**CCA Competition Rules.**

**Section A - League Rules.**

A1.      **Season**

The season shall run from 1st September until 31st August the following year.

A2.      **Membership of Clubs**

A member may usually only play in a team or teams representing one Club in the

league during one season. However, he may elect to change club once during any season subject to:

1. The player informing the Match Organiser.
2. the Club Secretary of his newly elected Club confirming his membership of his new club to the Match Organizer prior to playing.
3. the Member may not play for a team representing his new club if it is competing in the same Division as any of the teams he has played for earlier in that season.
4. Once a member has played for his new club, he may not revert to his original club, or change to a third club, during the same season.

A3.      **Un-rated Players**

1. If a player does not have a current ECF rating, then the last published rating shall be used. If a player still does not have a rating, then prior to playing, the team captain shall liaise with the Grader (or Match Organizer if Grader not available) who will allocate an estimated rating. This will be utilized for board order and nomination purposes.
2. If an un-rated player, or one for whom an estimated rating has not been given, plays a game, the game will be defaulted and the match result adjusted accordingly.
3. It is recognised that some ratings and especially P ratings may not be a fair reflection of a player’s strength. If a player and/or his club believe this to be the case, they shall liaise with the Grader or Match Organizer as above and either (i) continue to use the original estimated rating or (ii) agree a new estimated rating.
4. For the D Division only, unrated players do not need to be allocated an estimated rating for their first game. If no rating is allocated, they must play below any rated players for board order purposes.

A4.      **Adherence to Fixtures**

1. Matches must be played as laid down in the fixture list, otherwise the match is defaulted by the offending team.
2. An exception to this is when both captains agree to reschedule that match. The rearranged date for the match must be within 14 days of the last scheduled game in that division and the home team captain must notify the Match Organizer within 7 days of the postponed match.
3. If a match has not been played as per the fixture list and no efforts made to rearrange the fixture by either team, then both teams shall be deemed to be in default and no match or game points shall be awarded.
4. Notwithstanding the above, in wholly exceptional cases the Match Organizer may decide that a fixture should be played and specify the latest match date.
5. In cases of any dispute relating to the non playing of fixtures or the rearranging of matches, the Match Organizer may impose a match date, award the match as default or take other action he deems appropriate. His decision shall be final.

A5.      **Match Nights**

1. Games will be played according to the FIDE Laws of Chess in force at the beginning of the season, except where noted in these rules; in the event of any dispute, the two team captains will act as arbiters.
2. Players participating in any games played under the auspices of the league must be a member of the club they play for and a “fully paid up” direct member of the ECF.
3. Normally, a player may not play for more than one team in the same division during the season. This rule may be amended by the Executive where there is a compelling reason for doing so.
4. Any game involving a player who does not comply with the above will be defaulted and the match result adjusted accordingly.
5. The away team shall have white on the odd numbered boards.
6. Players shall receive 1 point for a game win, ½ for a draw and none for a loss.
7. A team shall receive 2 points for a match win, 1 for a draw and none for a loss.
8. Prior to the start of a match both captains shall exchange in writing the names of the players in their respective teams in order of play.
9. If a regular captain is not in attendance, a player for his team shall deputize and assume his responsibilities.
10. Captains may agree which boards (if any) are to be defaulted before the start of a match, in the absence of such agreement the game(s) on the lowest board(s) will be defaulted.
11. A team shall play in rating order, or within a margin of no more than 75 rating points according to the current CCA rating list.
12. For the first part of the season, ECF ratings on 1st September will be used. For the second part of the season, the ECF ratings on 1st January will be used. The match organiser will specify when the January list comes into effect (normally 1 week into the new year). Adoption of the January list will apply for board order only and does not affect the nominations process.
13. The start time for matches is 7pm unless both captains agree another start time.
14. The home team captain is responsible for submitting the match result in the approved manner as soon as possible but within 7 days of the fixture.
15. Mobile phones must be switched off and placed within sight of the opponent. Players leaving the room during the game may not take their phone with them. (The provisions of this rule may be adjusted if the alternative arrangements are agreeable to the opponent.)

A6.      **Game Time Limits**

1. The time limit shall be at a rate of one hundred and five minutes on each clock for all moves. However captains can agree a shorter time limit providing each player has at least 60 minutes on the clock for all moves and such must apply to all boards in that match.
2. If a Club for exceptional reasons is required to play games at a shorter rate, and the Match Organizer has been so notified before the commencement of a season, then a rate of ninety minutes for all moves per player shall apply. In such cases all home league games played by that Club during the season shall be played at this shorter rate.
3. If a player is not present within 30 minutes of the start time of that game, that game shall be defaulted to the player present. If both players are not present within 30 minutes of the start time, the game shall be void.
4. Within 30 minutes of the start time of that game, a captain may select a substitute player for an absent player, providing the rating of the substitute player shall not breach the playing order as per rule A6(a), and the substitute player accepts the time available on the absent player’s clock.
5. However, a player and his captain may accept, in their absolute discretion, a substitute opponent at variance to the requirements of rule A6(a) above re board order according to ratings.

**Section B - Nomination procedure**

B1 For those clubs that have more than one team in the league, player nominations must be made prior to the first game of the season by club secretaries to the Match Organiser. Nominations must be made for all teams other than the team(s) in the lowest league. The number of nominated players for each team will normally be one fewer than the number of players in the team. This rule may be amended by the Executive if there is a compelling reason to do so.

B2 A Club must nominate its strongest players according to the ECF rating list (as at 1st September). Such list shall be utilized throughout that season for nomination purposes.

B3 Where a club has more than one team in a Division, then the number of nominations required by that club for that division may be split across their teams in a manner they deem appropriate.

B4 If a member joins a Club after the start of the season and is a higher graded player than one already nominated for one of its teams, the list for that club will be adjusted accordingly.

B5 A nominated player may not play for a team entered by his Club in a lower Division.

B6 If a nominated player has not played one game for his Club by 1st January:

1. he shall be replaced with the next highest graded player who has played for his Club during that season (excepting for a team in the same Division);
2. he shall not be eligible to play for the remainder of that season in any team entered by his Club in a lower Division;
3. should he subsequently play for his original team before the end of the season, he shall then become a nominated player and the list for that club shall be amended accordingly.

B7 **ECF Membership**

Players must have an ECF membership on 1st October to be nominated. If not, they will be replaced by the next highest rated player on a club list. Should they subsequently get a membership, the list for that club will be adjusted accordingly.

B8 **Flexibility**

Changes to the ECF rating system in 2023 caused some anomalies between playing strength and rating, especially for P rated players. In such cases the Grader (or Match Organiser if Grader not available), in consultation with the relevant team captain, may impose a rating which will be utilised for all games played under the auspices of the league. The Grader will continually review such a rating making amendments as necessary.

B9 **Disputes**

In cases of disputes under these rules, the decision of the Match Organizer (in consultation with the Grader) shall be final.

**Section C - The Tom Wise Memorial Knockout Cup, the Jeremy Burnett Plate and the Knights Shield (together referred to as ‘the Cup’**),

C1 These rules shall apply to the cup competition. If they are inconsistent with the

league rules the cup rules shall prevail.

C2 The Match Organizer (MO) is the competition organizer. He shall ensure the draws are made and appropriate entries made on the website. He shall also administer all aspects of the cup.

C3 (a) The Tom Wise Memorial Cup shall be open to players of all ratings.

(b) The Jeremy Burnett Plate shall be open players rated under 1700 on 1st September provided that, prior to its commencement, the MO may vary the grading limits if appropriate.

C4 (a) A player for a team entered in the Jeremy Burnett Plate may also play in a

team entered in the Tom Wise Memorial Cup in the same season.

(b) Any club entering a team in the league may enter team(s) in the Cup and

all such teams shall comprise five players.

(c) In any season a player may play only for one club entered in the Cup.

C5 (a) The MO shall set a completion date for all matches, and ensure

publication on the website.

(b) Matches shall be played at the club venue of the first drawn team,

provided that the club is able play the match in accordance with the date

specified; if it cannot, the club shall provide an alternative venue for its

match.

C6 The time limit for games shall be the same as for the league.

C7 (a) After team lists have been exchanged, the captains shall toss a coin and

the winner choose the colour of pieces for his team on the odd numbered

boards.

(b) The league rules relating to board order and ratings shall apply.

(c) If a captain is present at the start time and neither his opposing captain

nor any other player in the opposing team is present, then he shall be deemed to have won the toss.

C8 If a match is tied on game points then the winning team shall be determined as

follows:

(a) the team having played the fewest games with the white pieces shall progress.

(b) If the teams remain tied, then the team with the lowest total cumulative rating points as at 1st September for all players shall progress. (League rules re un-rated players apply).

(c) The decision of the MO is final.

**Section D - The Individual Championship**

D1 The AGM or failing that the Executive Committee will appoint an “Individual Organizer” (IO) who is responsible for organising the championship. He shall ensure the draws are made and the appropriate entries made on the website. He shall also administer all aspects of the championship.

D2 The format and rules of the Championship are at the discretion of the IO, but can be discussed at the AGM. Normally the format is a Swiss system with 3 sections: the Open (no rating restriction), the Major and the Minor. In the event of a tie at the conclusion of the competition, the championship shall be shared.

D3 The ECF rating list current at the start of the competition shall be utilized for determining any rating or other prizes. League rules re P rated and un-rated players apply.

D4 Any player defaulting two games in succession or three games in total shall be eliminated from the Championship.

D5 (a) Within 7 days of publication of the draw on the website, the player of the

black pieces shall contact his opponent to agree a date for their game.

(b) The game time control shall be the same as for the league and it shall be

played at the club venue of the player drawn with the black pieces. If not

possible then it shall be played at the club venue of the player of the white

pieces. Both players may agree an alternative venue.

(c) If the players cannot agree a date, or contact with the opponent has failed

within 14 days of such publication, then the IO shall be informed and he shall set a date for the game.

(d) If no date is set for a game and if neither player has defaulted the game to

the other, then it shall be deemed void.

(e) Both players are responsible for notifying the IO of the result of the game

and if the IO does not receive the result before the end of that round he may declare it void.

(f) In any dispute the decision of the IO is final.

**Section E – D Division Rules**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: In the 2025-26 season, the D division is operating under a nomination basis like the 3 divisions above, so this section is not relevant for this season. Left here in case it reverts back at a later date**

(The D division was introduced in 2023 with some special extra rules to make an easier entry point to the league for new, young and inexperienced players).

E1 **Intention**

-To give inexperienced players more competitive games.

-To give more people a chance to sample and enjoy the fun of team chess.

-To encourage clubs to persuade an extra player or 2 to have a go at league chess.

E2 **Player Eligibility**

Ratings etc for September 1st will be used. Eligibility does not change after this so that squads can remain fixed for the season. Players eligible for D division:

-Any player rated under 1500.

-Any player with less than 10 lifetime competitive games played (usually indicated by a P rating). Estimates should still be submitted for board order.

E3 **Additional Rules**

-Like in other divisions, all players in the league must be ECF members.

-Like in other divisions, 1 player can only play for 1 team in the division during the season.

-An eligible player from a club that is not entering a team may play “on loan” for 1 other club as long as it is only in the D division.

-2 clubs could potentially enter a joint team if they wished.

E4 **Estimated Ratings**

As A3(d). For the D Division only, unrated players do not need to be allocated an estimated rating for their first game. If no rating is allocated, they must play below any rated players for board order purposes.

E5 **Spirit**

Although all rules of the league still apply to the D division, we would ask all captains and players to remember that there are a lot of new players at this level and ideally a friendly reminder of the rules is the best first step if there is a problem. This is in everyone’s interest as it helps all clubs with the retention and progression of their players.

**Section F – CCA LEAGUE FORMAT 2025-26**

F1 **Structure**

-4 divisions with as close to 8 teams in each as entries allow. Exec to make any necessary adjustments after all club’s entries are received in consultation with any affected clubs. There will also be a smaller E division (see section H).

-A division will have 5 player teams. All other divisions will have 4 player teams. (Knockout cup events will be 5 players per team)

F2 **Entries**

-Deadline for entries is Sunday September 21st. First week of matches is week commencing Monday 29th September.

-Clubs should check they are happy with existing team starting divisions (F5 below) and can enter any new teams directly into either the D division or the E division.

F3 **Nomination Rules**

-All A division teams nominate 3 players who can’t play in the divisions below.

-All B division teams nominate 3 players who can’t play in the divisions below.

-All C division teams nominate 3 players who can’t play in the divisions below.

-No nominations needed in the D division.

-E division has a rating cap of 1300.

-Clubs with more than 1 team in a division can spread their nominations however they see fit. Eg a club with 2 teams in a division could go 6-0, 5-1, 4-2 or 3-3.

-To ensure games remain competitive at the top level, a special rule is needed in the A division. Clubs with 2 teams in the A division nominate their top 3 rated players who can only play for one of their 2 teams. The next 3 players can’t play for teams in the lower divisions, but can play for either A division team.

-In all other divisions, individual players can only play for one team in a division.

F4 **Promotion and Relegation**

-At the end of the season, the top 2 teams in each division will be promoted (except A division) and the bottom 2 in each division (except D division) will be relegated.

-If a higher division has 7 or less teams for any reason, only 1 team would be relegated.

-Clubs can request for teams not to be relegated or promoted, but they must accept it if a division becomes too small or too big as a result.

-No team can be relegated into a division with a rating cap if the club do not have enough players under that rating to run a team.

-We would remind clubs that there is flexibility for the exec here as we demonstrated with Billingham in 24/25 and no club will be forced into a position that makes it impossible for them to run the number of teams they want to.

25/26 Summary

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Division** | **Teams** | **Promoted** | **Relegated** |
| **A** | **8** | **0** | **2** |
| **B** | **8** | **2** | **2** |
| **C** | **7** | **2** | **1** |
| **D** | **6** | **2** | **0** |
| **E** | **4** | **2** | **0** |

**Section G – TOM WISE CUP FORMAT 2025-26**

(The CCA AGM voted for a change to the format this year with the idea that a team rapid play would be an interesting alternative. These details were worked out by the exec afterwards, so this should only be seen as the format for this year and not set in stone for future years.)

G1 **Structure**

-Handicap Knockout for teams of 4.

-Clubs can enter as many teams as they want, but each individual player can only play for 1 team during the competition. Players of any rating can play on the same team as each other.

-Full competition tree drawn at the start. First round will be drawn so that teams from the same club do not play each other.

G2 **Match Night**

-A match is all play all in 4 sets of 20 minutes each rated rapid play games. Approx schedule 7pm, 7:45pm, 8:30pm, 9:15pm. Finish 10pm.

-Games to be played in this order:

Round 1) A1 V H1, H2 V A2, A3 V H3, H4 V A4

Round 2) A4 V H2, H1 V A3, A2 V H4, H3 V A1

Round 3) A2 V H1, H2 V A1, A4 V H3, H4 V A3

Round 4) A1 V H4, H1 V A4, A3 V H2, H3 V A2

-All games will be ECF rapid rated and all players need to be ECF registered and on the CCA list.

G3 **Handicap**

-The total ratings of the 2 teams based on latest published CCA standard ratings (not rapid) is used to calculate a handicap which is added to the lower rated teams score at the end:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rating Difference** | **Handicap** |
| 0-149 | 0 |
| 150-299 | 0.5 |
| 300-449 | 1.5 |
| 450-599 | 2.5 |
| 600-749 | 3.5 |
| 750-899 | 4.5 |
| 900-1049 | 5.5 |
| 1050-1199 | 6.5 |
| 1200-1349 | 7.5 |
| 1350-1499 | 8.5 |
| 1500-1649 | 9.5 |
| 1650-1799 | 10.5 |
| 1800-1949 | 11.5 |
| 1950-2099 | 12.5 |
| 2100-2249 | 13.5 |
| 2250+ | 14.5 |

G4 **Ties**

-In the result of a tie (note this is only possible if the teams are within 150 points of each other), the team that scored the most points with black goes through. If it is still a tie, the team whose number 1 scored the most points goes through. Followed by 2,3,4. If it is still a tie, the team with the lower rating goes through. Then finally a coin toss!

**Section H – E Division Rules**

(The E division was introduced in 2025 with some special extra rules to make an easier entry point to the league for young players).

H1 **Intention**

-To give young players a taste of competitive games.

-To give lower rated players of all ages more chances to play competitive games.

-This division is intended to be smaller than the others so there are less games to arrange.

H2 **Player Eligibility**

Ratings etc for September 1st will be used. Eligibility does not change after this so that squads can remain fixed for the season. Players with actual or estimated ratings below 1300 are eligible for the E division.

H3 **Additional Rules**

-Shorter time limit of 1 hour each means 9pm is the latest finishing time.

-Teams can specify they only want to play the home games and default all the away games 1-0.

-ECF registration only necessary after 3 games for a player.

-An eligible player from a club that is not entering a team may play “on loan” for 1 other club as long as it is only in the E division.

-Reserve/Fringe players can play for more than 1 team in the division. Although no player in the division should play more than the maximum number of games they could for 1 team.

H4 **Estimated Ratings**

As A3(d). For the E Division only, unrated players do not need to be allocated an estimated rating for their first game. If no rating is allocated, they must play below any rated players for board order purposes.

H5 **Spirit**

Although all rules of the league still apply to the E division, we would ask all captains and players to remember that there are a lot of new players at this level and ideally a friendly reminder of the rules is the best first step if there is a problem. This is in everyone’s interest as it helps all clubs with the retention and progression of their players.