**Northern Bridge League Regulations**

Formed in 2006, the Northern Bridge League (NBL) is a teams-of-eight competition open to the County Bridge Associations of Northern England, and North Wales. This restriction does not apply to online NBL seasons. It is organized as three separate Divisions A, B and C where A is Tolle standard, B is County Standard, C is Club level. There may also be a Division D of Junior standard if possible. Each Division (apart from Junior) should have between 5 and 9 teams.

There will be four ‘NBL Matches’ in a season arranged on Saturdays between July and October at around monthly intervals. For each ‘NBL Match’, an all-play-all set of matches will be played in each Division with around 40 boards played. Thus:

5 Teams 4 x 10 board matches

6 Teams 5 x 8 board matches

7 Teams 6 x 7 board matches

8 Teams 7 x 6 board matches

9 Teams 8 x 5 board matches

The Matches are scored by Cross-Imps converted to VPs on the WBF Discrete Scale.

Level 4 Systems are allowed in all Divisions.

The winning team of each of the three Divisions will be determined by the county with the highest number of VPs at the end of the season. In the event of a tie between two or more counties, those counties will be considered to be joint winners. The winner(s) will hold a Trophy for one year and earn the right to play in the Inter-County Leagues National Final (currently organized by Ian Mitchell) around June the following year). Where necessary, EBU procedures will apply to split a winners tie for this purpose..

1. Each Season will be from around 1st July to 15th October. Following an annual Review meeting around mid October, the NBL Coordinator will publish the dates and venues of the 4 NBL matches.
2. The Review meeting will determine the financial arrangements for the following year. Each County will pay an entry fee for each team as determined at the Review meeting and these must be paid to the NBL Treasurer before 1st April of the year preceding that season. Each player will pay an entry fee at each match as determined by this meeting. In addition, the meeting will set a fixed catering cost for all venues, TD payment, TD travel allowance, Duplmating/Hand Records charge, gratis payment to Officers etc For online matches, only TD payment and gratis payment to Officers need be set.
3. All players must be members of a UK NBO but they are not required to owe primary allegiance to the County they represent. Players may represent one county only in the combined Regional/National phase of the competition. County selectors should maintain a pool of players for each Division and as far as possible, players should only play in one Division during a season. Where this constraint makes it impracticable to maintain a team, Counties may organise their teams as necessary. Where a County has two teams in the same Division, a player may play for either team.
4. F2F Matches: All matches will start at 12.00pm and finish around 6:00pm. The caterers at the venue will provide tea/coffee and biscuits from 11:30 onwards and an afternoon tea at halftime. With 40 boards (5 hours (and 45 minutes for tea), finishing time should be around 5:45. With 42 boards, add 15 minutes.

Online Matches: All matches will be played on RealBridge and start at 10:30am with a suitable break finishing at around 5:30pm. The TD will Email the instructions and joining link to all the Team Captains shortly before the match is to be played.

1. In exceptional circumstances, a county may not have sufficient players available to field a team of 8 players. Any match forfeited will be scored using the EBU procedures for forfeited matches which is 14-6 VP award (Default Ave+ on every board). In F2F matches, Counties cancelling with less than 4 days notice will forfeit the catering costs (currently 8 x £10) for their players except in extenuating circumstances.
2. Standard EBU procedures generally apply and breaches of bridge law and regulations etc should always be dealt with in accordance with EBU regulation unless a specific variation is agreed within these rules (Ref Conduct & Disputes below).
3. At the end of each match, the TD will send the results to the Results coordinator within 24 hours of the completion of the match. The coordinator will collate (and correct when necessary) the data before passing to the Website Administrator for upload to the NBL website. There is a further 48 hour correction time subsequent to website publication of results before they become Final (except where a referred appeal is ongoing).
4. NBL Masterpoint Allocation is in line with the EBU MP handbook for Inter County Leagues Section 6.5 with only Green Points and only awarded where 6+board matches played.
5. At the Annual Review meeting, Counties may propose changes to the above procedures, which will be implemented subject to majority support of participating counties.

The NBL Coordinator or the nominated representative of any county participating in the NBL, may at any time propose a course of action and request a discussion on it. The Coordinator, or his nominee, will decide whether the discussion should be via email or video meet and will facilitate that discussion. Following the discussion, the county putting forward the resolution or the NBL Coordinator may request a formal vote/poll. Each county participating in the NBL gets one vote;

1. The Northern Bridge League site is at

<http://www.manchesterbridge.org.uk/NBL/index.html>

The Northern Bridge League Coordinators are Jeff Smith, Ken Johnston.

Anything concerning these rules should be referred to an NBL Coordinator (Email: jasmith@nildram.co.uk).

**Conduct and Disputes**

Players are reminded that maintaining a good spirit between Counties is important. Players should always be courteous and disputes avoided wherever possible. Counties are encouraged to resolve any bridge disputes during or at the end of each match and generally each county will be fielding several experienced players and/or Tournament Directors. The remainder of this section is for guidance or in the event that the players are unable to agree a decision.

.1a Where a ruling requires bridge judgement, the TD should consult a suitable number of people before making a ruling. This might delay the ruling, and where that causes a problem, an interim ruling (eg “score as if the claim was valid”) will be made. Where one or other party is not satisfied with the final ruling, they should inform the TD as soon as possible.

1b If the issue is an issue of interpretation of the Laws or Regulations, then the party concerned can seek an appeal before the match scores are announced or some earlier mutually agreed time.

In both cases, the TD will seek the NBL Appeals Authority unconnected with the NBL area (currently J Dhondy or M Amos) to adjudicate and the adjudicator(s) decision will be final. Any referral to the EBU Appeal Referee must be made within 72 hours of the conclusion of the match.

2 In the event of any non-bridge appeal, the NBL Administrator should be contacted and arrange for the dispute to be decided by the NBL Conduct Committee. (currently M Rothwell, J Hampson, J Smith)

Date: 25Oct2016

Revision Date 19Oct2023