a venue. The inability to field the strongest team is unacceptable. (Notes for guidance:- It may not always be possible to contact the Secretary in advance. However, provided that the postponement is made for the right reasons, and has been agreed between clubs, then a retrospective approach to the Secretary is acceptable. Clubs should not attempt to rearrange fixtures without the approval of the Secretary, since they may be unaware of other postponements or rearrangements that might complicate matters. The Secretary will endeavour to rearrange fixtures to suit the clubs involved.)

- 3.3 A postponed intra-club match must be played within five weeks; otherwise it will be deemed to have been double-defaulted

## 4. Defaults.

- 4.1 Any team failing to keep an engagement without giving a reasonable explanation will lose the match by default.
- 4.2 Game fees will be returned to the innocent team at the beginning of the following season.
- 4.3 Any team defaulting more than one match may have its record expunged and its club will be reported to the Committee and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 4.4 A team defaulting a board must write down a name on the match card in grade order.
- 4.5 For every four games defaulted by a team in the league, that team will have one match point deducted from its total, unless a reasonable explanation is offered.

- 4.6 An intra-club match that is not played will be recorded as a 0-0 double default. Neither team will score any match points.

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## 5. Disputes

- 5.1 Any disputes will be addressed to the Secretary in writing, by club secretaries, and a copy sent to the secretaries of other clubs involved.
- 5.2 The Secretary (or another officer or group of officers appointed to do so by the AGM) shall be authorised to settle a dispute.
- 5.3 In the event of either party in a dispute being unhappy with the decision, the matter will be referred to the Committee. All clubs involved in a dispute, or who are liable to disciplinary action, have a right to be represented at the Committee Meeting, whose decision will be binding.

## 6. Trophies

- 6.1 All the divisional trophies and the Frank Wood Shield are the property of the League.
- 6.2 All of these trophies and the Shield must be returned to the Treasurer not later than 30 April each season for engraving.
- 6.3 Trophies will be presented at the AGM.
- 6.4 An individual trophy named the Arthur Mushens Cup will be awarded to the player who scores the best game points percentage in Division 1.
- 6.5 An individual trophy named the Bernard C Wyatt Memorial Cup will be awarded to the player who scores the best game points percentage in Division 2.
- 6.6 An individual trophy named the David Del Nevo Cup will be awarded to the player who scores the best game points percentage in Division 3.
- 6.7 An individual trophy named the Sam Phipps Cup will be awarded to the player who scores the best game points percentage in Division 4.
- 6.8 A player must compete (wins by default do not count) in more than 50% of the League Matches for a team in the relevant divisions in order to receive an individual trophy.

## 7. Match Rules - All Divisions

- 7.1 Home clubs are expected to provide scoresheets, clocks, and sets and boards of a uniform, recognised pattern.
- 7.2 Matches will normally commence at 7.30pm. Home teams may at the start of the season unilaterally specify a different start time for some or all of their matches, provided that this is not earlier than 7.15pm nor later than 7.45pm. Any other change to the start time must be agreed between the captains of the teams involved in the fixture.
- 7.3 Arrangements will be made for a minimum of three hours' play, except that, for division 4, the playing session is 2.5 hours.
- 7.4 A time limit of all moves in 90 minutes will be played in Divisions 1, 2 and 3; in Division 4 the time limit will be all moves in 75 minutes.
- 7.5 The ECF Quickplay Finish Rules for games played without an arbiter, which came into effect on 1/9/95 will apply.
- 7.6 All games will be conducted in accordance with the Laws of Chess unless otherwise provided by the League Rules.
- 7.7 The home club is responsible for the venue and all match arrangements.
- 7.8 Prior to the start of play, team lists will be exchanged.
- 7.9 Team lists will be in approximate order of playing strength.
- 7.10 The visiting team will have white on the odd boards.
- 7.11 If a player is absent, his / her place may be taken by a substitute at any time within thirty minutes of the start of the match.
- 7.12 If a player does not have an opponent within 30 minutes of the start of a match, he /she wins the game by default.
- 7.13 The use of clocks is compulsory. Digital clocks may be used if both players agree.
- 7.14 Clocks must be started promptly at the specified starting time and any time that is lost because the home club is not ready shall be deducted from that club's clocks before play begins.

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## 8. Results

- 8.1 The matches will be decided as stated in rule 1.7 .
- 8.2 One score card shall be filled in and signed by both captains. The home team shall either forward it to the Secretary, or send an e-mail to the Secretary, or enter the results on the league website, E-mail results on their own are not acceptable in the event of a dispute.
- 8.3 The match card should show the following information: date, division, names of players and their scores. The match card should be signed by both team captains.
- 8.4 A home club which fails within seven days of the match to send the match result to the Secretary or to submit it on the league website, may lose the match by default.

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## 9. Frank Wood Shield Rules

League rules for Division 1 apply except where amended hereunder.

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### 9.1 Players' Eligibility

- 9.1.1 Teams should be representative of their equivalent team in the League except with permission of the Secretary. In particular, a player 'starred' for a league team under Rule 2.3 may only play for that team in the FW competition.
- 9.1.2 No player may play for more than one team in the competition.
- 9.1.3 A player receiving a default in the first round may play for another team in future rounds.

### 9.2 Colours

Captains will toss for colours at each match after the exchange of teams.

### 9.3 Results Handicapping

- 9.3.1 Teams in the same division - no handicap. The board count rule will operate if the match is drawn. If this fails to resolve the match, elimination of bottom board etc will apply. If all games are drawn, the match will be replayed, players changing colours.
- 9.3.2 Teams one division apart - higher team must win 4.0 - 2.0;
- 9.3.3 Teams two divisions apart - higher team must win 4.5 - 1.5;
- 9.3.4 Teams three divisions apart - higher team must win 5.0 - 1.0.
- 9.3.5 Any result by a smaller margin means a win on handicap for the lower team.
- 9.3.6 Examples:
  - A div 1 team must win by at least 4.0 -2.0 against a div 2 team
  - A div 1 team must win by at least 4.5 -1.5 against a div 3 team
  - A div 1 team must win by at least 5.0 -1.0 against a div 4 team
  - A div 2 team must win by at least 4.0 -2.0 against a div 3 team
  - A div 2 team must win by at least 4.5 -1.5 against a div 4 team
  - A div 3 team must win by at least 4.0 -2.0 against a div 4 team