

HEREFORDSHIRE SHORT MAT BOWLING ASSOCIATION



LEAGUE RULES and CONDITIONS OF PLAY

(Revised May 2024)

1. The League

- a. The HSMBA League will consist of one or more divisions depending on the number of teams entered.
- b. Each team will play Home and Away matches against all teams in their division.
- c. Each match will consist of four games played on two mats. Each game will be twelve ends with two woods per player being bowled alternately against the opposing side.
- d. Each team will consist of six players divided into two triples. A team may make up to two scheduled player substitutions between the first pair of games and the second pair of games but these substitutions, including the names of the players involved, must be advised to the opposing captain before the match commences and each must be a direct substitution of a player playing in the first pair of games with a substitute who did not play in either of those games. A substitution advised in accordance with this rule must be made and cannot be withdrawn once play commences. There shall be no other switches of players between rinks.
- e. Clubs must ensure that 32oz jacks are used for all League matches.
- f. Each away team triple will select and play both games on the same mat. The home team triples will play on one mat for the first game and the other mat for the second game.
- g. The home team will supply refreshments during a short break after the first two games. If this is not appropriate, refreshments can be served at any other time with the agreement of the visiting team.
- h. Matches can be played at any time suitable to both captains.
- i. All matches will be played in accordance with the ESMBA Laws of the Game and the HSMBA League Rules and Conditions of Play. A copy of the latest version of both documents should be available at every match.
- j. Variations from these rules which apply to the Multi Discipline Summer League only are set out in the Appendix to this document.

2. Registration and Fees

- a. Only HSMBA registered clubs may register league teams.
- b. Only ESMBA/HSMBA registered players are eligible to play in the league and there is no minimum or maximum age.
- c. All HSMBA Association and League fees must be paid before 1st August and ESMBA Player fees for the players registered at the beginning of the season must be paid before the season commences which is normally 1st September. No matches can be played by a team until such fees are paid.

- d. Players must be registered to a specific HSMBA club at least three days prior to playing in any match and may only play League for that club. League Player identification must be completed before 1st September. Each player can only be nominated to play for one team and will remain with that team for the season. In exceptional circumstances the HSMBA Committee may consider a request to transfer a player permanently between teams within a club during the season and its decision in this respect shall be final. If a club has more than one team, cross team substitutions are allowed subject to the following restrictions:
 - i. Each player can play a match for one team within the same club, other than the team for which he / she is nominated to play, on one occasion during any season (a cross team substitution).
 - ii. In any match no more than 2 cross team substitutions can be made by a team.
 - iii. A cross team substitute must play in the position of Lead or Two. This restriction takes precedence over ESMBA Rule F(3) and HSMBA Rule 5(a) regarding Order of Play. Any cross-team substitute must be notified to the opposing captain and highlighted on the match score sheet before play commences. If the score sheet does not highlight the cross-team substitute, then action will be taken under Rule 2(e) as if the player was ineligible.
- e. In the event of an invalid cross team substitution or a non-registered player participating in a league game the following penalties will apply:
 - i. Any individual games in which an ineligible player played will be restated to a 10-0 defeat for the infringing triple (unless the original score was a higher net shot defeat, in which case the original score stands). The overall match result is restated based on revised scores; and
 - ii. A penalty of 2 points for the team incurring the infringement.
- f. Clubs must send an official ESMBA Player Registration form together with the appropriate fees to the Membership Secretary to register players at the start of each season.
- g. If new players are to be registered after the start of the season an HSMBA New Members Registration form should be sent to the Membership Secretary with the registration fee at least three days prior to playing in any match.
- h. The Membership Secretary will inform clubs and the League Secretary of all player registration numbers.

3. Dress Code

The following dress code should be observed by all team players at official league matches:

- a. Mid grey or black tailored trousers, shorts, skirts, culottes, slacks, or recognised bowling trousers below the waist. No jeans or leggings.

- b. Plain white or club colours above the waist (shirts, sweaters, pullovers, ties, scarves, cravats, etc.).
- c. All players in a team should be dressed the same, including either black or grey below the waist. Any player who does not have access to team colours may wear plain white above the waist.
- d. Regulation bowling shoes or sandals, with entirely flat soles, must be worn, and these must be changed into inside the venue.
- e. New clubs wishing to enter a team in the County League will have 12 months to conform to the dress code except that regulation bowling shoes must always be worn by all players.
- f. Clubs with two teams in the same division may put a small additional sticker on each side of their bowls (not on top of the club sticker) to aid identification when they play each other.

4. Fixtures

- a. Each club will arrange fixture dates before the start of the season for both home and away matches with the first match before December 31 and the return match before March 31. If a club has two teams in the same division, they should play both matches before January 31.
- b. The fixture list of dates, clubs and venues for the whole season should be forwarded to the League Secretary as early as possible in September. Clubs entering more than one team must clearly identify each team.
- c. The League Secretary will circulate a full list of fixtures before the start of the season and each club should check that this list is correct so any differences can be resolved before the season commences.
- d. Matches must be played on the arranged dates. A fixture date should only be changed in exceptional circumstances and both captains must agree to the revised arrangement.
- e. The League Secretary must be informed in writing of any change of fixture by both clubs before the match is played. If time is limited before the match is played, both clubs must inform the League Secretary by phone and then confirm in writing.
- f. If a league match is played on a club roll up night the home team may lay a mat down for the use of other club members, but the visiting team must be informed before the match. The two league mats must be laid adjacent to each other.
- g. All players and spectators should, as a matter of courtesy, switch off their mobile phones during matches.

5. Order of Play

- a. Each team captain will select both triples and the order of play. Playing order within a triple may be changed on the completion of any end provided the opposing skip has been notified.
- b. A score card will be made out for each game by each captain, clearly listing the names of the players in order of play (e.g., Lead-Second-Skip).
- c. An exchange of score cards may take place with the opposing team for names to be inserted before the start of the first two games. Scorecards for the second two games may be completed similarly at the beginning of the second half. Team captains should retain all scorecards in case of query after the match results have been published.
- d. The selection of each triple can only be changed within the limits of the rules relating to the non-arrival of players.
- e. Captains must keep a record throughout the season of the players in all teams and in all games. Each captain must be able to prove, if asked to do so by the League Secretary or on appeal to the HSMBA by another club, that the requirements of rule 2d are met.
- f. A match should commence at the published start time with two trial ends for each team leading immediately into the first pair of games. There will be no further trial ends before the second pair of games, but a player named as a substitute for the second half of the match may take part in the trial ends at the commencement of the match. The away team shall be offered the choice before each individual game as to whether they bowl first or second on the first end. Home team players must not have played on either match mat for at least 2 hours prior to the start of the match.

6. Scoring & Match Result

- a. Points will be awarded for each of the four games - 2 points to the winning team or 1 point to each team if the shots are equal.
- b. A further 2-point bonus will be awarded to the team with the highest combined number of shots scored over the four games or 1 point to each team if the shots are equal.
- c. After both home and away matches have been played, an additional Aggregate Point will be awarded to the team with the highest combined total of shots scored over the two matches. In the event of a tie on the combined total then the extra point will be divided i.e., $\frac{1}{2}$ a point per team.
- d. The match result will be recorded on a League Result sheet by the Home Team Captain and signed by both Captains. It is the responsibility of the Home Team Captain to ensure that the result sheet is received by the League Secretary not later than the fourth morning after the match.

7. Non-arrival of Players

- a. If any team is short of players, the following procedures will take place.
 - i. With one player short on a mat (3v2) the missing player will be regarded as a Second and the order of play will be:
Lead, Lead, Second; Lead, Lead, Second; then Skips.
This order will apply no matter which side leads first.
 - ii. With one player short on both sides on a mat (2v2) this game will be played as a 2-wood pair.
 - iii. With two players short in one team on a mat (3v1) then the two games will automatically be awarded to the opposing side by 2 points and 10 shots to nil for each game.
 - iv. With two players short in both teams on a mat the game will be declared void with no score recorded.
- b. No team will be allowed to play a short triple if eligible substitutes are present.
- c. If substitute players are brought forward, then the originally named players may not play in the match.
- d. If a substitute has not been used, then a late player may join the game at the start of the next end.

8. Non-arrival of Teams

- a. A team that fails to arrive at the appointed venue within 15 minutes of the agreed match start time without notifying the opposing team will be penalised 5 points and 20 shots. The two captains should arrange a new fixture date and both captains must notify the League Secretary, in writing, of that date without delay.
- b. If a match cannot be re-arranged, then Rule 9(f) applies

9. Postponement of Matches

- a. In the event of a club wishing to postpone a match the following procedure should be followed.
 - i. Notify the League Secretary immediately with details of the circumstances leading to the request.
 - ii. With the League's Secretary's approval contact should then be made with the opposing captain to re-arrange the fixture in accordance with the procedure below.
 - iii. Either captain may appeal the League Secretary's ruling to the HSMBA committee via the County Secretary.
- b. A match may be postponed but only in exceptional circumstances. This does not include a situation when a team is short of players. If the postponement is due to excessively bad weather or some other Act of God then the Home club may incur

non-refundable hall hire fees. In such circumstances the Away club should be approached with a view to sharing the cost.

- c. The home captain must offer two alternative dates within seven days on which the match may be played. These dates must not clash with any fixtures of the away team and should give a minimum of fourteen days' notice except where a match is postponed late in the season and such notice would be impracticable.
- d. The away captain must signify which date has been accepted within seven days of the alternative dates being offered. Both captains should confirm the revised match date in writing to the League Secretary. Any dispute must be reported immediately to the League Secretary.
- e. If a match is declared void or prevented from being completed for any reason, then a date for replay must be made within 28 days.
- f. Teams must make every reasonable effort to accommodate the rearrangement of a fixture that has been postponed or otherwise not completed. If a match cannot be rearranged the Management Committee will rule as to the allocation of points and shots for the match. Each team may be requested to make a written statement in respect of the circumstances to assist the Committee in making a ruling. Where one team is held fully responsible for the failure to fulfil the fixture then the team suffering the failed fixture will be awarded a 10 points & 20 shots to nil victory. The offending team will meet any financial losses incurred by the opponent. The Committee may rule that the blame is shared or that no team is to blame and make an appropriate alternative ruling at its discretion. The ruling of the Committee shall be final.

10. Transfers

- a. Players are not allowed to play in the League for more than one club during a season without the permission of the Management Committee. This will only be authorised if it is a permanent transfer.
- b. Players may apply to transfer from one club to another during the year. The 'gaining' club must notify the County Secretary in writing at least 14 days before transfer. The County Secretary will check with the 'losing' club to ensure that there are no outstanding issues that might affect the transfer and confirm with the 'gaining' club that the transfer may take place. No additional fee is required.
- c. The application must have the approval of both clubs involved. Any objections to the transfer must be submitted in writing with a full explanation as to the nature of the objection.
- d. No transfer application will be granted after 31 January.
- e. Players are not allowed to play for two different clubs scheduled to play in the same week.

11. Promotion & Relegation

- a. Promotion & relegation between divisions will be confirmed by the Management Committee once it is known how many teams are registering for the following season. The following principles will be used:
 - i. The top two teams in a division will be moved to the next higher division and the bottom two teams in a division will be moved to the next lower division. This adjustment to the overall ranking of teams will be actioned before any further divisional revisions are made under rule 11a (ii)
 - ii. If the number of teams in the leagues changes between seasons a revised allocation of teams to divisions will be made such that divisions will be of equal size but, where this is not possible, a higher division will include an additional team before a lower division
 - iii. New teams joining the league will join in the lowest division
 - iv. These principles mean that in a situation of increased entries an otherwise relegated team may retain their place in a higher division (ahead of the promotion of 3rd or lower placed teams) but in a situation of decreased entries an otherwise promoted team may remain in their current division (but both relegated teams will join the lower division).
 - v. These principles will also apply when the number of divisions changes between seasons. There will be a maximum of 10 and a minimum of 7 teams in a division.

- b. If two or more teams are level on points at the completion of the fixtures, then Promotion or Relegation will be determined by the following criteria, in order:
 - i. Shots difference across all fixtures
 - ii. Points (including bonus points) in head-to-head fixtures between two or more tied teams
 - iii. Shots difference in head-to-head fixtures between two or more tied teams
 - iv. A toss, or series of tosses, of a coin

12. Disputes and Complaints

Notice of a dispute or complaint should be submitted to the League Secretary within three days of any problem. The Secretary of the team or club concerned must also be notified. The Management Committee will then consider the issue and make a decision which will be final.

13. Penalties

The Management Committee is authorised to implement any of the following penalties for any infringement of either the HSMBA or ESMBA rules.

- a. An HSMBA warning.
- b. A cash fine.
- c. Forfeiture or deduction of league points and / or shots.
- d. Cancellation of any particular result with or without the instruction to replay.
- e. A temporary or permanent suspension from the League or Association.

The above penalties may be applied to any player, team, or club.

Appendix - The HSMBA Multi Discipline Summer League

Introduction

These rules serve to modify the main HSMBA Rules and Conditions of Play to accommodate the alternative structure and format of the Multi Discipline Summer League. The following sections of the HSMBA Rules and Conditions of Play are affected:

- Rule 1 Replaced by Rule A1 below
- Rule 2 Sections (d) and (e) inapplicable – refer Rule A2 below
- Rule 4 Sections (a) and (b) inapplicable – refer Rule A3 below
- Rule 6 Replaced by Rule A4 below
- Rule 7 Section (a) inapplicable – refer Rule A5 below

A1. The League

- a. The Summer League will be run between May and August.
- b. The League will consist of one or more divisions depending on the number of teams entered. If there are two or more divisions, there will be end of season play-offs and/or a final to determine the overall competition winner.
- c. Each full team will consist of a minimum of five players up to a maximum of ten players.
- d. A match will comprise:
 - One Singles game (four bowls per player) played over 15 ends
 - One Pairs game (three bowls per player) played over 10 ends
 - One Triples game (two bowls per player) played over 10 ends
 - One Fours game (two bowls per player) played over 9 ends.
- e. Clubs must ensure that 32oz jacks are used for all League matches.
- f. Each team will play Home and Away matches against all teams in their division.
- g. The home team decides the mats on which the games are to be played and the order for play (Single/Four followed by Pair/Triple or vice versa). The home team is required to supply a marker for the singles game.
- h. The home team will supply refreshments during a short break after the first two games. If this is not appropriate, refreshments can be served at any other time with the agreement of the visiting team.
- i. Match dates and start times are to be set by agreement between the clubs involved.
- j. All matches will be played in accordance with the ESMBA Laws of the Game and the HSMBA League Rules & Conditions of Play. A copy of the latest version of these documents should be available at every match.

A2. Player Participation

- a. Each player can only play for one club. However, they may play for a club where they are not registered.
- b. If a club has more than one team in the league a player is permitted to play for any team provided they do not exceed the maximum number of permitted matches (MPM).

- c. The MPM is calculated as follows: $MPM = (\text{The number of teams in the league} - 1) * 2$
- d. If there is more than one division in the league then the MPM is calculated based on the largest number of teams in any division.
- e. A record of the number of matches played by each player will be maintained by the League Secretary
- f. The team which a player represents first in a particular summer league season is deemed to be that player's 'primary' team unless the League Secretary is informed to the contrary at the time of that first appearance. If a player subsequently represents another team from the same club, then that player may only play in the positions of Lead in a Pair and/or Lead or Two in a Triple or Four. This restriction takes precedence over ESMBA Rule F(3) and HSMBA Rule 5(a) regarding Order of Play.
- g. If a player exceeds the MPM or is in contravention of Rule A2(f) then the team will forfeit any points and shots scored in games played within a match by the offending player and those points, and a shot score equating to one shot per end played in each game affected, will be awarded to the opposing team.
- h. A player may only play in the end of season play-offs / final for a team for which he/she has previously played at least 2 regular season matches.

A3. Fixtures

- a. Each club will arrange fixture dates before the start of the season for both home and away matches. If a club has two teams in the same division, they should play both matches before July 31.
- b. The fixture list of dates, clubs and venues for the whole season should be forwarded to the League Secretary as early as possible in April. Clubs entering more than one team must clearly identify each team.

A4. Scoring & Match Result

- a. Points will be awarded for each of the four games - 2 points to the winning team or 1 point to each team if the shots are equal.
- b. A further 2-point bonus will be awarded to the team with the highest combined number of shots scored over the four games.
- c. After both home and away matches have been played, an additional Aggregate Point will be awarded to the team with the highest combined total of shots scored over the two matches. In the event of a tie on the combined total then the extra point will be divided i.e., half a point per team.
- d. The match result will be recorded on a League Result sheet by the Home Team Captain and signed by both Captains. It is the responsibility of the Home Team Captain to ensure that the result sheet is received by the League Secretary not later than the fourth morning after the match.

A5. Non-arrival of Players

For a match to be valid a club must field a minimum of four players, in which case the team will play one short in the triple and one short in the four in accordance with ESMBA Rules (F. Play infringements (9) Absentee Players – (10) Playing with a player missing).

For full details and exact wording of the ESMBA Rules please refer to the ESMBA booklet 'Laws of the Game'



Visit our website - www.hsmba.org - for up-to-date League results throughout the season plus detailed information about the Association and affiliated Clubs.