# League Competitions: Template Regulations

## Preface

Many Counties and other organisations run League events. The English Bridge Union (EBU) does not directly organise any similar competition. This template is offered as a starting point or reference for anyone organising a League. It attempts to cover all the areas which in our experience can cause a dispute if the rules are not laid out clearly. There are three ways you may wish to make use of this document:

1. Take these regulations as the basis and make any amendments or changes necessary for the specific circumstances of your event;
2. take note of all the topics covered and ensure your regulations also cover them;
3. add a clause to your regulations stating that for any circumstance not covered, these regulations will apply or refer to particular sections.

The EBU also provides a League Management System, available through the My EBU members’ area. Existing results can be seen at <http://www.ebu.co.uk/leagues>

## Document Structure

Leagues are typically played either at a specified club or privately with the ‘home’ team having to provide a venue. Some events have a specified date (or range of dates) for each match; others simply provide the draw and leave teams to organise all their matches within a period of, say, six months.

To account for these variations, some sections in this document are enclosed in curly brackets { } and marked as alternatives: when adopting these regulations for your own use delete those sections that do not apply.

Square brackets are use to highlight content which the Organiser needs to supply.

Teams of eight have some special considerations. At the end of the document I have suggested alternative or additional wording for those sections affected.

The League organiser may wish to include some of the relevant sections from the White Book explicitly within these regulations, notably the VP Scale to be used, and (for teams of eight) the modified IMPs scale if required and the procedure for dealing with missing results and adjusted scores (parts of sections 3.7). These depend on the form of scoring.

Any enquiries regarding these regulations should be addressed to

The Secretary, Laws & Ethics Committee

EBU, Broadfields

Bicester Road

Aylesbury HP19 8AZ

🕿: 01296 317228 or email lecsec@ebu.co.uk

Frances Hinden

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# The [Utopia] County League: Regulations

### Introduction

The League is run by [Utopia County Bridge Association]. Any enquiries should be sent to the Organiser at [1 Paradise Road, email Wotan@utopia.org]

### General

These regulations describe arrangements for the League. They are supplementary to the general regulations contained in various EBU publications (such as the Blue Book), and in some cases replace them. All the general EBU regulations continue to apply unless over-ridden by more specific regulations, or stated otherwise.

The EBU White Book (<http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/white-book> ) and the Regulations for Knock-Out Competitions (<http://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/competitions/regulations-and-conditions-of-contest/knockout-regs.pdf> ) contain a number of regulations for EBU events which also apply to this league. These cover (among other matters) smoking, mobile phones, accommodating disabled players, spectators and split tie procedures. They also have more detail for complex areas such as the treatment of fouled boards and the procedure for rulings and appeals.

In the event of any circumstance arising not covered by these regulations nor by any EBU regulation the Organiser may add to or amend these regulations as required.

### Entry

Entry is open to all members of [Utopia] in good standing. Teams may have up to [eight] registered players. Additional players up to the maximum may be added at any time by notifying the Organiser. No player may represent more than one team during the season.

The draw and schedule can be found at [www.utopia.org/league]. Entry costs [£10 per team] Entries should be sent to the Organiser by [30 September].

{*if there are multiple divisions:*

There are [two] divisions. The first division has [eight] teams. At the end of the season the winning team in division two will be promoted to division one, and the last team in division one will be relegated to division two.[[1]](#footnote-1)

A new team will play in division two. In order to retain their place in division one in the following season, a team must either (i) retain at least three players who each played at least half of the matches, or (ii) retain at least four players.}

### Scoring

Matches are [24 boards played in two sets of 12]. Scoring is IMPs converted to VPs on the discrete 20-0 scale[[2]](#footnote-2) which can be found in the EBU diary or from <http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales> .

[Blue Points] will be awarded. [The winning team in each division receives a prize of £50 and the winner of Division 1 will receive the trophy for one year.]

### Permissible Systems

Partnership understandings permitted at ‘Level 4’ as set out in the current EBU Blue Book are permitted.

### Arranging Matches

The first named team in the draw are the home team.

{*for a league played at a fixed venue(s) on fixed dates}:*

Matches must be played at [Utopia Bridge Club] on the dates shown in the schedule. Table money is £[4] per player.

If a captain is unable to raise a team for one match, he may ask the opposing captain for it be rearranged as long as he gives at least one week’s notice. Re-arranged matches must be played at [Utopia Bridge Club] after the first date, and on or before the last date, of the season. Any team that rearranges more than one match during the season will be fined 4 VPs per match after the first. In the event of difficulty finding an alternative date the Organiser will adjudicate but the onus is on the offending side to be accommodating. If less than one week’s notice is provided, the non-offending team is awarded the match (see section 11).

{*for a league played as home or away at venues provided by the players}*

Matches should be played from [October to April (June for Division 1)] The draw specifies the month(s) when it expected that each match should be played. The captains are expected to agree a suitable date and starting time. Any match that cannot be played during the specified period can be played at another date amenable to both teams as long as it is played by [30 June] and the Organiser is informed.

In the event of difficulty arranging a date the Organise will, if necessary, adjudicate based on the number of suitable dates each captain has offered and their timeliness in replying to messages. A ‘suitable’ date is a weekday evening during the specified period for playing the match given with at least 10 days’ notice. (Note there is no requirement to play on a weekday evening if both captains agree otherwise.) The Organiser will typically deem one team to have defaulted and award a VP result as specified in section 11.

The venue must be [in Utopia (old boundaries)] unless both captains agree otherwise. If the match is played at a club, the home team will pay any table money due.

The home team is expected to provide refreshments for both teams and to provide playing conditions similar to or better than those found in a duplicate club (such as suitable lighting, boards, bidding boxes, paper and a copy of the IMP scale). Exceptions, such as not using bidding boxes, should be agreed by the captains beforehand.

#### 6.1 Substitutions

A substitute is only allowed with the explicit agreement of the Organiser. No substitute that is a significantly better player than the team member they are substituting will be allowed. At the

discretion of the Organiser a member of a team from the same or a lower division may be allowed as a substitute.

#### 6.2 Exceptional Circumstances

The Organiser may allow other arrangements for matches or ask for a match to be rearranged in exceptional circumstances such as illness or extreme weather conditions but teams are encouraged to find substitute or additional players if at all possible.

### Dealing

Boards are dealt at the table in the presence of at least one player from each team. Pre-duplicated boards may be used instead as long as both captains are satisfied with the security arrangements.

### Seating Rights

The home team may choose which opponents it plays in the first half. When two teams of four play in fixed partnerships, there is a compulsory change of opponents at half time. If one or both teams have more than four players or wish to swap partnerships, the away team have seating rights for the second half. This is subject to the condition that the same four players must not play against each other for the entire match.

### Reporting Results

It is the responsibility of the winning captain, or the home captain in case of a draw, to

enter the results via the [Utopia.org] website or if unable to do so, to send the results to the

Organiser within two days of the match being played. The names of all participating players must be included. No correction of scores is allowed after the captains have agreed the result.

### Irregularities

#### 10.1 Late Arrival and Non-Arrival

If a team is more than 30 minutes late without notification, or more than 90 minutes late having notified late arrival, the match is awarded to the non-offending side. If any member of a team is present within 30 minutes of the starting time that constitutes ‘notification’.

After 30 minutes of delay, whether notified or not, the match is reduced by 2 boards and for each further complete 15 minute period the match is again reduced by 2 boards. The maximum number of boards that can be removed is eight (which occurs after 75 minutes of late arrival). If both teams are late, the 30 minutes starts from the time all the members of the first team are present.

It is preferable for an equal number of boards to be removed from each stanza of the match, but if one table can start play the non-offending side may choose to remove boards only from the first half. The non-offending side is awarded 3 IMPs per board removed but the match is still scored using the 24-board VP scale.

If a player has to leave early due to an emergency, the unplayed boards are treated in the same way as with late arrival. If there are more than eight boards still to play, section 11 below applies.

#### 10.2 Fouled or Cancelled Boards

In the event that both pairs in a team sit in the same polarity in one stanza, the score for that set will be zero. The stanza that has been completed will determine the score according to the [24]-board VP scale. Both pairs at the table are equally responsible for making sure that they sit in the correct positions.

If a board is fouled or cancelled for whatever reason in the first stanza of the match, a substitute board is added to the second half with the same dealer and vulnerability. If a board is fouled or cancelled in the second stanza of the match a substitute board may only be played if no player is aware of any of the results from the other table.

The captains should be aware that Law 86D may apply.

### Unplayed or Incomplete Matches and Withdrawal

If a match has to be abandoned due to unforeseen circumstances with neither team at fault, then:

1. if at least half of the boards have been played at both tables, the match is considered complete and the VP scale for the number of completed boards is used;
2. if fewer than half of the boards have been completed, the captains should endeavour to replay the match completely. If this is not possible, the Organiser will adjudicate a result.

A team is considered not to be at fault if its home venue becomes unavailable during the match (e.g. due to a power cut) unless a member of the team was the direct cause of the problem.

If a team is awarded a match, for example under rules 6 or 10, it will receive the highest of 12 VPs, its average across all the other matches it plays during the season, or the final average of all other teams in matches played against the defaulting team. Artificial VP scores from other defaulted matches are not included in this calculation.

If a team ‘concedes’ a match having played at least half the boards, the non-offending side get the higher of their score under the preceding paragraph or their VP score for the match assuming they score +3 IMPs on each of the unplayed boards.

The defaulting team always receives 0 VPs.

If a team withdraws from the league having played fewer than half its scheduled matches, all results against the team are removed. If the team has played at least half its scheduled matches, results in the remaining matches are calculated using the preceding rule for defaulted matches.

The organiser may impose the penalty of non-entry in the following season on some or all the members of a team that defaults on a match or withdraws during the season.

### Rulings

{*for matches played at a specified venue}*

A non-playing TD will usually be available at the venue. If no TD is available, a suitably qualified player present but not playing in the match will give a ruling of first instance.

{*for matches played privately}*

The section on ‘Rulings In Matches Played Privately’ in the EBU Regulations for Knock-Out Competitions applies and covers all circumstances not described here.

The equivalent of summoning the Director is to inform one’s opponents at the table that one wishes to have a ruling. If a ruling is required, then in the first instance the Captains may agree on an outcome. If they cannot agree, they should contact [Utopia’s Chief TD] or an EBU Tournament Director or EBU Referee (contact details are available on the EBU website).

If it is impossible to obtain a ruling at the time, the captains should submit details of the hand to the Organiser who will arrange a ruling in the days following the match.

### Appeals

A ruling may be appealed by either captain as long as this is within 12 hours of receiving the original ruling. [The Utopia Appeals process applies / Details of the hand, the original ruling, comments from both sides and contact details for the players should be sent in writing to the Organiser including a request for an appeal to be held. The Organiser will ask at least three players of good standing within the [County] to act as an appeals committee. There is [no deposit] required for an appeal. If it is not possible to form a disinterested committee of suitable standard, the Organiser may ask any member of the EBU panel of Referees, as listed on the EBU website, to hear the appeal.

# Additional/Amended Regulations for Teams of Eight

*Note that amendments to the regulations on venue may be required if two locations are used for each match.*

*{A for matches played as two separate teams of four}*

### Scoring

Each team of four plays a separate match of [24 boards played in two sets of 12]. Scoring is by IMPs. The net IMP result from the two matches combined is converted to VPs on the discrete 20-0 scale3 for a match of [48] boards which can be found in the EBU diary or from <http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales> .

### 10.1 Late Arrival or Non-Arrival *additional text*

Each team of four is considered to be playing an independent match. One of the two matches should start play as soon as soon as one team from each side is present.

If one team of four is late, up to eight boards may be removed from their match and scored as defined below.

If one team of four does not arrive within 75 minutes of the scheduled start time the other match is played as usual, but the unplayed match is scored as + 24 IMPs to the non-offending team (and – 24 IMPS to the offending team).

*{B for matches played as one team of eight}*

### Movement and Scoring

The away team sits for the first set, with two pairs NS (at tables 1 and 3) and two pairs EW (at tables 2 and 4). The home team have seating rights for the first stanza. The away team remains stationary for the match while the home team moves. The match is played in four stanzas of [6] boards each, with scoring after [12] boards. The movement is as follows:

Stanza 1: Tables 1 and 2 play [1-6] (sharing boards); tables 3 and 4 play [7-12].

Stanza 2: The home team pairs at tables 1 and 2 swap places, as do the home team pairs at tables 3 and 4. The boards are also swapped, so that tables 1 and 2 play [7-12] and 3 and 4 play [1-6].

Stanza 3: The home team pairs at tables 1 and 2 swap with their counterparts who were at tables 3 and 4. Tables 1 and 2 play boards [13-18] and tables 3 and 4 play boards [19-24].

Stanza 4: The home team pairs at tables 1 and 2 swap places, as do the home team pairs at tables 3 and 4. Tables 1 and 2 play boards [19-24] while tables 3 and 4 play boards [13-18].

Note that there can be no discussion of the hands after the first or third stanza, only at the scoring break and at the end of play.

{*If more than one set of boards can be duplicated it is simpler to have all four tables playing the same boards for each stanza with the home team moving up one table at each break, however sharing six boards between four tables is unacceptably slow.}*

Scoring is by {cross-imps} / {adding up the four scores and using the modified IMPs scale in the White Book section 3.7.1} converted to VPs on the discrete 20-0 scale[[3]](#footnote-3) which can be found in the EBU diary or from <http://www.ebu.co.uk/laws-and-ethics/vp-scales> . {*the White Book explains which VP scale to use depending on the form of scoring*}

### 10.1 Late Arrival or Non-Arrival *additional text*

If it is known that one or two pairs from a team of eight will not arrive within 75 minutes of the scheduled start time, the non-offending captain may choose either to claim a default (scored as in Section 11) or to play a teams-of-four match. The two captains may each choose which of their pairs play which stanzas and which (if any) players will leave without playing.

The match is scored using IMPs converted to VPs using the discrete [24] board VP scale. The non-offending side is awarded an additional +24 IMPs (and the offending side -24 IMPs).

One or two pairs from a team of eight may be more than thirty minutes late but still expected to arrive before the first stanza is completed or within 75 minutes of the scheduled start time. In that event the match should be started with those pairs present. The non-offending side’s captain has seating rights for the first stanza (this over-rides the usual seating rights). If only two pairs are present, one should sit EW and the other NS.

{*when scored by Cross-Imps:* The non-offending side scores +4 IMPs for each board with two missing comparisons (one missing pair) or +5 IMPs for each board with three missing comparisons (two missing pairs), up to a maximum of {the lesser of} eight boards or one complete stanza. An artificial score is calculated to be used in place of the missing comparisons using the formula in the White Book section 3.7.2.2.

If the missing players have not arrived before the start of the second stanza, the match is continued as a team-of-four match for the remaining boards. The [24] board VP scale for teams of four is used, with the IMP result from the first stanza divided by eight before converting the final result to VPs.}

 {*when scored as ‘add then IMP’:* Boards with only two results are scored normally. If there are three results available on a board, an artificial score is calculated to be used in place of the missing comparison using the formula in the White Book section 3.7.2.3. In addition, the non-offending side receives +2 imps for each board where there is one missing score, and +3 imps for each board where there are two missing scores.

If the missing pair have not arrived in time for the second stanza, the match is continued as a teams-of-four match, using the normal IMP scale and the [24] board VP scale.}

{C *for matches played as teams of eight using ‘IMP then Add’}*

### 10.2 Fouled or Cancelled Boards *additional text*

If a board is fouled having already been played two or three times, a score is calculated for the board as in section 10.1 above for late arrival. An additional IMP adjustment may be given as in that section if only one team is deemed to be the offending side.

1. There are many possible ways of handling multiple divisions and promotion/relegation (such as play-offs); the default approach for new teams may depend on the total number of divisions, whether the number of teams in each division is fixed or whether other teams pull out. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. League organisers may specify the use the continuous scale found at the same location. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. League organisers may specify the use the continuous scale found at the same location. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)