

RULES OF THE TUNBRIDGE WELLS BADMINTON LEAGUE

1. Title and Objects

- a) The league shall be called the TUNBRIDGE WELLS BADMINTON LEAGUE.
- b) The object of the league shall be to further the enjoyment of the game of badminton and to provide organised competition for member clubs within the defined geographical area.

2. Membership

- a) Membership of the league shall be open to any club in the Tunbridge Wells area, although the Committee reserves the right to refuse membership of the league to any club. All member clubs shall be affiliated to a County Badminton Association and to Badminton England.
- b) New club applications for membership of the league for the forthcoming season shall be delivered in writing to the TWBL by the preceding 1st July.
- c) Any appeal in writing submitted by 1st August to the Committee shall be considered if a club be refused membership of the league under Rule 2(a).
- d) The Committee reserves the right to inspect halls and courts at any time.
- e) Annual subscriptions per club, per team, and per individual shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting and shall be paid to the TWBL not later than 1st August each year.
- f) No club or individual member shall be eligible to compete if the aforesaid subscription has not been paid.
- g) Fixture Lists, Player Registration Forms and Team Captain Nominations Forms must be returned by 30th September, or earlier if a specific date is nominated. Late return of this paperwork will incur a financial penalty of £20 per club.

3. The League Committee

- a) The league shall be governed by a committee consisting of a Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Match Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and up to seven others, all of whom shall be league members or individual members of the league and shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.
- b) All retiring members shall be eligible for re-election.
- c) Five members shall form a quorum of the Committee.
- d) All business in committee shall be decided by the greatest number of votes received from those present, each member of the Committee having one vote and when votes are equal the Chairman or acting Chairman shall have an additional casting vote.
- e) If any member of the Committee be absent from three consecutive meetings, he or she may, at the discretion of the Committee, be treated as if he or she has tendered his or her resignation.
- f) The office of Hon. Life Vice President may be conferred by the league Committee, subject to the approval of the Annual General Meeting - such officers having no voting power.
- g) The Committee shall also have the power:
 - i) To co-opt not more than two additional members to the Committee.
 - ii) To fill any casual vacancy occurring on the Committee.
 - iii) To take any steps considered necessary for the purpose of ensuring payment of any subscription due.
 - iv) To admit individuals to league membership subject to the payment of an annual subscription.
 - v) Should either of the clubs in connection with any dispute or protest have a member or members on the Committee, the said member or members shall not be eligible to vote on the Committee while such dispute or protest is being considered.

4. General Meetings

- a) The league year and financial year shall commence on 1st April and finish on 31st March each year and the Annual General Meeting of the league shall be held by 15th July, on a day and at a place appointed by the retiring committee.
- b) A general meeting of the league may be called at any time by a quorum of the Committee or when ten or a quarter of all member clubs, whichever is the fewer, so demand in writing of the Hon. Secretary or Chairman.
- c) Not fewer than 14 days written notice of any general meeting shall be given to Hon. Secretaries of each member club, stating the purpose of the meeting and notifying any proposed alterations to the Rules.
- d) Members of league clubs and individual members of the league shall be entitled to attend any general meeting. A maximum of two representatives from each club present at a general meeting may each cast a vote on any issue. All business at a general meeting shall be decided by the greatest number of votes received from those club representatives who are present and who cast a vote. When votes are equal then the Chairman, or acting Chairman, shall have an additional casting vote. Individual members do not have a vote.
- e) No alteration shall be made to these Rules except by a vote at a general meeting.
- f) No club shall have the right to vote unless in attendance at the said general meeting.
- g) No member shall be elected to the Committee in their absence unless their written willingness to stand is given in advance.

5. The League Competition

- a) The league competition shall be divided into the following events; open 6-player doubles, open 4-player doubles, mixed 6-player doubles, combination 4-player doubles, ladies' 6-player doubles, ladies' 4-player doubles, masters' 4-player doubles (eligibility to the masters' event will be restricted to players who have reached the required minimum age for the event on the date of the match), hybrid 6-player doubles, open singles, ladies' singles, open under 18 6-player doubles, girls' (under 18) 6-player doubles. The Committee shall have the power to arrange competing teams in divisions having regard to Rules 5(b), 7 and 13, and also reserve the right to withdraw an event if there are insufficient entries. Following the introduction of BE's inclusion policy, in addition to mixed, masters' and hybrid events, females at birth may play in ladies' events OR open events, but not both, and must choose between them at the time of their registration.
- b) In each event, the divisions shall run in order from highest to lowest commencing with the "Premier" division being the highest, then the "Upper 1st", "Lower 1st", Division 2, 3, 4, etc. until all teams entered are accommodated, or the league limit (if any) has been reached.
- c) The playing season shall commence on 1st October and end on the following 15th May.
- d) Each team shall play home and away matches with every other team in its division and the home team shall bear all expenses except travelling expenses of the away team. The venue for all matches must be within 15 miles driving distance of the centre of Tunbridge Wells, or 20 miles driving distance subject to the match venue providing at least 2 playing courts per match, or, exceptionally, the Committee otherwise allows.
- e) A match fixture list in a format specified by the Committee shall be submitted to the TWBL by each club before the first competitive match is played but in any event by no later than 30th September, unless a specific date before this is requested.
- f) Should any club have multiple teams competing in the same division, then the said teams shall play their home and away matches against each other before playing any other team in their division.
- g) Rearrangement or cancellation of fixtures:
 - i) Re-arrangements of fixtures shall only be considered in the situations of adverse weather conditions or national crisis such as petrol shortage or epidemic or if the hall should become unavailable due to the owner/caretaker overruling the original booking. If re-arrangement is requested for any other reason, then the club requesting the postponement of the original fixture agrees to concede if the match does not subsequently take place for any reason. In all cases the TWBL must be informed of any postponement, using the match rearrangement information, available from the TWBL website.

- ii) Every reasonable effort must be made to honour the fixtures agreed before the start of the season. If the fixture cannot be fulfilled, a minimum of 72 hours' notice before the commencement of the match must be given to the opposing club. (Notice must also be given to the TWBL by email).

If none of the nominated club officials (secretary, match secretary, chairperson or club captain) can be contacted **in person or by speaking to them directly**, efforts **must continue** to be made to notify the opposition club of cancellation. **Additionally**, notification must be given to a League Committee member. Such notification to a League Committee member shall be deemed as evidence that sufficient notice, in the prescribed manner, was attempted to be given to the opposition club.

If an offending team fails to give the required notice under this Rule **or a match is conceded** the injured team may claim from the offender their match fees that would have been collected.

If such compensation is requested, which must be made by the injured club within 28 days of the advertised match date, payment of such claim shall then be made [to the injured club] within 28 days of receiving said notification. If the monies are not paid within 28 days the injured club shall notify the League Committee who will have the power to deduct from the relevant team's League score of 1 win (6 or 9 rubbers, depending on the event format) in addition to the concessions made under Rule 5(i)).

- iii) If a team withdraws from the League having played an away match against another team but not the return home match, the injured team may claim their lost match fees for their unplayed away match, as they will have borne the cost of staging their home match but only received half the expected match fees from the two fixtures.
- h) Results of league matches shall be sent to the TWBL within 72 hours of the match being played, using electronic scorecards as available on the TWBL website; the home team shall complete the electronic score card and will also be responsible for sending it to the TWBL within 72 hours, in the manner prescribed on the scorecard. The scorecard must record the Christian names and surnames of all players, and the scores of each game played.
- i) Date and venue, type of shuttle, and time of commencement of match and any time restriction are to be confirmed prior to the start of the season when fixtures are agreed. The teams are strongly recommended to confirm the arrangements 7 days before the fixture. Any club not attending an arranged fixture shall be deemed as losing 6-0 or 9-0, depending on the event format.
- j) Cork based feather shuttles or hybrid shuttles shall be used by all clubs in any event organised by the TWBL. Regardless of the type of shuttle used, the away team may insist on a new shuttle every rubber. Shuttles used for knocking up shall be of the same type and quality as those to be used for the match.
- k) Each team shall consist of three pairs (or 4 players for 4-player events), each pair to play the best of three games against each pair of the opposing team. The order of play shall be mutually agreed between the opposing captains; the order of the home pairs being nominated before that of the visiting pairs. For 4-player events the order of play shall be set out on the relevant match score card; home players will be nominated before away players. However, the player order in all 4s events will also be guided by each individual player handicap; with the strongest players listed first, though to the weakest at the end. It is not permitted for a team to play a 4-player match with fewer than 4 players.
- l) The team which wins the most rubbers shall be declared the winners. The home team will concede any rubbers which are unplayed or unfinished if the match is curtailed due to insufficient court time. If, for any reason, a match needs to be abandoned before its natural conclusion (e.g. through the hall becoming unavailable/unplayable, or bad weather forcing players to travel home early for their own safety), the result at that point shall stand provided a clear result has been achieved, i.e. one team has won at least 5 rubbers in a 6-player match, or 4 rubbers in a 4-player match. In all other circumstances the fixture will be re-arranged and will be played again from the beginning, the score of the abandoned match being disregarded.
- m) If, because of the absence of team players, it is not possible to commence the first game within 20 minutes of the prearranged starting time (or within 10 minutes if there is a limit on court time), or any subsequent game within 10 minutes of the end of the preceding game, then the other team may formally declare to the offending team that they are late and that if time constraints prevent any

rubber from being completed (or started) then unplayed/unfinished rubbers will be claimed from the offending team at the end of the evening and will be recorded as conceded on the scorecard. No matches played during Monday to Friday may start before 7.00pm, except by mutual agreement between the clubs concerned.

- n) Both captains shall agree in advance which timepiece shall be used to determine the conclusion of the match. If play continues after the appointed time, either by oversight or intention any points so played shall count.
- o) All matches shall be played under the Laws of Badminton as set out in the current edition of the Badminton England Handbook, unless specifically noted in our own Rules here.

6. Player Registration

- a) All clubs shall submit to the TWBL not later than 30th September for the season's registration, a list of all their club members in a format specified by the Committee. Further registration may be made at any time during the season in writing to the TWBL, but only those players who have been registered for a club for at least seven days may play in any league match. Please also note Rule 6(h) regarding payment of relevant fees.
- b) Except as provided for by Rule 6(c) any player may only play for any one club in any one event during any one season.
- c) The registration of any player may be cancelled up to 1st January on written application to the TWBL. However, the cancellation of registration of a player will only be permitted once per event in any one season. At least 14 days must elapse between such cancellation of registration of a player and he or she playing in a league match for a second club in the same event.
- d) The date of registration or cancellation thereof shall be taken to be that of the postmark of the notifying letter, or the date of the email to the TWBL.
- e) In any one event:
 - i) Any club having two teams competing shall nominate, in a format specified by the Committee, all the players (4 or 6, depending on event format) of its first team, and any club having three teams competing shall nominate its first and second teams, and so on, before any match is played but in any case not later than 30th September. If in the future a Feeder League is set up all other teams will need to be nominated.
 - ii) No player nominated for a team shall be eligible to play for a lesser ranked team except as in Rule 6(e) (iv), or at the discretion of the Committee on written application to the TWBL, no later than 31st December.
 - iii) No player shall be eligible to play for any team if he or she shall have played that season for any higher team or teams on more than two occasions. A member plays for a team as soon as he or she plays their first point in a match and this may only be deemed to be annulled by specific approval of the TWBL.
 - iv) Before a club plays any matches in an event, written changes in nominations may be made to the TWBL.
- f) If a club has teams in any 6s Premier division & any 4s event in which the same players may play (e.g. Open 6s or Ladies' 6s Premier and Masters'), then the 6s team must be nominated (even if the club has no other 6s team in that event) and those players will not be eligible to play in any 4s event. Players who become 'tied' to a team playing in a 6s Premier division through playing in more than 2 matches at that level will also become ineligible to play in any 4s event from the date on which they become 'tied' to a Premier 6s team. N.B. This rule applies only in respect of 6s events where at least 2 divisions exist. If only 1 division exists for a 6s event (i.e. just the Premier division) then players in a club's lowest ranked (or only) 6s team may also play in a 4s event until they become 'tied' to a higher ranked 6s team due to them playing in more than 2 matches for any higher team in that 6s event.
- g) Any competing team may include a player not qualified in accordance with any of Rule 6, provided that the said team concedes all rubbers in which the unqualified player competes and that their opponents are so notified before any such rubbers are commenced, except when hall is time restricted, in which case the approval of their opponents must be given.
- h) In accordance with BE requirements for affiliated leagues, all players who compete in any TWBL match must be fully paid-up members of BE and their local county association for the current season

and their BE membership must be of a level which permits playing; any player who is not a member of an appropriate level at the time of playing a match (e.g. their status on the BE system is not showing as 'Active') will forfeit all rubbers played. Retrospective BE membership will not be accepted, except in the case of initial player registrations made at the start of the season (i.e. before 30th September, per Rule 6(a), provided all relevant fees are paid by 30th November of that year (failure to pay by 30th November will result in player registrations being rescinded and any rubbers already played being forfeited). This deadline may be relaxed at the discretion of the TWBL Committee if, early in the season, the BE website is unexpectedly unavailable, the data is seen to be out of date or there are any other unforeseen circumstances which may prevent payment being made.

7. League Positions

- a) League positions in each division shall be decided by the number of matches won (a drawn match will count as half a won match). In addition, a points total will also be shown on league tables, with a match win counting as 2 points and a draw counting as 1 point – this will make league positions more obvious where draws are a factor. In the event of two or more teams in the same division having the same number of wins/points then the number of rubbers won in all matches shall determine the position. In the event of a tie for championships, promotions or relegations, the league matches played between the teams concerned shall be taken into account to determine league positions. The number of wins by each team in just those matches will be considered and, if level, then the rubbers won by each team in those matches will also be considered. If still level, then the games won in those matches will also be considered. The points won or lost will **not** be considered due to the inherent inaccuracy of match recording to this level. If all the above has been taken into account and teams are still level then a play-off match will take place, this to be arranged mutually by the clubs concerned, and to be played within 4 weeks of the end of the season. If the clubs are unable to reach agreement as to the date and/or venue within this time frame, then the TWBL Committee will resolve the matter by the tossing of a coin or other similar random process.
- b) The winning team in each division shall be entitled to the custody of the shield of that division until the succeeding 31st March and shall be responsible for the return of that shield in good condition.
- c) The following basic principles will be applied regarding promotion and relegation at the end of each season:
 - The team finishing at the top of each division will be promoted to the next higher division.
 - The team finishing bottom of each division will be relegated to the next lower division.
 - Should a circumstance arise where more than one team needs to be promoted, e.g. as a result of a team withdrawing from the event, then the team originally being relegated will be offered the option of remaining in the higher division. If they decline, then the team finishing second in the lower division will be promoted (if they agree, otherwise it should pass down to the next team and so on).
 - Should a new team apply to play in an event; their starting position will normally be in the bottom division. However, should the Committee feel that this is inappropriate; they have the discretion to “insert” the team in a higher division providing this is not to the obvious detriment of existing teams. (There should be a justifiable reason for this such as a proven ability by the majority of the nominated team; if there is doubt the team should be entered in the lowest division).
 - In exceptional circumstances, the Committee has the discretion to re-position teams as they feel necessary. If this process is to be used, the League Committee will contact a Committee Member (normally the Chairman) of each of the clubs directly involved to inform them of the situation.
- d) If a team withdraws from a division then all their match results will be cancelled.

8. Other Matters

- a) All questions concerning the League competition and any other questions concerning these Rules, shall be referred to the Committee whose decision shall be final.
- b) Any matter not provided for by these Rules shall be referred to the Committee.
- c) Any dispute arising between clubs in the League competition shall be referred to the sole arbitration of the Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding on both sides.

- d) Failure to comply with these Rules may, at the discretion of the Committee, result in the penalising of the offending club(s) as appropriate.
- e) Smoking is prohibited in all playing areas.

9. Financial Assistance from the League to Clubs

- a) Any club able to enter one additional team to those entered in the previous season should be made a 50% refund of the additional team fees paid to TWBL. Should a club be able to enter an additional two or more teams a full refund of the additional team fees would be made.
- b) The TWBL will cover the cost of Assimilation Courses for existing coaches already involved in junior clubs. Any coaches who form a new junior club will also be eligible for this payment.
- c) Financial assistance in the form of travel expenses, parking fees and a lunch (if attending an event all day) should be given to those helping for a minimum of four hours.

10. Correspondence with the League

All correspondence to the TWBL Committee should be by the nominated club officials, i.e. secretary, match secretary, chairperson or club captain. The only exception to this rule is the notification to the Hon. Match Secretary of match results or concessions, which may also be made by a nominated team captain (or another player in that team if the team captain is unavailable). All correspondence regarding disputes between clubs should again be between nominated club officials with a copy to the relevant member of the TWBL Committee.

11. Conduct

Any form of conduct which, in the view of the Committee, operates against the spirit and objectives of the TWBL will be considered by the Committee and appropriate action will be undertaken.

12. Use of Personal Data and Badminton England Data Protection Policy

- a) The TWBL endorses, follows and is covered by the Badminton England Data Protection Policy.
- b) By registering to play in the TWBL, all players agree to Badminton England's policy and to the collection and storage of match data and statistics by the TWBL for the purposes of handicapping and general league administration and for this data to be made publicly available on the TWBL website. A player may request in writing to the Hon. Match Secretary that his/her name appearing on any public match data or statistics lists be replaced with another name (to be chosen by the Hon. Match Secretary) to maintain their anonymity. Any such request will be valid for that season only, and a new written request must be made for each subsequent season if required.
- c) All registered players agree that their names will be included in players' lists which are held on electronic scorecards for the purposes of submitting match results electronically.
- d) Officials from any club may request at any time a list of all registered players from their own club and the dates on which they played matches in order to ensure that no ineligible player is selected for future matches – all registered players agree to their inclusion on such lists for this purpose.
- e) Any personal postal addresses, email addresses or telephone numbers as explicitly provided by club representatives (i.e. secretary, match secretary, chairperson and club captain contact details) on official TWBL forms will be made available to the TWBL Committee and all TWBL clubs for the purposes of league and/or match administration. By default, this list will also be made publicly available on the TWBL website, unless and explicit request is made in writing by the club representative himself/herself to the Hon. Match Secretary that their details be withheld from this public list. Such requests will be valid only until the start of the following season, when a new request must be made if necessary. If any such written request is made after the public list has been made available on the TWBL website, then those details will be removed from the public list as soon as is practically possible.
- f) The TWBL now has a separate, specific General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) & Privacy Statement which also forms a part of these Rules.

13. TWBL and Badminton England Inclusion Policies

The TWBL endorses, follows and is covered by the Badminton England Inclusion Policy, summarised as below, including TWBL-specific requirements:

- a) Open doubles must be played with partners of the same sex at birth. This means that two ladies (females at birth) could partner each other if they so wished, along with men (males at birth) partnering each other in a team. A transgender woman (male at birth) wanting to play level doubles will have to play in this event and may only partner a male (at birth) player. Open singles will follow the same guideline.
- b) In the mixed event only pairings of different sex at birth players may partner each other. As an example, a transgender woman would have to partner a female (at birth) player. Regular mixed pairings will continue as normal.
- c) If held, the ladies' 6s, ladies' 4s and ladies' singles events will only be open to females at birth.
- d) In the interests of fairness to men, but primarily because it is mentioned in the BE Policy, it should be noted that if there are ladies (females at birth) who wish to partner together in the Open 6s event, then they give up the right of also playing in the ladies' 6s event. Similarly, if a transgender man (female at birth) chooses to play in the Open event, then that player may not also play in the ladies' 6s event.

14. Inter-Regional Team Selection

The TWBL team for the senior inter-regional tournament, if held, will be selected by the TWBL chairman, but only after having consulted with at least one representative from each winning premier league team (Open, Ladies' and Mixed), along with anyone else the chairman sees fit to consult, and that this selection is done in good time (i.e. in January if possible) to enable the region to sport their strongest available team.

Appendix A – Additional Regulations/Guidelines for Singles

1. Individual players entering the singles events must be Badminton England (BE) registered members of a Tunbridge Wells Badminton League (TWBL) club.
2. The events will include ladies' singles and open singles leagues, subject to there being sufficient entries in the opinion of the TWBL Committee for the event to run, with matches being played during the course of the standard TWBL season (currently 1st October to 15th May, which may be extended by the TWBL if this is deemed necessary due to bad weather, etc.). Please note the inclusion policy (Rule 13) in the League Rules, which determines who may play in each event.
3. A list of player contacts will be sent to every participating player before the start of the season – it will be the player's own responsibility to check that their details are correct and to inform the TWBL of any errors/changes. This list will **not** be available on the TWBL website for security reasons.
4. Each player will play each other player in his/her division either once or twice during the course of the season, depending on the number of entries received, this to be decided by the TWBL at the outset of the season. If players only play each other once, then whoever makes the first contact to arrange a match will be deemed the 'home' player and will have the choice of playing venue. Players will decide between themselves who will provide the shuttles. Court and shuttle costs will be shared between the players.
5. Unlike the other TWBL events, there will be no requirement for players to provide the TWBL with a list of their match dates at the beginning of the season, as individuals are unlikely to be able to book courts more than a couple of weeks in advance. However, please try to inform the TWBL whenever possible of any upcoming matches.
6. Each match played will consist of the best of 3 games to 21 with setting, using the rally points scoring system.
7. The 'home' player will complete an email scorecard and return this to the TWBL within 72 hours of the match being played.
8. The League Rules concerning ties for promotion or relegation will also be used to resolve ties in the singles events, except any references to 'rubbers' in those Rules will translate to 'games' in the singles events.
9. A player who has not played each of the other players in his/her division (see Rule 4) during the course of the season without good reason may be excluded, at the discretion of the TWBL Committee, from entering this event in the following or future seasons.
10. The TWBL Committee will decide on all matters of dispute.