

Northants Bar Billiards League



*League
Constitution
&
Governing Rules*

*September
2023*

These rules supersede all previous versions

Officers of the league 2023/24

HONORARY PRESIDENT

Ted Dunkley (decd)

CHAIRMAN

Tony Britten

VICE CHAIRMAN

Jim Thomson

TREASURER

Tony Britten

LEAGUE SECRETARY

Mary Leeming

COMPETITION SECRETARY

Simon Coleman

SOCIAL SECRETARY

Michelle Coleman

DATA & STATISTICS OFFICER

Lorin Clough

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Tony Britten

COUNTY CAPTAIN

TBC

COMMITTEE

Jason Neal

Keith Thomson

Alan Taylor

Dawn Dunkley

Stew Greenaway

CONSTITUTION

1. The Officers of the league shall be the Chairman, Vice Chairman, League Secretary, Treasurer, Competition Secretary, Social Secretary, Communications Officer, Data & Statistics Officer and County Captain. The league committee shall comprise further of Inter Area 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' team captains and an additional five ordinary members. All committee members shall have full voting powers.
2. Once elected the affairs of the league are under sole management and control of this committee, whose decision shall be final and binding upon all persons.

OFFICERS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3. All officers of the league are required to act in a manner that is not injurious or likely to be injurious to the interests and character of the league.
4. All officers of the league are expected to attend committee meetings wherever reasonably possible and to transact business and decision making in the best interests of the league.
5. All officers of the league are jointly accountable for league strategy with regard to sustainability, growth and development.
6. The roles and responsibilities of the officers of the league are as follows:
 - a. **CHAIRMAN** – The role of the Chairman shall be to stand as figurehead to the league and to oversee the continuing operations of the league. The Chairman is responsible for the leadership of the league and management of the league committee.
 - b. **VICE CHAIRMAN** – The Vice Chairman role is to act as deputy to the Chairman and to assume the role of Chairman in the absence of the same. The Vice Chairman is responsible for the continual growth of the league and identifying areas of development.
 - c. **TREASURER** – The role of the Treasurer shall be to manage the financial activity of the league and to ensure ongoing solvency as well as to ensure the security of league assets. The Treasurer shall supply ongoing information pertaining to the financial position of the league at each committee meeting and will prepare full and detailed accounts for acceptance at the A.G.M. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the day to day management of league finances,

subscriptions and sponsorship as well as for allocating budget for expenditure.

- d. LEAGUE SECRETARY – The role of Secretary shall be to schedule, oversee and administer the key activities of the league committee. The Secretary shall maintain all records pertaining to committee meetings and shall be responsible for managing the success and productivity of meetings. All meeting minutes shall be compiled by the Secretary and forwarded to the Communications Officer for publication. The Secretary shall coordinate the preparation of all documentation for committee meetings and the A.G.M. and will act as the conduit of communication with the All England Bar Billiards Association (A.E.B.B.A).
- e. COMPETITION SECRETARY – The role of Competition Secretary shall be to ensure adequate focus is given to the playing success of the league and its members. The Competition Secretary shall be responsible for the formulation of league fixtures, the management and administration of challenge competitions and Northants Masters. They shall maintain necessary documentation in order to conduct draws for each competition. The Competition Secretary shall provide access to league and competition draws and results to both the Data & Statistics Officer and the Communications Officer in order to enable timely recording and publication of Fixtures, Ranking Points and/or Qualification tables.
- f. SOCIAL SECRETARY – The role of Social Secretary shall be to maintain overall focus on the provision of fund-raising events which in turn will underpin the financial sustainability of the league. The Social Secretary will be responsible for organizing, arranging and procuring all required items for all such events to the benefit of the league and its members. Including but not limited to Race Night, Quiz Night, Presentation Evening and all other social events.
- g. COUNTY CAPTAIN – The role of County Captain shall be to act as the leader of the league from a playing perspective. The County Captain is responsible for ensuring the league has representation in Inter Area and National competitions. The County Captain shall, at all times, ensure that the league is compliant with the terms and conditions for entry into Inter Area and National competitions and shall report to committee on matches played and performances.
- h. COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER – The role of Communications Officer is to ensure that all league members can be informed of results, standings and forthcoming events via the league website and email. The Communications Officer shall be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the league website, manage subscriptions and ensure that costs are forwarded to the Treasurer.

- i. DATA & STATISTICS OFFICER – The role of the Data & Statistics Officer shall be to compile Ranking Points and Qualification standings for all players against all playing activity.
7. All other members of the committee shall have equal voting rights but are not required to execute additional powers.

COMMITTEE POWERS

8. The committee is empowered to institute an additional position of Honorary President and/or Honorary Vice-President which shall be awarded by committee to reward, and in recognition of, longstanding commitment to the league.
9. This committee has the power to refuse the entry or to disqualify any team or player it sees fit, should their conduct be injurious or likely to be injurious to the interests and character of the league.
10. The committee shall have the power to make all necessary bylaws dealing with matters not provided for by the "Rules & Constitution" of the league including, but not limited to, matters of organisation, events and competitions, matters of adjudication.
11. A decision cannot be made in committee without a quorum being present. Four members of the committee shall form a quorum, including at least two officers of the league. In the event of the Chairman and Vice Chairman both being absent, the members of the committee shall elect a Chairman for that particular meeting from those present. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
11. The committee shall be responsible for the selection of County and Inter Area squads based on league and competition performances as informed by the Data & Statistics Officer and Competition Secretary. The selection of playing teams shall be solely at the discretion of the respective captain.
12. The committee will meet at approximately monthly intervals or when the Chairman/League Secretary feels it to be appropriate.
13. The committee may at any time, and they shall if required by requisition signed by at least six registered players of the League stating in express terms the nature of the business to be transacted, call a "Special General Meeting" of the league at such time as the committee shall determine. The notice convening the meeting shall specify the business to be transacted and no other business shall be brought before the meeting.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

14. A "General Meeting" will be held annually and will be called by the League Secretary, with the venue and date arranged by the committee. The purpose of this meeting will be to receive the officers' reports, to adopt the annual accounts, to elect officers for the ensuing year and to transact only such business as is included on the agenda and of which due notice has been given. All registered players will be entitled to vote at this meeting. TEN registered players present shall form a quorum at any "General Meeting".
15. An open invitation for league members to stand for election to committee posts shall be posted at least 30 days prior to the A.G.M. Election of officers and committee members shall take the form of a ballot (show of hands) where the candidate with the highest number of votes shall prevail. Proxy votes shall not be valid in the election of committee officers and AGM proposals.
16. All nominations for election as officers and committee must be in writing, these nominees must be present at the "Annual General Meeting" to assume immediate office. Unless otherwise advised all officers serving at the time of this meeting will be able to stand en-bloc for re-election.
17. Those standing for election either to the Committee or to one of the principal managerial roles (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer) shall declare their intentions no later than 10 working days prior to the AGM, and their names shall be displayed on the website with members invited to vote either online, at the AGM in person, by appointing a proxy to vote on their behalf. Such intentions shall be notified online no later than the working day prior to the AGM.
18. Copies of the agenda will be forwarded to league members well in advance of the meeting date. Minutes of the previous A.G.M. will only be sent on request (although they will be made available on the league website throughout the year) and the annual accounts will be tabled at the meeting.
19. In order to strengthen the effectiveness of the A.G.M, proposals may be accepted for voting purposes where minor modifications to the terms of said proposal have been discussed and agreed during the discussion of that proposal at the A.G.M.
20. A report of business transacted at all meetings shall be published via the league website no later than seven days following the meeting or made available on request and kept for that purpose by the League Secretary. The Treasurer shall keep proper books of accounts showing all receipts and expenditure. Receipts must be held until the Annual Accounts have been adopted at the A.G.M. All monies received shall be paid into the bank account which will be in the name of the league, and operated by any two of the following officers: - Chairman, Vice Chairman, League Secretary, Competition Secretary or Treasurer.
21. Members shall be notified of the date for Committee meetings no later than 7 days prior to the meeting. Members shall then have 3 working days to submit any matter for discussion at the Committee meeting.

AWARDS

22. All challenge cups and perpetual trophies will remain the property of the league. Any player who wins such awards and wishes to take possession of it for their term of honour, must give a guarantee that any trophy will be safeguarded by them and that they shall be returned to the custody of the league when called for. All perpetual trophies and awards may be retained in the House/Club that the player/team played from or may be kept at your private address so long as they are covered by insurance.
23. Costs of repair for trophies that have been damaged whilst in the possession league members or venues must be reported immediately to the Committee once known and borne exclusively by the custodian when the damage occurred.
24. The league will supply personal trophies/medals to winners and runners-up in all competitions and meet the cost of engraving for those and all perpetual trophies.
25. The properties and assets of the league shall be vested in the committee.
26. If for any reason the league shall cease to exist, the properties and assets of the league shall be disposed of in such a manner as the committee shall think fit.
27. Toward the end of each Winter season the committee shall be required to vote on the recipient of the Committee Award. Committee members are invited to bring nominations to the selection based on, but not limited to, league and/or competition performances, contribution to the development or enhancement of the league, extraordinary commitment.
28. The Committee shall award prizes in respect of highest eligible player score on an 'away' table (Highest Away Score) and highest eligible player break on an 'away' table (Highest Away Break) for the top performances in each division (currently two).
29. Qualifying matches where scores/breaks shall be eligible for prizes set out in Rule 26 shall be Winter League matches (except where Rule 28 applies), Individual Knockout matches excluding semi-final and final, Division 2 Individual Knockout matches excluding semi-final and final.
30. Players from Division 1 shall not be entitled to submit an eligible score/break when playing a team or player from a lower division.
31. The Chairman shall award an annual prize (Chairman's Award) at his/her sole discretion based on any criteria as he/she sees fit.
32. There shall be an annual award for the Most Promising Novice Player (Mary Leeming Award) which shall be decided, based on performances and improvement, by the committee.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

33. Teams must submit the required subscription fee as determined by the Treasurer and as directed by the Competition Secretary to enter league competition. Subscriptions shall be payable on the occasion of the first Winter League match of the season.
34. Players must submit the required entry fee as determined and directed by the Competition Secretary to enter challenge competitions.
35. Any fines or unpaid fees must be paid in full before re-entry can be accepted into any league competition and such monies will form part of the new seasons entry fees.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

36. MONDAY will be the recognised night for league matches. Other match nights will be considered by the committee when teams have other commitments, but only where all else fails. Houses with more than two teams playing from one table will be permitted to change their home game match nights for the third team. All league matches to start by 8.30PM except challenge competition matches which shall commence from 8:00PM. Challenge competition matches shall normally be scheduled for play on THURSDAY evenings. Start times for each competition is detailed below:
 - a) League matches – 8:30pm
 - b) Premiership/Nene Cup matches – 8:30PM
 - c) Team Knockout matches – 8:00pm
 - d) Individual Knockout (including 2nd Division) – 8:00pm
 - e) Pairs Knockout (including Blind Pairs) – 8:00pm
37. For challenge competition matches all players, whether scheduled to play in the first series of games or later, should still attend the match venue at the designated start time to assist with scoring matches as designated in Rule 34 above.
38. In addition and to the exception of the competitions set out in Rule 34, the Committee shall host an additional event called the Northants Team Championships. This competition shall be the exclusive route of entry for teams into the All England Bar Billiards Association National Team Championships Competition and shall be concluded no later than April of each year.
39. The playing season for this league will be that time from the start of the winter competition to the conclusion of the summer competition.

40. In team matches opponent's names to be drawn by each opposing Captain. However, to prevent any delays the games may be played in any order, if the breaks are duly allotted if possible. In a team game, if a leg cannot be played due to a player(s) late arrival and no other leg can be played and no substitution is possible, then that leg is forfeited by the player who is absent. If the missing player is involved in more than one leg, then this rule will be applied for each leg every 20 minutes after the first leg is defaulted.
41. Initial registration of team players for the Winter League must be made as requested by the Competition Secretary. Any subsequent registrations for either the Winter League or Summer League may be made by request to the Competition Secretary 24 hours prior to the commencement of the scheduled match to enable a check on eligibility and also for a Summer League Handicap to be calculated and provided, where this format is used.
42. To expedite fixture fulfilment and to maintain fairness, and in circumstances where a team cannot field five players, team captains may deploy one player of their team to play twice in one fixture. This shall be known as the '4 Man Rule'.
43. Each team can use the '4 Man Rule' UPTO 8 TIMES PER SEASON. This may be deployed in any team league or cup match (incl. Nene Cup, Team KO & Premiership) but up to a maximum of eight times in total however this may be extended at the discretion of the committee
 - a) Players may only be drawn as the '5th man' twice per season.
 - b) In away league fixtures the '5th man' must be deployed in leg 4 (against the break) so as not to gain an advantage.
 - c) In home league fixtures the '5th man' must be deployed in leg 5 (against the break) so as not to gain an advantage.
 - d) In cup matches the same applies - the 5th man cannot be drawn with the break.
 - e) When completing the draw, captains must ensure that, if using the 4 Man Rule, they complete the draw as normal for the legs that a player is available to them (i.e. legs 1,2,3 and 4 or 5 depending on whether you are home or away). Once completed, the draw is then made (randomly from the available 4-man rule players) for the remaining leg.
 - f) Games played under this ruling do not attract ranking points and are not considered when calculating Northants Masters Averages or Wins, nor will any break or score be eligible for consideration as the highest break or score
44. A player will only be permitted to register for one house per season and enter competitions thereafter from that house. Players may transfer from their registered team to another team at any time before the mid-point of the season. Such transfers must be with the agreement of the team captains involved and are subject to Committee approval.

45. Matches should not be postponed other than for reason of inclement weather or inability to field an eligible team even when deploying the '4 Man Rule'. In the event of unnecessary postponement, the match must be played by the closing date for that competition, as set by the Competition Secretary. The date for postponed match must be set within 14 days of the cancellation. In respect of challenge cup and competition matches, failure to play within 14 days will result in the postponing team forfeiting the match. Additional flexibility is available for rearranging league matches however all outstanding matches MUST be completed prior to the final match of the league season. Failure to play outstanding matches in compliance of this rule shall result in the postponing team forfeiting the match and points being awarded to the opposing team.
46. If a team fails to give at least 2hrs notification of a postponement, they will forfeit that match subject to the discretion of the Competition Secretary. In the event of any postponement the Competition Secretary MUST be notified on the day of the match. If less than 2hrs notice is provided, the offending team may be liable to reimburse the hosting team for food charges etc.
47. If a visiting team or player is found to have practiced on the "home" team's table on the match day, they will forfeit the match.
48. In team league matches one point will be awarded for each game won plus one point for the match winners. In the event of a tie in any game each team will be awarded 1/2 a point. Where a match is drawn, no bonus point shall be awarded.
49. Division winners will be the team holding the most points at the close of the competition and other positions awarded accordingly. In the case of two or more teams concluding on equal points, positions will be decided by the number of away wins, then by the number of home wins, then by aggregate score. Should all things then be equal, a neutral table play off will be made with the winner taking the honours.
50. League division promotions and relegation's will be one team down and one team up, subject to the committee's discretion and the number of teams in the league competition.
51. The CAPTAIN of the WINNING team is responsible for ensuring that the Competition Secretary receives a copy of the card signed by both captains within 36hrs of the match. Failure to comply may result in loss of points for one or both teams. It is recommended that captains keep a copy of their match cards. Match scorecards shall be made available to the Communications Officer for publication on the League Website.
52. COMPLAINTS, i.e. condition of the table etc., must be given in writing within seven days of the offending match. Complaints on table condition must be pointed out to the opposing Captain prior to completing half of the first leg of the match. In respect of a complaint, both captains may agree to re-set the table and then both captains may play the table, once re-set to agree that it is satisfactory for play. If the 'away' captain is still unable to rule the table as 'playable' then a complaint may be lodged and the

remainder of the games shall not be played. If a complaint is to be lodged the words "COMPLAINT LODGED" must be marked on the result card.

53. For competition matches, games may only be played at the venue allocated by the Competition Secretary or organiser. Games must be played within one week of allocated date or at any time before the allocated date. All disputes regarding fixture fulfilment shall be escalated to the Competition Secretary or organizer for adjudication.

RULES IN RESPECT OF LEAGUE MATCHES (WINTER)

54. League matches shall consist of five singles games of one leg per game.
55. Points shall be awarded as per rule 48 above.
56. Opening breaks shall be allocated as follows:
 - a) The 'home' team shall have opening breaks in legs 1 & 4.
 - b) The 'away' team shall have breaks in legs 2, 3 & 5.
57. All legs shall be played as 'Chase the break'.
58. League matches shall be played on tables in compliance with Rules 135 - 146 below.
59. All other playing rules shall be in compliance with Rules 147 – 174 below.

RULES IN RESPECT OF LEAGUE MATCHES (SUMMER)

60. League matches shall consist of three singles matches of one leg per match and one doubles match of one leg.
61. Points shall be awarded for each leg win only (1 point per leg won). A bonus point shall be awarded to the winning team. In the event of a drawn match, a bonus point shall be awarded to the team with the greatest total score.
62. Opening breaks shall be allocated as follows:
 - a) The 'home' team shall have opening breaks in legs 1 & 4.
 - b) The 'away' team shall have breaks in legs 2 & 3.
63. The break position for this variation is to play a ball from the centre of the 'D' to hit a triangle of six white balls.

64. The triangle of balls is to be placed on the centre line between the 100 hole and the 10 hole, lead ball nearest the 100 hole, with its centre 14cm from the centre of the 100 hole.
65. If a player pots all available balls on the table, a new triangle shall be formed and play shall commence as at the beginning of the game. The break score compiled to that point shall be banked and recorded on the scoreboard. The scorer shall then start counting from zero.
66. Any foul committed shall only apply to the current break.
67. Should insufficient balls be available to fill the triangle after the bar has dropped, the triangle will be built row by row from the front and right hand side.
68. All break shots to be played 'off-the-spot' from the centre of the 'D' but all others, with the exception of the last ball, can be played from anywhere on the 'D'.
69. The black skittle will only count as a white for this competition, except for the 'last ball shot'.
70. All legs shall be played as 'chase the break' with the home side having first break in legs 1 and 4. The away team shall have the first break in legs 2 and 3.
71. League matches shall be played on tables in compliance with Rules 135 - 146 below.
72. All other playing rules shall be in compliance with Rules 147 – 174 below.

RULES IN RESPECT OF TEAM KNOCKOUT COMPETITIONS

73. Team Knockout matches shall be played on a neutral table.
74. According to the competition draw the team drawn as the 'home' team shall be awarded the opening break in legs 1, 3 and 5.
75. All legs shall be played as 'Equal breaks but not equal time' except for the final where in leg 5 the rule of 'equal break and equal time' is adopted.
76. 'Equal break and equal time shall mean:
 - a) Should the first player consume in excess of half the agreed table time in the fifth leg with their opening break, the second player shall be permitted equal time for their opening break in the attempt to pass the first players opening break.
 - b) Further coins should be inserted before the second player commences their break.
 - c) Once extra coins have been inserted, the game will be over when:

- i. the second player passes the first players opening score.
 - ii. the second player has consumed the agreed equal time.
 - iii. the second player breaks down on their opening break.
- 77. Team Knockout matches shall be played on tables in compliance with Rules 135 - 146 below.
- 78. All other playing rules shall be in compliance with Rules 147 – 174 below.

RULES IN RESPECT OF PREMIERSHIP AND NENE CUP

- 79. All matches shall be played consistent with Rules 54 - 59 above.

RULES IN RESPECT OF THE NORTHANTS TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 80. This competition shall be used to determine eligibility into the AEBBA National Team Championships as detailed in Rule 38 above.
- 81. Entry to this competition is open to all league members but is conditional on the commitment of the winning team too represent the league at the National Tournament as arranged by the AEBBA.
- 82. Only teams that can meet Rule 81 above may be permitted to play in this competition.
- 83. Team captains are invited to submit teams comprised of a total of 5 players from any team in the league subject to all players committing to comply with Rule 81 and Rule 82 above.
- 84. The competition shall be conducted as a single day event where all entered teams compete.
- 85. The Competition Secretary, according to the number of teams that enter, shall determine the precise format of the competition.
- 86. Should only one team enter the competition they shall automatically be declared the Northants Team Championship winners and shall be put forward to the AEBBA event.
- 87. Should multiple teams enter then the playing format of matches shall be in accordance with Rules 73 – 78 above.

RULES IN RESPECT OF INDIVIDUAL CHALLENGE COMPETITION MATCHES

(Main Individual Knockout, Division 2 Knockout, Jim Wilson Memorial (incl. plate) & The Northants Masters)

88. All matches shall be played on a neutral table (except those of The Northants Masters which shall be played according to a published schedule).
89. Entry to all Challenge Competitions shall be subject player registration with a league team and the commitment of any player to participate a minimum of FIVE league matches. In the event that a player is not selected by their team captain and can therefore not meet this criteria, the Competition Secretary may exercise discretion to allow entry.
90. All matches shall be played over two legs.
91. The first player drawn in each game will be deemed the "home" player.
92. The home player is to take the first break and the away player the 2nd. This rule SHALL NOT APPLY IN THE JIM WILSON MEMORIAL COMPETITION where players shall toss a coin to determine the choice of opening break.
93. All legs shall be played as 'Chase the break'.
94. Should any match reach a draw situation, an additional leg will be played on the same table until a conclusion is reached. The 'Equal break and equal time' rule shall apply with the order of breaks being decided by the toss of a coin with the choice going to the winner.
95. All semi-finals and finals (with the exception of the Northants Masters) shall be played on neutral tables on Grand Finals Day, to be drawn by the committee. Any players found to have played on any other table other than the one drawn, will be disqualified subject to the discretion of the Competition Secretary.
96. Players will not be permitted to play on any neutral table, on which they have been drawn to play, once the draw has been made (League and Cup commitments excepted).
97. Individual Challenge Competition matches shall be played on tables in compliance with Rules 135 - 146 below.
98. All other playing rules shall be in compliance with Rules 147 – 174 below.

RULES IN RESPECT OF PAIRS CHALLENGE COMPETITION MATCHES

(Main Pairs Knockout, Blind Pairs, Jim Wilson Memorial Mixed Pairs)

99. All matches shall be played on a neutral table wherever possible subject to the discretion of the Competition Secretary.
100. Entry to all Challenge Competitions shall be subject player registration with a league team and the commitment of any player to participate a minimum of FIVE league matches. In the event that a player is not selected by their team captain and can therefore not meet this criteria, the Competition Secretary may exercise discretion to allow entry.
101. All matches shall be played over two legs with the exception of the Jim Wilson Mixed Pairs which shall be played over one leg until the final where this rule shall apply.
102. The first pairing drawn in each game will be deemed the "home" team.
103. The home team shall nominate one player to take the first break and the away team shall nominate a player to immediately follow. Play then alternates with the second player from the 'home' team following that of the first player from the 'away' team and so on. In the second leg the second player from the 'away' team shall have the opening break followed by the second player from the 'home' team. Except in the case of the Blind Pairs and Jim Wilson Mixed Pairs where the following rules shall apply:
 - a) In the Blind Pairs the 'Division 2' player from the 'home' team shall take the opening break followed by the 'Division 2' player from the 'away team. This shall be repeated in the second leg.
 - b) In the Jim Wilson Mixed Pairs the 'Lady' player (or in some cases the weakest player as determined by the Competition Secretary) from the 'home' team shall take the opening break followed by the 'Lady' player from the 'away team. This shall be repeated in the second leg.
 - c) In the Jim Wilson Mixed Pairs ALL PLAYERS are subject to a scoring limit and may only compile breaks of 2,000 points in any visit to the table. A player must leave the table immediately on the shot which takes the break upto or over 2,000 points. Should the break exceed 2,000 points as a result of the last shot only 2,000 points shall be recorded. Scorers must alert players by clearly calling the scores when approaching this limit.
104. All legs in the Main Pairs Knockout shall be played as 'Equal break but not equal time'. All legs in the Blind Pairs and, when applicable, the Jim Wilson Mixed Pairs, shall be played as 'Chase the break'.
105. Pairs Challenge Competition matches shall be played on tables in compliance with Rules 135 - 146 below.
106. All other playing rules shall be in compliance with Rules 147 – 174 below.

RULES IN RESPECT OF THE NORTHANTS MASTERS

FIXTURES AND FULFILMENT

107. Invitation to play is offered conditionally on the entrant's commitment to fulfil all matches in accordance with the Rules in respect of The Northants Masters.
108. Entry to the Northants Masters shall be contingent on player registration with a league team and the commitment of any player to participate a minimum of FIVE league matches. In the event that a player is not selected by their team captain and can therefore not meet these criteria, the Competition Secretary or event organiser may exercise discretion to allow entry.
109. Qualification for The Northants Masters shall take place throughout the Winter League season and shall be based on league match performances as follows:
 - a. Players shall be ranked based on the number of league wins they have attained
 - b. Players shall also be ranked according to their average league match score against teams in their own division
 - c. This combined ranking $(a+b/2)$ shall then represent a player's Masters Ranking
 - d. Where Masters Rankings are level, the player with the higher average score shall be ranked higher
110. The winners of each division from the previous year are guaranteed promotion to the division higher or the highest division in which they qualify subject to compliance with Rules 107 and 108 above. The previous winner of the Premier Division shall be guaranteed entry to the same division in order to defend their title.
111. Players shall be allocated a Masters Division according to their Masters Ranking as follows:
 - a. Premier Division = Players with a Masters Rank of 1-6 plus previous year Premier Division Master and previous year Division 1 Master. In the event that the previous winners who are guaranteed entry are ranked in the top six, they are
 - b. Division 1 = the next seven players in the Masters Rankings plus the previous winner of Division 2
 - c. Division 2 = the next seven players in the Masters Rankings plus the previous winner of Division 3
 - d. Division 3 = the next seven players in the Masters Rankings plus the previous winner of Division 4
 - e. Division 4 = the next seven players in the Masters Rankings
 - f. Division 5 = the next seven players in the Masters Rankings
 - g. Division 6 = the next eight players in the Masters Rankings

112. Where an invited player is unable to accept the invitation the next ranked player in the qualification table will be offered the place and so on.
113. All scheduled matches should be completed on the designated match night wherever possible.
114. Where a player is unable to fulfil a single fixture on the scheduled match night, that game may be re-arranged for play up to 5 DAYS prior or 5 DAYS after the designated match time - to be played at the venue as per the published schedule.
115. Where a player is unable to meet the conditions of Rule 114 above, points will be forfeited and awarded in full to the opponent.
116. Where Rule 115 has been imposed - the player awarded the points will also be awarded an aggregate points total for that game based upon the average winning aggregate score from the other fixtures that week within his/her division.

ENTRY AND STRUCTURE

117. Entry fee for 'The Northants Masters 2024' has been set at £12.00 per player and will be collected on Match Night 1. Matchnights will commence at 8pm sharp!
118. Failure to submit the entry fee will prohibit play in the competition.
119. Players will compete in a division of eight players in a 'round robin' format over a period of seven weeks.
120. Each match shall be played over two legs.
121. The first named player in the fixture shall have the break in leg 1 and play shall follow according to 'chase the break'. The second named player in the fixture shall have the break in leg 2.
122. Players shall be awarded points for victories and ranked in a league table with the winner of the league awarded victory and the title.
123. Points shall be awarded as follows:
 - a) One point will be awarded for each leg won.
 - b) One bonus point will be awarded for the aggregate score win.
 - c) A maximum of three points may be won for a victory in both legs and the aggregate score win.
124. Prizes will be available for a number of aspects of play so scorers are required to record the following:
 - a) Player scores.
 - b) Player highest breaks (regardless of score) in each match.

- c) Player aggregate score.
- d) Player opening break (from the leg where the player commences with the break).

WINNING AND PRIZES

125. Players will win each match according to the standard Bar Billiards Rules of Play which govern all Northants Bar Billiards League matches.

126. Players will win the title of Northants Master (within each division) if they complete the league with the most points awarded.

127. In the event of a tie, the following shall be the order of precedence:

- a) Number of leg wins.
- b) Highest aggregate score.
- c) Head to Head.

128. Where all of the above are equal the prize shall be shared.

129. Prizes for The Northants Masters 2024 are as follows:

- a) The winner of each division will receive:
 - i. Title of Northants Master 2024.
 - ii. Northants Masters Trophy to keep for one year.
 - iii. Winners trophy to keep.
 - iv. Winners prize money of £50.
- b) The Runner up in each division will receive:
 - i. Runner Up trophy to keep.
 - ii. Runner Up prize money of £25.
- c) The player with the highest single break in each division will receive:
 - i. Highest Break trophy to keep.
- d) The player with the highest total aggregate score in each division will receive:
 - i. Highest Aggregate trophy to keep.

DISPUTES AND ADJUDICATION

130. Completed scorecards must be submitted to the Competition Secretary by 9pm on the Tuesday following the match night (or in the case of rearranged games, within 24 hours of the match).
131. In the unlikely event of a dispute all reasonable steps should be taken by players and scorers to resolve any matters according to mutual agreement within the Rules of Bar Billiards.
132. Where a dispute cannot be resolved in this manner it must be recorded on the scorecard and escalated (or raised directly) to the Competition Secretary and/or League Secretary within 24 hours for adjudication. Any decisions will be made prior to the next scheduled game.
133. The Northants Masters Competition matches shall be played on tables in compliance with Rules 135 - 146 below.
134. All other playing rules shall be in compliance with Rules 147 - 174 below.

BAR BILLIARDS PLAYING CONDITIONS

135. The playing area of the table shall not be less than 138.4 cm or more than 143.5 cm in length and not less than 78.7 cm in width, measuring from the inside edge of the cushions.
136. The table shall be not less than 86.4 cm and not more than 92.7 cm in height from the floor to the top of the cushion.
137. The table must be level and in good condition.
138. There shall be one black and two white skittles of equal size and weight.
139. To a height of at least 5.1 cm above its base each skittle should be cylindrical with a diameter between 1.5 cm and 1.8 cm. Skittles should be 11.4 cm tall +/- 0.6 cm. The black skittle shall be placed on a spot, the back edge of which will be 0.6 cm from the front edge of the 200 hole.
140. The white skittles shall be placed on spots level with and 17.8 cm from the centre of the 100 hole.
141. A "D" shall be firmly fixed to the table in the centre of the base of the playing area. This should be approximately 4 cm radius and the centre of the "D" shall be clearly marked with a spot, to be known as the break spot.
142. Another spot shall be fixed in the centre of the table with its centre not less than 17.1 cm and not more than 17.9 cm from the centre of the break spot on the "D". This shall be known as the red spot.
143. Baulk lines shall be clearly drawn on the table radiating from the centre of the base of the playing area to the side cushions so as to form an arc of not less than 150 degrees and not more than 160 degrees.

144. The table shall be adequately illuminated.
145. One ball of one colour and seven balls of a strongly contrasting colour – all of equal size and weight shall be provided. All balls used shall be clearly visible against the colour of the bed of the table. As an example:

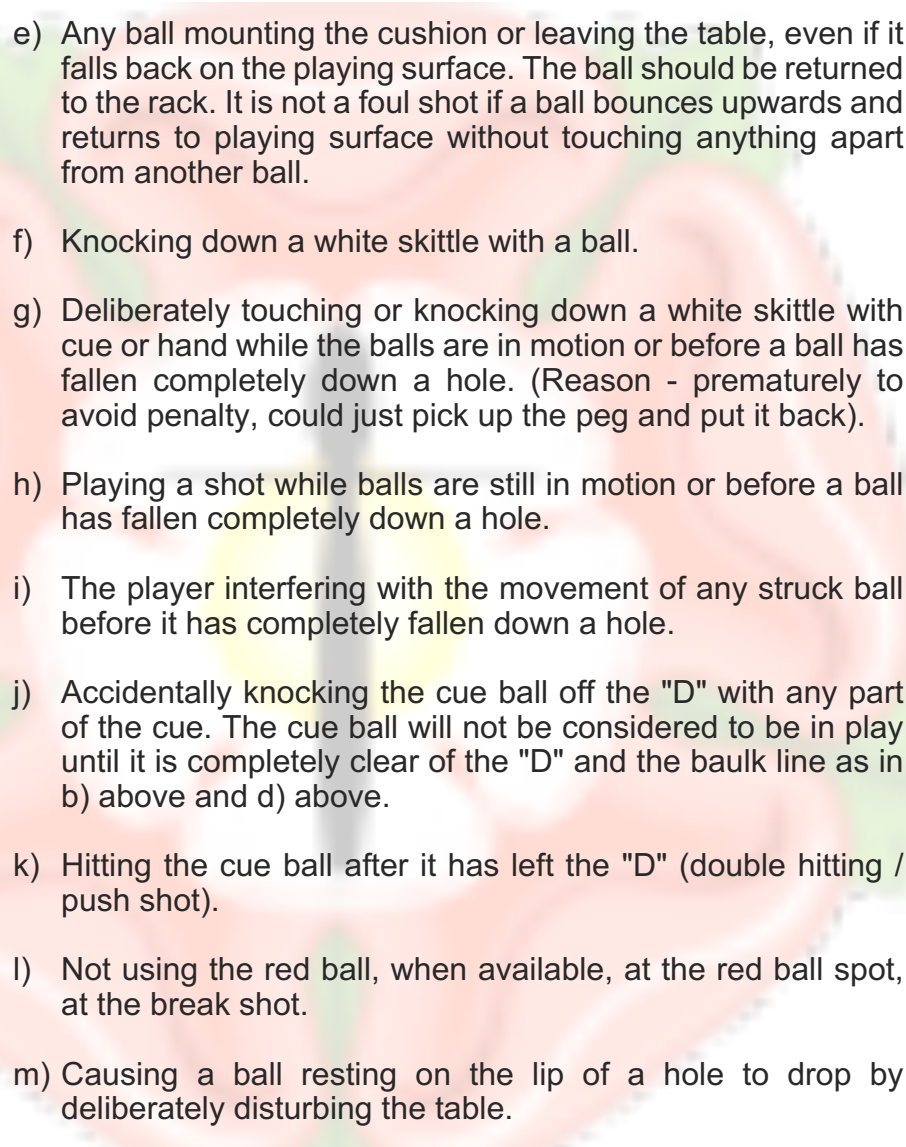
Cloth colour	Ball colour
Green	7x White and 1x Red
Red	7x Yellow & 1x Blue
Blue	7x White and 1x Red

146. Table time for League matches, Team, Individual and Pairs competitions will be a minimum 15 minutes and a maximum 20 minutes. If the table runs for less than 15 minutes the bar will be pulled again and play will continue until 15 minutes, at which point any balls going into holes will be retained as if the bar had dropped. If the bar has not dropped by 20 minutes any balls returning to the trap will be retained by the scorer as if the bar has dropped.

BAR BILLIARDS RULES OF PLAY

147. All shots must be played with the base of the cue ball within the area of the "D".
148. The red ball shall be placed by the hand on the red spot and a white ball placed on the break spot, also by hand. The white ball is then played with a cue onto the red ball with the object of potting one or both balls. This is known as playing from the break position.
149. If, from the break position, both balls are potted into any holes, three times consecutively, the player on their next shot shall be barred from potting more than one ball, in accordance with rule 172(e).
150. If no balls remain on the table at any time during the course of the game, with the exception of the last ball shot, play will be continued from the break position.
151. From the break position the red ball must always be used on the red spot, unless the bar has dropped and the red is no longer available. At any other time use of the red ball as the cue ball is optional.
152. Other than from the break position and the last ball shot (see rule 164) the cue ball may be placed anywhere on the "D".
153. A white ball potted into a hole shall score the value of that hole. The red ball when potted will score double the value of that hole, provided no penalty has been incurred in either case.
154. A break will continue until such time as the player fails to pot a ball or plays a foul shot in accordance with rules 165 and 166.

155. At the end of a break the score should be recorded progressively on the scoreboard.
156. If during a break a ball on the lip of a hole falls in without being struck by another, the ball shall count as if potted and the score will count. A break will be deemed to have started when the first shot is played and ended when the scorer calls end of break.
157. If a player plays at a ball on the lip of a hole and the ball falls before the cue ball reaches it, no penalty will be incurred and the player will continue with his break, except for any penalty incurred before the cue ball reaches the position previously occupied by the object ball.
158. If a ball on the lip of a hole falls in after the scorer has called end of break, in conjunction with rule 172(f), this ball shall not count.
159. Should a ball knock a skittle off its spot but the skittle does not fall over, the score shall count and the skittle should be replaced in its correct position before the next shot is played, unless prevented by a ball encroaching on the skittle's correct position, in which case it should be replaced as soon as the spot is clear, see rule 160.
160. Should any ball be touching a skittle causing it to lean, or preventing it from being re-spotted, this ball should be returned to the rack AT THE END OF THE BREAK.
161. When no balls are left in the rack, play continues by taking the ball furthest from the top (back) cushion. If two balls are equidistant from the top cushion the ball nearest the Centre line of the table should be taken.
162. After the Bar has dropped, play should continue until all balls in the rack had been used.
163. If two balls are "bridged" over a hole and one must be returned to the player, the scorer must hold the balls, "tilt" the back ball onto the table at its nearest point, and bring the other ball back to the player.
164. If only one ball remains, either in the rack or on the table, the break score should be recorded before the last shot is played. The last ball must then be played from the centre of the "D" into either the 100 or the 200 hole OFF ONE SIDE CUSHION. This is known as the 'Last ball shot'. Before playing the last ball shot the white skittles should be placed in the 50 holes and the top holes guarded. If the ball strikes a skittle in the 50 hole, and falls into the 100 or 200 hole, the score will not count. Both players should continue to play the last ball shot alternately until the ball is potted or the black peg is knocked down.
165. No one is to touch any ball whilst it is in motion (e.g. falling down hole), except to prevent the ball from going down the top holes in rule 164.
166. Foul shots incurring loss of break score penalty:
 - a) Potting both balls from break position four consecutive times. (Except as in rule 172(e)).
 - b) Failing to hit another ball with the cue ball. (Except as in rule 157 and rule 164).

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- c) Any ball returning over or obstructing the baulk line. A ball shall be deemed to be obstructing the baulk line if, when viewed from directly above, it obscures any part of the line. The ball should be returned to the rack.
 - d) Any ball obstructing or hitting the "D". A ball shall be deemed to be obstructing the "D" if, when viewed from directly above, it obscures any part of the "D". The ball should be returned to the rack.
 - e) Any ball mounting the cushion or leaving the table, even if it falls back on the playing surface. The ball should be returned to the rack. It is not a foul shot if a ball bounces upwards and returns to playing surface without touching anything apart from another ball.
 - f) Knocking down a white skittle with a ball.
 - g) Deliberately touching or knocking down a white skittle with cue or hand while the balls are in motion or before a ball has fallen completely down a hole. (Reason - prematurely to avoid penalty, could just pick up the peg and put it back).
 - h) Playing a shot while balls are still in motion or before a ball has fallen completely down a hole.
 - i) The player interfering with the movement of any struck ball before it has completely fallen down a hole.
 - j) Accidentally knocking the cue ball off the "D" with any part of the cue. The cue ball will not be considered to be in play until it is completely clear of the "D" and the baulk line as in b) above and d) above.
 - k) Hitting the cue ball after it has left the "D" (double hitting / push shot).
 - l) Not using the red ball, when available, at the red ball spot, at the break shot.
 - m) Causing a ball resting on the lip of a hole to drop by deliberately disturbing the table.
 - n) Playing the break shot with either ball not on its spot. It is not a foul under this rule if the ball falls off the spot as the player is in the act of striking. Any other penalty incurred will count.
 - o) If the cue ball fails to reach an imaginary line through the black peg and parallel with the top cushion and does not strike another ball, it will be returned to the tray and the player loses his break. (This does not apply to the last ball of the game).

167. Foul shots incurring loss of entire score penalty:

- a) Knocking down the black skittle with a ball.

- b) Deliberately touching the black skittle with a cue or hand while balls are in motion or before a ball has completely fallen down a hole.
168. Should both a white and a black skittle be knocked down, if the white skittle falls first, the penalty will be loss of break, unless the white was knocked down deliberately by hand or cue. Should the black skittle fall first, the penalty will be loss of entire score.
169. If a player is nudged or jolted while in the act of playing a shot, causing them to play a foul shot, no penalty will be incurred. The scorer should replace the balls in what they consider to be their original positions and the player should then replay their shot.
170. If the balls are disturbed in any way other than in the normal course of play, then the scorer should replace the balls in what he/she considers to be their original positions and play should continue. If, in the opinion of the scorer, a ball on the edge of the hole falls due to any accidental or deliberate table movement by the player, that the ball be replaced and will not count and the break will end.
171. Deliberately foul shot: If, after the bar has dropped, a player - in the opinion of the scorer - deliberately plays a ball directly into a hole without touching another ball, then the ball should be retrieved and the other player allowed to play it. Any additional coins required to do so should be provided by the player deemed to have played the foul.
172. Scorer and marker:
- a) A competent scorer should be appointed. In league and competition play a marker may also be appointed at the discretion of team captains and/or players.
 - b) The scorer will act as referee and will be the sole arbiter on matters of facts and interpretation of the rules during the course of the game, unless a tournament referee is present.
 - c) The scorer will call out, progressively, the score after each shot.
 - d) Progressive thousands must be recorded either by placing, in clear view, coins or other suitable markers, or alternatively by recording them on the scoreboard.
 - e) After a player has potted both balls three times consecutively from the break position, the scorer must clearly warn the player to leave one ball up. Should the scorer fail to do so, the player will not be penalised under rule 166(a).
 - f) If, during the course of play, a ball remains on the lip of a hole, the scorer shall decide when to call end of break in accordance with rule 158. (Player walking away from table does not determine end of break)

- g) The scorer shall be responsible for ensuring that the scores recorded on the scoreboard are correct.
- h) A marker may be appointed to record the progressive scores on the scoreboard at the end of each break.
- i) The marker, if appointed, should check the score as it is called out by the scorer and should draw his attention to any discrepancy at the earliest convenient time.
- j) No person, other than the scorer or marker, should touch the scoreboard during the course of the game.

173. If a ball obstructs the placing of a ball anywhere in the “D”, but no foul shot has been played, it will remain there, but will be removed to the trap at the end of the current break (similar to the leaning peg/obstructed spot situation).

174. No coaching of players should take place whilst the player is at the table.

ALL RULES ARE BY ORDER OF THE COMMITTEE