



# PREMIER LEAGUE 2024

## SPECIFIC CONDITIONS OF CONTEST

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## 1. Definitions

- 1.1. The Conditions of Contest for the Premier League comprise the General Conditions of Contest and these Specific Conditions of Contest. This document should be read in conjunction with the General Conditions of Contest.

## 2. Scope of the League

- 2.1. The Premier League is a national league played under international championship conditions.
- 2.2. The Premier League is not a trial for European or World Championships.
- 2.3. The winners and runners up of Division 1 earn selection to represent England in one weekend each of the 2025 Camrose Trophy series, and, should England have a spot in the 2025 EBL Champions Cup, the winners of Division 1 earn selection to represent England in that event. Should any of these teams comprise of fewer than six qualified players, the Selection Committee reserves the right to select additional players for these events. This will be done in accordance with Section 18.6.

## 3. Entry Fee

- 3.1. The entry fee is £960 per team, assuming a 6-day event of approximately 340 boards.

## 4. Eligibility

- 4.1. The eligibility conditions in Section 5 of the General Conditions of Contest relating to the Home International series shall apply in full to division 1 of the League. In particular, participants should note that all players must be qualified to represent England in the home international series by the start of the first day's play in the first weekend of the league. Any player seeking to represent England through the bona fide residence criteria must have supplied the necessary documentation to the EBU before the start of the first day's play in the first weekend of the League. Participants with players who do not meet the above regulations will not be allowed to play in Division 1 of the league that year.

Any player with questions about eligibility should contact Gordon Rainsford – [gordon@ebu.co.uk](mailto:gordon@ebu.co.uk).

- 4.2. Entries will be welcomed from teams containing players not qualified to represent England as described in 4.1, but such teams will be ineligible to participate in Division 1 and ineligible players will be unable to be promoted to Division 1 in the following season. They may be replaced by eligible players providing that the team satisfies the requirements of section 6.5.

## 5. Registered players

See also the section on Registered Players (section 7) of the General Conditions of Contest.

- 5.1. A team may consist of four, five or six players, except as described in 5.2.
- 5.2. A team or teams submitted by an England Junior Squad Leader may, with the prior permission of the Selection Committee, contain more than six players. This will be permitted only when the team is participating as part of the squad's training programme. The team/s must contain only members of an England Junior Squad and, optionally, a squad leader. This concession will not be extended to other teams, and it will not necessarily apply in future years.
- 5.3. When a team as in 5.2 is accepted, the Committee may set further conditions on the participation of the team and may vary these conditions as necessary.

- 5.4. A player may be a member of only one team in any given year, with the exception of members of junior teams as described in 5.2 who may, with prior permission of the Committee, play in more than one such team.

## **6. Composition of future divisions and team continuity**

### **Number and size of divisions**

- 6.1. The Selection Committee (hereafter “the Committee”) has discretion to decide on the number of divisions and the number of teams in each division, and to assign teams to a newly added division, acting with the aim of achieving the best possible competition, but subject to the regulations set out below.
- 6.2. In so far as numbers permit, the League will usually be divided into divisions of eight teams each.

### **Placement of teams in divisions**

- 6.3. Subject to the continuity requirements listed in paragraphs 6.4 and 6.5 below existing teams will be placed in divisions as follows:

- The top two teams in each division below Division 1 will be promoted to the next higher division, except that no team with a player or players not meeting the eligibility requirements in 4.1 in the season just completed will be eligible for promotion to Division 1.
- If promotion of a team to Division 1 is disallowed by 4.1 then the two highest-placed eligible teams in Division 2 will be promoted if they have placed fourth or higher.
- The bottom two teams in each division but the lowest will be demoted to the next lower division, to make room for the promoted teams.
- Teams neither promoted nor demoted remain in the same division, save that, if the committee creates a new division, those that finished either outside of the top eight, or inside the bottom two, of the previous lowest division, will not be guaranteed a spot in that division, and will be placed into a division as outlined in 6.10.

### **Qualification of players and continuity of teams**

- 6.4. Any player is qualified who:

- was a member of the team in the previous season, meeting the playing requirements in 16.1 AND
- meets all requirements of the Conditions of Contest for the coming season AND
- For a team promoted to Division 1, meets the eligibility requirements in 4.1 and 6.3.

- 6.5. To maintain team continuity:

- For a team that had three, four or five qualified players at the end of the season, the team must retain at least three of those players in the next season.
- For a team that had six qualified players at the end of the season, the team must retain at least four of those players in the next season.

- 6.6. If a team has such a quorum it may apply to add any further players it chooses, up to the limit in 5.1.

- 6.7. There is no absolute requirement for the qualified players from the preceding season to play any minimum number of boards for a team to whose continuity they contributed. However, teams are expected to act in good faith, by submitting only players who intend to play in the League.

- 6.8. Where a team did meet the continuity requirement, but before the start of the season one or more players withdrew from the team and the remaining team did not then meet the continuity requirement, the team will then be considered a new team and will have no right to remain in the same division.
- 6.9. In the case of junior teams (as defined in 5.2 above), the continuity requirements will not apply. A Junior team will usually be subject to promotion or demotion in the same way as other teams, but the Committee may, at its discretion, override a promotion if it judges that the team has been significantly weakened.

#### **Divisions with fewer teams than previously**

- 6.10. If, because of the continuity requirement, teams not reapplying to play, the non-promotion of a junior team, or for any other reason, a division has fewer teams than previously, the Committee has discretion to add teams to Division. The Committee will add to Division (starting with Division 1) a team or teams chosen on bridge merit. In choosing between continuing teams, a lower-placed team from the previous year will not be preferred to a higher-placed team unless the Committee judges that changes in personnel have significantly altered their relative playing strength. For this purpose, the higher-placed relegated team from Division ranks equally with the highest placed non-promoted team from Division below, and so on.

### **7. Registered players**

- 7.1. The General Conditions of Contest regulations on registered players (Section 7), and specifically the regulations concerning changing the membership of teams after the closing date for applications apply in full to all divisions of the Premier League.

### **8. Substitutes**

- 8.1. For Division 1 of the Premier League, the general Conditions of Contest concerning substitutes (Section 8) will apply in full.
- 8.2. For all other divisions, teams with six players who have all played and who find themselves unable to field a team in the second or third weekend may apply to the Committee for a substitute(s) for one or more of the remaining weekends. Teams who have fewer than six players or who have some players who have yet to play may apply for replacements as per Section 7 of the General Conditions of Contest. Teams are expected to act in good faith in ensuring that they can field a team for every weekend of the Premier League and players should expect to be available. Teams should not rely on this section, and the Committee has the right to accept or refuse a substitute(s) as it sees fit.
- 8.3. The Tournament Director in charge of any weekend may authorise an emergency substitution(s) at any weekend if a team (other than in division 1) is unable to field four players. In this case a full report will be given to the Committee.
- 8.4. In the case of paragraph 8.2 or 8.3 above the team with substitutes will occur a 1 imp penalty per substitute per board that the substitute played. So, a team with two substitutes playing will incur a fine of 2imps/board. These fines are mandatory. This is a fine, not an adjustment to the match score, so it affects only the team fielding the substitute(s). Example: team A has 2 substitutes and team B 0 substitutes. Team A wins the match by 5imps. Team A scored 5 – 32imps, so -27imps (3.74VPs); team B scores -5imps (8.52 VPs)
- 8.5. After the fines for substitutes have been applied, the results of the matches are final, and the Committee will not have the right to alter them further.

## 9. Timetable and format

9.1. All four Divisions will comprise eight teams playing three round-robins of seven 16 board matches.

9.2. The 16 teams not entitled to be in Division 1 or Division 2 will be allocated to Division 3A or Division 3B with the intention that these two divisions will be of similar strength. They will each play a single round-robin on the first weekend, after which the top four teams from each will be allocated to Division 3 and the bottom four to Division 4.

These two divisions will then each play two round-robins over the next two weekends, after which promotion and relegation for the next season will take place in the usual way. Section 6, relating to composition of future divisions and team continuity, will apply.

9.3. The schedule will be:

Weekend 1: 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Division 1 – Young Chelsea Bridge Club

Division 2 – Richmond Bridge Club

Divisions 3A and 3B – West Midlands Bridge Club

Weekend 2: 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Division 1 – Tunbridge Wells Bridge Club

Division 2 – Young Chelsea Bridge Club

Divisions 3 & 4 – East Midland Bridge Academy, Derby

Weekend 3: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Division 1 – West Midlands Bridge Club

Division 2 – West Midlands Bridge Club

Divisions 3 & 4 – Young Chelsea Bridge Club

The format and playing schedule for each weekend is:

### All Divisions

All Weekends: 7 x 16-board matches

Saturday: 10.45 – 12.55; 13.25 – 15.35; 15.55 – 18.05; 18.25- 20.35

Sunday: 10.45 – 12.55; 13.25 – 15.35; 15.55 – 18.05

9.4. Special circumstances may dictate that minor changes be made to the detailed timings shown, at the discretion of the Tournament Director in Charge.

9.5. In unforeseen circumstances, the format may be altered at the discretion of the Committee.

## 10. Scoring

10.1. Scoring will be by IMPs, converted to Victory Points on the WBF continuous 20-0 VP scales for 16-board matches. See Appendix A.

## 11. Movement

11.1. The movement for all divisions will be such that each team is the home team in approximately half of its matches, and each team is the home team in one or two of its matches against each other team.

11.2. The movement will be determined in advance for the first two round-robins for the top two divisions, for the single round-robin of the combined third division and for both round-robins of the separated third and fourth Divisions.

11.3. The movement for the third round-robins of the top two divisions will be determined after the second weekend. The objective will be to match up teams with similar scores in the last few rounds. This will be based on the scores after two weekends.

## **12. Systems and partnership understandings**

12.1. WBF system cards are mandatory in Division 1. In Divisions 2, 3 and 4, both WBF and EBU system cards are acceptable.

12.2. Systems and partnership understandings which are authorised at 'EBU Level 5' are permitted throughout.

12.3. Brown Sticker conventions which are not already authorised at EBU Level 5 are also permitted in Divisions 1 and 2, subject to the provisions in the General Conditions of Contest. Brown Sticker conventions which are not already authorised at EBU Level 5 are not permitted in any lower divisions.

12.4. Psychic bids protected by system or required by system are not permitted, unless already permitted under EBU Level 5 and properly disclosed.

12.5. HUM systems are permitted in Division 1 only, subject to the provisions of the General Conditions of Contest. HUM systems are not permitted in any lower division.

12.6. The deadline for submission of HUM and Brown Sticker system cards is 9am on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

## **13. Late arrival, withdrawal or unplayed matches**

13.1. Sections 9 (late arrival), and 10 (withdrawal and unplayed matches) of the General Conditions of Contest shall apply in full to all divisions of the League.

## **14. Slow play**

14.1. Section 11 (slow play) of the general Conditions of Contest shall apply in full to all divisions of the League.

## **15. Unplayed matches**

In addition to Section 10 of the General Conditions of Contest the following shall apply to all divisions of the League:

15.1. If a team does not complete at least half of its matches (i.e. at least 11 matches out of 21), all results obtained against that team will be cancelled.

15.2. Otherwise, unplayed matches will provisionally be scored 13-0 VPs in favour of the non-offending team. If, at the end of the event, the non-offending team have a match average which is more than 3 VPs better than that of the offending team, then its score will be increased by the corresponding amount, up to a maximum score of 20-0.

All such awards will be rounded to 2 decimal places.

Example: team 'A' (non-offending) has scored 78.60 VPs from 6 matches (average of 13.10). Team 'B' (offending) has scored 49.76 VPs from 6 matches (average of 8.29). The difference in average is 4.81 VPs. The match is therefore rescored as 14.81-0.

The IMP difference for both teams shall be deemed to be 0 IMPs regardless of the assigned VP score.

- 15.3. Boards played by the non-offending team in a match subsequently cancelled shall still count for the purpose of assessing the playing requirements described in Section 16, and for the purpose of awarding Green Points.
- 15.4. In the case of an unplayed match, the non-offending team may nominate which of its players would have played in the match in order to assess the playing requirements of Section 16.

## **16. Playing requirements**

- 16.1. For the following purposes:

- receiving the title of Premier League or Division champion
- earning automatic selection for the Camrose Trophy or the Champions Cup
- meeting the conditions for team continuity in Section 6

a player must play at least 50% of the matches, rounded down in the case of a fraction (i.e. 10 matches out of 21).

- 16.2. In addition, for the purpose of earning automatic selection for England, a player must play at least one match against each of the other teams in Division 1.
- 16.3. An individual player failing to fulfil the playing requirement in 16.1 or 16.2 does not disqualify the rest of the team.

## **17. Green Point awards**

- 17.1. Match awards

Division 1:	1.50 for a win
	0.75 for a draw
Division 2:	0.75 for a win
	0.38 for a draw
Division 3:	0.50 for a win
	0.25 for a draw
Division 4:	0.25 for a win
	0.13 for a draw

For the first weekend, Division 4 awards will apply to Divisions 3A and 3B

Bonus awards

Division 1: Top six teams: 20, 10, 6, 4, 2.5, 1 respectively

Division 2: Top four teams: 10, 4, 2, 1 respectively

Division 3: Top two teams: 4, 1 respectively

Division 4: Top team: 2

- 17.2. Players who sit out a match are not eligible for awards for that match.
- 17.3. Green points will not be awarded for unplayed matches.
- 17.4. In order to be eligible for 'bonus ranking awards' a player must have played at least one-third of the boards that their team was scheduled to play (i.e. 7 matches out of 21).



## 18. Selection

- 18.1. The captain of the winning team from Division 1 will nominate their preferred weekend to play the Camrose Trophy. The team finishing second in Division 1 will then be offered the other Camrose weekend.
- 18.2. If either team refuses the Camrose invitation, then the invitation will be offered to the team finishing third in Division 1. If that team is unavailable, then the invitation will be made to the team finishing fourth in Division 1, and so on, up to and including the team finishing sixth in Division 1. Should all such teams decline the invitation then the Committee will select a team(s) as it sees fit, except that all pairs selected must have played in the Premier League (in any division).
- 18.3. All players who have met the playing requirements in Section 16 from the winning team will, if available, be guaranteed selection for the nominated weekend, unless this proves completely unviable. All players who have met the playing requirements in Section 16 from the second placed team will, if available, be guaranteed selection for a weekend of the Camrose, unless this proves completed unviable.
- 18.4. Any player who does not meet the playing requirements of 16.1 will not normally be considered for Camrose selection, but the Committee reserves the right to waive this condition in exceptional circumstances.
- 18.5. If, because a selected team had fewer than six players, or not all six players are available, or for any other reason, a selected team has fewer than six players, the Selection Committee will usually, but not invariably, select other pairs or players to complete a team of six. The Committee will consult with the selected team on whether to add players and if so, who, but its decision is final.
- 18.6. If the Committee decides to add a pair(s) or player(s) to a selected team as in 18.5 above then the Committee will be constrained by the following:
- If a pair(s) is to be added to a team:
- The Committee will choose from pairs in the highest ranked team in Division 1 that has not be selected for a Camrose weekend (i.e. it will select a pair(s) from the third-placed team unless that team has been selected for a Camrose weekend in which case it will select from the fourth-placed team unless that team has been selected for a Camrose weekend and so on).
  - If, after following the process above, there is no pair(s) available from the top six teams in Division 1 of the Premier League, then the Committee will select pairs to complete the team as it sees fit, except that all pairs must have played in the Premier League (in any division).
- If an individual player(s) is to be selected to play with someone already in the team:
- The Committee will choose any player(s) as it sees fit except that the player(s) must have played in the Premier League (in any division).
- 18.7. Selection for the Camrose weekends may be on a part-funded, or unfunded basis, at the discretion of the Committee.
- 18.8. If applicable, the winning team in Division 1 will be invited to represent England in the Champions' Cup. This will be on an unfunded basis.

## Appendix A: WBF Victory Point Scale (16 boards)

IMPs	VPs	VPs
0	10.00	10.00
1	10.31	9.69
2	10.61	9.39
3	10.91	9.09
4	11.20	8.80
5	11.48	8.52
6	11.76	8.24
7	12.03	7.97
8	12.29	7.71
9	12.55	7.45
10	12.80	7.20
11	13.04	6.96
12	13.28	6.72
13	13.52	6.48
14	13.75	6.25
15	13.97	6.03
16	14.18	5.82
17	14.39	5.61
18	14.60	5.40
19	14.80	5.20
20	15.00	5.00
21	15.19	4.81
22	15.38	4.62
23	15.56	4.44
24	15.74	4.26
25	15.92	4.08
26	16.09	3.91
27	16.26	3.74
28	16.42	3.58
29	16.58	3.42

30	16.73	3.27
31	16.88	3.12
32	17.03	2.97
33	17.17	2.83
34	17.31	2.69
35	17.45	2.55
36	17.59	2.41
37	17.72	2.28
38	17.85	2.15
39	17.97	2.03
40	18.09	1.91
41	18.21	1.79
42	18.33	1.67
43	18.44	1.56
44	18.55	1.45
45	18.66	1.34
46	18.77	1.23
47	18.87	1.13
48	18.97	1.03
49	19.07	0.93
50	19.16	0.84
51	19.25	0.75
52	19.34	0.66
53	19.43	0.57
54	19.52	0.48
55	19.61	0.39
56	19.69	0.31
57	19.77	0.23
58	19.85	0.15
59	19.93	0.07
60	20.00	0.00