

SHROPSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION : ONLINE LEAGUE RULES

1. All games must be played online. Players must use the Lichess Platform. Players must always play a rated match to ensure anti-cheating software is activated. If a game is played other than as a rated game, the game will be scored 0-0 unless both players agree to replay the match as a rated match.

2. All games must be played according to the laws of chess as published in '[The Official Laws of Chess' updated by FIDE](#) on 1 January 2018.

3. If a player disconnects during the match, that player should attempt to reconnect as soon as possible. If that player is unable to reconnect they will lose the match unless both players agree to finish the match on another night.

If the lichess server restarts mid-match or there is a global connection outage all unfinished games will be declared null and void and the match will be rearranged at the discretion of the league controller.

4. No player may act as or exercise the powers of an arbiter. Any disputes arising from the interpretation or application of the laws of chess or the league rules will be resolved by the League Controller. Appeals against the League Controller's decisions must be sent in writing to the General Secretary within 14 days. The matter will be referred to a Rules and Disputes Committee, consisting of the President, the General Secretary, the Treasurer and one other. If one or more of these officers is a party to the dispute, the President may appoint replacements acceptable to both parties. The League Controller may be invited to attend and to give advice but will not be able to vote. The Committee's decision will be final.

5. It is the responsibility of the League Controller to decide which and how many teams shall play in each division (subject to the agreement of the Council), and to publish a fixture list before the start of each season. The League Controller has discretion (after due consultation) to specify the number of times each team shall play each other team in a division. In the absence of specification to the contrary, each team shall play every other team twice (once home, once away).

6. Each club must register its players with the League Controller at the start of each season, before the first fixture in which they play.

Late registration may be carried out at any time during the season, as long as the information is received no later than the first match result involving the player(s). Penalties for breaches of the rule are stipulated at rule 28.

7. When registering its players with the league Controller at the start of each season, division 1 teams must nominate 3 players whilst teams in division 2 and 3 must nominate 2 players.

A player registered before the start of the season must be one of the nominated players where;

- that player played fewer than 4 games in the Shropshire league in the previous season and;
- that player resides outside the county

A player registered after the start of the season must play a minimum of 3 games where;

- that player played fewer than 4 games in the Shropshire league in the previous season and;
- that player resides outside the county

If there are fewer than 3 games remaining in the season a player cannot be registered where;

- that player played fewer than 4 games in the Shropshire league in the previous season and;
- that player resides outside the county

Players nominated to a higher team cannot play for a lower team. Penalties for breaches of the rule are stipulated at rule 29. Nominated players must play for their team at least three times in a season. If this proves impossible on account of unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness), the League Controller has discretion to accept an alternative nominated player for the remainder of the season. Normally, the alternative nominated player will be expected to play for the balance of games not played by the original nominated player. Any appearances of the new nominated player for a lower team prior to acceptance by the league Controller shall be disregarded from the point of view of rule breaches specified in rule 28. A penalty of one match point per player per game to encourage registered players being a true member of the team.

TEAMS

8. A team shall consist of four players in division one and three players in divisions two and three.

9. The "away" team shall have White on boards 1 and 3.

10. A member of a club may only be nominated for one team for that club. If a player is a member of more than one club, he/she may only play for one club within a division. If a team in the second or third division uses a player who normally plays for another Shropshire club in a higher division during that season, then it is permitted only on condition that the player has a current July ECF standard grade of below 1710 for Div 2 and below 1560 for Div 3.

11. If an ungraded player has had a grade in the previous 5 years then that grade is to be used provisionally. Where a player has a previous "3-digit" grade in the previous 5 years that grade should be converted to 4-digit using the formula $(7.5 * \text{three-digit-grade} + 700)$. If a player has no previous grade then that player has the maximum flexibility subject to the league controller's approval.

12. A reserve may be drawn from a lower team, as follows:- any players regardless of whether they are nominated or tied to one team may be used as reserves for a higher team as follows (rules 9a to 9e). Players who are not nominated to a team may also play for a lower team.

a) Players graded below 1710 can play for any of their club's teams in Division 1 without restriction, providing that the lower team, for which the player normally appears, and the higher team for which the player wishes to appear as a reserve, are not both in Division 1, in which case the restriction in sub - paragraph d will apply.

b) Players graded below 1600 can play up into any of their club's teams in Divisions 1 and 2 without restriction, providing that the lower team, for which the player normally appears, and the higher team for which the player wishes to appear as a reserve, are not both in the same Division, in which case the restriction in sub - paragraph d will apply.

c) Players graded below 1450 can play up into any of their club's teams in Division 1 and 2 without restriction.

d) Where a player is used more than three times for a higher team, then (unless sub-paragraphs a, b or c apply) he / she becomes a member of the senior team on the fourth occasion for the remainder of the season. Where a reserve wins by default the result will count as an appearance for the senior team.

e) Penalties for breaches of rule 12d are stipulated at rule 30.

A flowchart explaining player eligibility can be found [here](#).

MATCH DETAILS

13. The time control for all matches shall be all moves in 45minutes plus an increment of 15 seconds per move from move 1.

14. Players must be arranged in order of playing strength according to the latest E.C.F. online grading list; except that players whose grading differs by no more than 75 points shall be regarded as interchangeable for the purposes of this rule. Penalties for breaches of this rule are specified at rule 30. Summer grades will be used for substitution purposes through the year. Ungraded players - if they have past history, the last known grade is to be used provisionally. If not, the player has the maximum flexibility subject to league controller's approval and a provisional grading will not be given if the last historic grade is older than five years.

15. Team captains must send their team to the league controller via email at least 1 hour 15 minutes prior to the start of the match. Team captains must then forward the email sent to the league

controller to the opposing captain 1 hour prior to the start of the match. If either one of these deadlines is missed then the offending team will be subject to a 1 match point penalty. If both deadlines are missed the penalty is only 1 point in total.

If a team captain fields a different team to the one sent to the league controller their team will be subject to a 1 match point penalty subject to rule 16.

16. A captain may change their team after the deadlines only with the agreement of the opposition captain. Prior to the start of the match any player may be substituted into the team and the team order changed. After the start of the match another player may be substituted for an absent player at any time during the first 30 minutes of the match. This substituted player must either meet the grading constraints as per rule 14, being within 75 grading points of the adjacent boards, or alternatively be a lower graded player than the lowest board of the team.

All player's grades must be clearly indicated on the match card before the game starts. If a captain knows before start of play that the team will be incomplete, the remaining players must be declared in board order, and defaults must take place on the bottom board(s).

17. Matches must be played on the appointed date unless another date is previously agreed by the League Controller .

18. A default of a match will result in a 1 point deduction, no warnings. A team should consist of at least half the number of boards.

19. If lichess bans a player for cheating then all matches played by that player throughout the season will be scored as a loss. That player will be banned from the league for the rest of the season. If a successful appeal is made to lichess that players' results will be reinstated. This decision can also be appealed to the Shropshire appeals committee.

START OF PLAY

20. Matches should start at 7.30 pm (or at a time agreed by both captains).

21. If a player fails to start play within 30 minutes of the agreed start of play, he / she shall lose by default; if neither player is present within 30 minutes of start of play, that board is declared void.

22. Another player may be substituted for an absent player at any time during the first 30 minutes. If such a substitution breaches rule 12, it is subject to the agreement of the opposing captain, and it must be clearly indicated on the match card.

END OF PLAY

23. The outcome of games will be decided according to ' The Official Laws of Chess '.

RESULTS

24. Results must be sent to the League Controller within eight days of the match date. It is the responsibility of the home team captain to forward the result. If no result is notified within eight days, the League Controller will issue a warning to the home team. Penalties for breaches of the rule are specified at rule 31.

25. For each match win, two points will be awarded; for a drawn match, one point. If, at the end of the season, two or more teams are tied, then the team with the higher number of game points will be adjudged the higher team. If there is still a tie, then the team with the higher head to head board count will be adjudged the higher team. If there is still tie a play - off match, or matches, will be organised by the league controller. If the play - off ends in a drawn match, then board count will be used to decide the winner. If all five games end in draws, then the team with black on board 1 will be named the winner. To decide colours the two team captains will conduct a coin toss on the night of the match and in the presence of a neutral party i.e. the league controller.

26. All results will be submitted for an ECF online rating.

27. At the end of the season the top 2 teams in the lower divisions will be promoted, and the bottom 2 teams in the higher divisions will be relegated, subject to the provisions of rule 3.

PENALTIES

28. Where rule 6 is breached:

- a) all results achieved by the player in the league before registration will be treated as losses by default for match purposes.
- b) The team will be penalised one match point for each affected match.

29. Where rule 7 is breached:

- a) all results achieved by the reserve following their fourth appearance for the senior team will be treated as losses by default for match purposes.
- b) The team will be penalised one match point for each affected match.

30. Where rule 12 is breached:

- a) a player out of order will be deemed to have lost by default,
- b) the minimum number of players will be defaulted in order to achieve an acceptable playing order,
- c) the team will then be penalised by one match point.

31. Where rule 24 is breached any failure to notify a match result (subsequent to the first warning) will incur the loss of a match point.

32. These and any other penalties deemed necessary will be imposed by the League Controller who will inform the teams involved.

33. In exceptional circumstances the League Controller may waive penalties, providing the club/team writes in advance to the League Controller with a full explanation of the facts and providing the case is accepted.