

RULES OF PLAY.

A – League Match Procedure

1. All League matches can be played in white or Club tops and greys, or a Club uniform registered with the County. For semi-finals and finals whites or registered club uniform may be worn. In all games (i.e. all rounds) all members of any team must be dressed in shirts/tops of the same design and bottoms of the same colour.
2. Teams to normally consist of 4 Triples, 3 bowls each, 18 ends, Suffolk Bowls (B.E.) rules to apply.
3. All games to be played on a home and away basis. Scheduled games normally to take place on a Wednesday at 6.30pm. Each area to be allowed variable start times if agreed by the opposing side. No trial ends to be played except in the Semi-finals and Final.
4. Unfinished (14 ENDS ON ALL RINKS CONSTITUTES A GAME) matches to be re-arranged within 7 days. As per B.E. rules the game must continue where previously left off and the Hon. Area Secretary to be informed immediately of postponements.
5. Results of matches must be received by the Hon. Area Secretary within 3 days of the match being played. Clubs will be fined £20.00 for sending in 2 or more late results in a season.
6. In the event of a club having a player short at the commencement of the game a period of 15 minutes shall be allowed for the player to join in and play at Second.
7. In the event of a club not being able to field 12 players then a minimum of 10 players may play, with a minimum of 2 rinks of 3 players, this can occur 2 times in any given season. The order of play shall be as follow: - The rink(s) with 3 players shall be known as team A and the rink(s) with 2 players shall be known as team B.
 - i) When team A has the jack the order of play shall be Lead A, Lead B then second A (each in turn till 3 bowls by each player have been played) followed by the skips a normal manner.
 - ii) When team B has the jack the order of play shall be Lead B, Lead A, Second A (each in turn till 3 bowls have been bowled) followed by the skips in a normal manner.
8. In the event of a team not being able to fulfil a fixture, approval for a cancellation must be sort from the Hon. Area Secretary, if possible, in advance. WITHOUT A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION, 4 points and 20 shots may be deducted from the offending team's accrued total. If the match is not rearranged and played the offending team may have 4 points and 20 shots deducted from their accrued total shot difference and the non-offending team may be awarded 4 points and 20 shots to their shot difference. For any subsequent cancellation without approval by the Hon. Area Secretary a fine of £20.00 may also be imposed in addition to the points & shots deductions. Any agreed cancellation must be re-arranged within 7 days and played prior to the final match date.
9. Where possible the home team to supply an Umpire.

B – Scores and Divisions

1. In all League matches 2 points will be awarded to the winning team (aggregate score), 1 point each for a draw and 1 point to each winning Triple, In the event of a tied Triple each shall receive a ½ point.

2. Divisions to be decided by i) Points; the ii) Shot difference. If 2 clubs are equal on points and shot difference, the winner shall be the club with the most shots for. Should it still be a tied then the club that scored the most aggregate shots over their head-to-head matches shall be the winner and if still no winner, then the winner shall be decided by the toss of a coin.

3. If a match is not played by the final date, the offending club or clubs may be fined £20.00 and have 4 points and 20 shots deducted from their accrued total shot difference for each match not played.

The non-offending club or clubs may be awarded 4 points and 20 shots for each match not played. Should a cancelled game effect Relegation, Promotion or the Play Off's, the Area Results Secretary may use any suitable solution to get the match played. Failure to find a suitable solution may result in sanctions being applied to offending teams by the Area Committee and the original rule applied.

4. In the circumstances of a club / team having to withdraw from the League before the end of the Season, all the points and shots acquired by that club will be deducted from all other results. The withdrawing club will be relegated to the next bottom Division for the next season. No financial penalty will be imposed unless the club / team applies for membership for the next season when a £20.00 admin fee will be applied in addition to the team affiliation fee. Withdrawn clubs have no voting rights at Area AGMs County AGMs, or SGMs but may attend and speak.

5. Where required promotion & relegation will normally be on a 2 up and 2 down basis.

C – Player Registration

1. All members of each club, for whom a Suffolk Bowls (B.E.) affiliation has been paid, shall be eligible to play for their club in all League matches. Clubs playing non-affiliated players will be fined a sum of £20.00 payable to the Hon. Area Secretary and the club will be deducted 4 points from their accrued total each time such a person plays whilst not registered.

2. Clubs entering 2 TEAMS MUST REGISTER the names of the members of their First team (Minimum 12 players) with the Hon. Area Secretary at least 1 week before the league programme commences. For the purposes of the league Rules of Play the highest ranked team (from the previous year) is their first team regardless of team name. This rule shall not be applied if teams are in different (3 or 4 rink) sections.

3. Any member not being registered as a first team player may play for the first team 3 times, after which they shall be considered a member of the first team until next season, and may not play for the second team until next season. Each time such a person plays for the first team their name MUST be endorsed on the team sheet to make it plain to the Hon. Area Secretary that they have played such a game. Up to three senior pool players may play for the junior side per match providing no senior pool player competes in more than three matches per season in the junior side.

4. Players of teams that qualify for the play-offs i.e. the Semi-finals or beyond, such players that play in these matches WHERE possible should have played a minimum of 3 games for that team in the league that year, but if THIS is not possible then up to a maximum of 3 affiliated players from that club may be called in to make up the squad of 12 players. This is subject to the prior notification and approval of the General Council Hon. Secretary.

D – Play Offs

1. Each area to decide on the nominations of their teams to go forward to the play-offs. The play-offs will be made on an open draw basis, with the draw being made on the day. The teams that qualify for the Semi-finals are split: - Ipswich Area 2; Lowestoft Area 1; West Suffolk Area 1.
2. The East Anglian Daily Times Shield to be held for 12 months will be presented at the County Association Annual Dinner/Luncheon to the Champion club. Other awards made at the Area Committees / General Council discretion.
3. The Semi-finals and Final shall be decided on overall shots only. In the case of a drawn match then all rinks will play an extra end or ends until a result is obtained.
4. The Semi and finals shall be played on the 1st Sunday in September, if a team is not able to play the match, then the next team below them in their division, MUST be offered the opportunity to take their place.

2026 Season