



RULES FOR THE LEINSTER LEAGUES

**Published by
The Leinster Chess Union**

Season 2009/2010

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Rules for Leinster Leagues Controlled by the Leinster Chess Union

Definitions

In these rules:

- *LCU* means the Leinster Chess Union.
- *ICU* means the Irish Chess Union.
- *FIDE* means *Federation Internationale des Echecs*.
- *FIDE rules* means The Laws of Chess published by FIDE.
- *Divisional controller* means the controller for any division of the leagues.
- *Leagues controller* means the controller for all of the leagues.
- *Season* means the period beginning with the start of the first league match and ending with the final determination of places in the last league to be completed.

1. League Structure

- 1.1.** Subject to entry and the provision set out in rule 1.3 there shall be six divisions in the leagues. Extra divisions may be added at the discretion of the leagues controller. The maximum number of teams in each division shall be twelve.
- 1.2.** Division 1: The winners shall be declared champions of Leinster and holders of the Armstrong Cup for the ensuing season.
- 1.3.** Divisions 1 and 2 shall consist of teams of eight players. Divisions 3 and 4 shall consist of teams of six players. All other divisions shall consist of teams of five players.
- 1.4.** All fees due to the LCU for participation in the leagues should be paid not later than 30th of November. Clubs whose fees are paid not later than 31st of October shall be entitled to a 10% discount.
- 1.5.** Fixtures shall be arranged so that the entire league programme shall be completed by the end of April with the following considerations to apply:
 - No team or player shall be obliged to play a league fixture on a public holiday or on a weekend encompassing a public holiday.
 - No league fixtures shall be arranged during the weeks immediately preceding and succeeding Easter Sunday.
 - No league fixtures shall be arranged for a weekend involving a chess tournament

officially sanctioned by the LCU or the ICU.

- The league will have staggered starting dates so that Division 1 will commence before Division 2, Division 2 before Division 3, etc.

2. Promotion and Relegation

2.1. The following promotion and relegation system will operate:-

- Except for Division 1, the teams finishing in first and second place in each division will be promoted to the next highest division.
- Except for the lowest division, teams finishing in eleventh and twelfth positions in each league will be relegated.

2.2. A club may forego its right to be promoted in which case a replacement team shall be selected at the discretion of the LCU.

2.3. In all divisions a game won counts one point to the winner, a game drawn counts a half-point to each player and a game lost counts as zero points to the loser. The score of a team in a match shall be the sum of the points scored by the players on that team in the match, subject to the provisions of rule 4.

2.4. In the event of a tie for any place between two or more teams, the tie shall be resolved on the basis of the match result or results (cumulative game points) between the teams concerned and subsequently, in the event of a further tie on the basis of board count in the match or matches between the teams concerned. In the event of a further tie, the placing shall be determined by a single play-off match between the teams concerned. In the event of a further tie the placing shall be decided by lot.

2.5. A board count as set out in the previous rule shall consist of allocating points on a descending scale for wins from board 1 down to one point for the lowest board as follows:

- eight points for board 1 (Armstrong Cup and Heidenfeld Trophy)
- six points for board 1 (Ennis Shield and O'Hanlon Cup)
- five points for board 1 (Bea, Bodley Cup and other divisions)

The team receiving the highest points shall be deemed the winner.

3. Constitution of Teams

- 3.1.** All players must be registered with the Irish Chess Union. A team which utilises an unregistered player in any match will not be credited with any score for that match. A team appealing a decision under this rule must do so in writing to the leagues controller within fourteen days of notification of the non-crediting of the score by the controller who imposes the penalty. Such an appeal must include confirmation of the player's registration.
- 3.2.** No player may play for more than one club in any season. For the purpose of this rule two or more teams from the same club in the same division shall be regarded as playing for separate clubs. Teams offending against this rule will have any points won by the illegal player(s) deducted and awarded to their opponents and may have any points gained on boards lower than that on which the infringement took place likewise deducted and awarded to their opponents. Where a club has only two teams (A and B) and both are in the same division, the league controller may allow a player from Team B to play for Team A provided that that player is not substituting for a lower rated player and provided the team has applied (to the divisional controller) for such permission in advance. A player will only be given a maximum of two such allowances in any one season.
- 3.3.** Prior to the commencement of any games in the final round of matches, each team captain must submit his/her team to the leagues controller. No player may play for a team in the last round or in a play-off unless said player has played at least one match for that club in any division during the season. Teams offending against this rule will automatically forfeit any points gained from the match and points for any game involving an illegal player will be awarded to the opposition. Where two opposing teams have illegal players, the result of the match will be null and void and no points will be awarded to either team for that match.
- 3.4.** Prior to the commencement of play in each division, clubs shall declare to the divisional controller the names of players selected for their respective teams. In the absence of such declaration, the first team played shall be deemed to be the declared team. For the purpose of this rule the word "team" shall be regarded as a full complement as set out in rule 1.3.
- 3.5.** No player declared for a higher division team may play in a lower division in that

season, but a player declared in a lower division may play as a substitute in a higher division. Where a club has two or more teams in the same division, a substitute from a lower division may only play for one of his/her club's teams in the relevant higher division. Where a player has played more than three games in the higher division/divisions as a substitute, he/she, subject to rule 3.6, :-

- a) may not play again that season in a lower division, and
- b) where he/she has played as a substitute for more than one team in higher divisions, he/she may only play again for one such team and this team shall be the one for which he/she plays as a substitute for a fourth time. Thereafter for the remainder of the season no further substitution in respect of that player shall be allowed.

3.6. A player who has substituted three times for a team cannot play any further games for that team during that season if there is another player rated 150 points above him/her playing for that club in a lower division. Breaches of this rule will result in the player being declared an illegal player on that team and will be subject to the procedures in rule 3.2.

3.7. The board order of each team in each match shall be as determined by the team captain immediately prior to the commencement of the match, providing that:

- a) No player is placed ahead of a team member whose rating is 150 or more ELO rating points higher. The criteria for determining a player's rating are as follows: For players who are registered with the ICU, the rating published by the ICU prior to the commencement of the current season. If there is any doubt about a player's published rating, confirmation should be sought from the leagues controller who will verify the correct rating to be used. For players who have no ICU rating but are rated by FIDE, their current FIDE rating. Team captains must inform the divisional controller of the player's FIDE code and rating when returning the match scorecard. For players with no ICU or FIDE rating and who have a rating from another federation, team captains should endeavour to ascertain the players rating, and inform the divisional controller of the players rating and federation when returning the match scorecard. For all other players including unrated players, team captains must determine the player's playing strength and advise the divisional controller of the estimated rating to be used to determine board order. The estimated rating used in the first match played by the player shall be used for the remainder of the season.
- b) For the purpose of the '150' rule in (a) above all players rated 1200 or below and all unrated players are deemed to have a rating of 1200. This means that they can play on any board provided that no player with a rating of 1350 (1200 + 150)

or higher is placed on a lower board.

- c) No player may play on a team in a lower division if a fellow club member rated 150 points or more below the player is declared on a team in a higher division except with the prior permission of the leagues controller.
- d) All unrated substitutes commence on the lowest board and continue upwards (moving by one place at a time) except in exceptional circumstances and with the prior permission of the divisional controller.

3.8. Players and teams offending against rule 3.7 will have any points won by the illegal player(s) deducted and awarded to their opponents and may have any points gained on boards lower than that on which the infringement took place likewise deducted and awarded to their opponents.

3.9. Immediately before the commencement of each match, the opposing team captains must declare their respective teams to each other, to show names and ratings as well as ICU registration numbers and arrange the pairings. Once a team has been declared no substitutions can be allowed.

3.10. Where the name of his/her opponent has not been declared at the time of starting the match, the player with the white pieces shall be entitled to start his/her opponent's clock without committing himself/herself to any particular opening move. Should the player of the black pieces arrive without the player of the white pieces being either declared or present, he/she shall be entitled to start the white player's clock.

4. Defaults and Walkovers

4.1. Where there are insufficient players to make up a full team, defaults must commence on the lowest board and continue upwards.

4.2. Should a team in any division default two or more boards that team may be fined not less than €10 euro for each player who defaults. No further points shall be awarded to such team until the fine is paid. The fine may be waived, if within seven days of the offence the club submits a written explanation acceptable to the divisional controller.

4.3. In the event of a default by a declared player, the defaulting player shall score –1

(minus one) point. The player benefiting from the default shall score 1 point.

- 4.4.** Where a team defaults three or more games in a match, and as a result there is a distortion in placing such that another team suffers, either by relegation, missing a play-off or promotion place or failing to win a division when they might have done, a special match shall be arranged between the team benefiting from the defaults (say team “A”) and the displaced team (say team “B”), to determine relative places. Team “B” shall only have the right to this match if:
- a) Team “B” has a greater total of points than team “A” when both team scores against the defaulting team are eliminated and
 - b) Team “B” has itself not defaulted more than 3 games in the season and
 - c) Team “B” is immediately below Team “A” in the table

To reverse the placing, team “B” must defeat Team “A” (who shall have home venue). In the event of a draw placing remains unchanged. Where multiple defaults occur, the scores of all defaulting teams will be eliminated to determine “special match” rights.

- 4.5.** At the conclusion of the leagues all defaults will be totalled and where a team has benefited by six defaults or more the provisions of rule 4.4 will apply.
- 4.6.** The divisional controller shall notify any clubs who have the right to special matches under rule 4.4 or 4.5. If clubs wish to avail of the special match arrangements they must notify the divisional controller of their intentions to availing of these arrangements within seven days of being notified.
- 4.7** Teams which default a match will be relegated one division the following season except in the lowest division, where the team may be scratched from the league the following season, unless the club submits a written explanation acceptable to the divisional controller.

5. Playing Rules

- 5.1.** Play shall be in accordance with FIDE rules where there is conflict between FIDE and LCU rules the LCU rules take precedence.
- 5.2.** Clubs shall be responsible for ensuring that their players are conversant with current FIDE and LCU rules.

- 5.3.** The playing session and rate of play (per player) shall be as follows:
Divisions 1 and 2: 7:15 pm to 11.15 pm – All moves in two hours;
Other Divisions: 7:30 pm to 11.00 pm – All moves in one hour and forty-five minutes.
Matches played on a Saturday shall commence at 2.30 pm, with the rate of play as set out above.

A club may nominate Saturday afternoon for its matches. The starting time for such matches shall be 2:30 pm and the conditions of play the same as for evening matches.

The executive committee reserves the right to play off the final round in all divisions on one day. Special rules relating to this final round may be issued and shall take precedence over the rules relating to other rounds. Clubs must be notified of any special rules not later than two weeks before the date of the final round. The rate of play for the final rounds shall be:

- Divisions 1 and 2 – All moves in two hours per player
- Other divisions – All moves in one hour and forty-five minutes per player.

- 5.4.** The game must be finished within the time control specified, failing which, subject to the rules for conclusion of games set out in rule 10, the player whose time first expires loses the game.
- 5.5.** Subject to agreement between the respective team captains, games may be played in advance of the scheduled date. If a team wishes to postpone games in a match, the approval of the divisional controller must be obtained in advance, which approval shall be given only in extenuating circumstances such as a family death or some similarly pressing occurrence.
- 5.6.** In all divisions, the away team shall have the white pieces on the odd-numbered boards.
- 5.7.** Home teams shall be responsible for the provision of all playing equipment including clocks, score sheets and a copy of the current LCU rules. Where a home team fails to produce clocks or other equipment at the appointed starting time, the visiting team may demand that the time lost by such failure be deducted from the home team's clocks before the match commences; and if the time lost is one hour or more, the games affected shall be deemed lost by walkover to the visiting team, but such home players

as may be present before the hour elapses shall not suffer any loss beyond a nil score.

- 5.8. Subject to rule 9.3 and to any direction from the tournament director/controller the player with the black pieces shall have the choice as to whether the clock shall be on the left or the right side of the board.
- 5.9. Disputes arising between players in a league match should be settled between the team captains and the players involved away from the playing area to avoid disturbance to players on adjacent boards. If a dispute is not resolved in this way the game(s) affected shall continue with either or both players and or their respective captains having the right to appeal the outcome to the divisional controller, and the resumption of play in these circumstances shall not pre-empt or prejudice the appeal process in any way.
If in the event of a dispute a copy of the rules is unavailable, the clock of the home player shall be left running until a copy of the rules is produced.
- 5.10. Players who have deliberate recourse to the advice of third parties shall forfeit any points gained during the game(s) concerned and shall be suspended from play for two matches.
- 5.11. Clubs are responsible for providing proper facilities suitable for playing chess. Visiting clubs may report excessive noise and/or insufficient light or heat to the divisional controller who shall investigate and if necessary demand remedial action.
- 5.12. Players must arrive at the board not later than 1 hour from the scheduled start time of the game. Players who arrive after the scheduled start time but no later than one hour after the scheduled start time attract no more than the accrued time penalty.

6. Results and Appeals

- 6.1. At the end of the matches score cards should be agreed by both captains or other nominated persons to ensure that the result is agreed by both teams. Results should be forwarded by e-mail to the divisional controller within three days of the match being played. Where the captain or other nominated person does not have access to e-mail, a result card should be submitted to the divisional league controller within seven days of the match being played.
Where this is not complied with by any team captain or other designated person, the

divisional controller shall levy a fine of €15 on that team, once seven days have elapsed from the date of the match. If the fine and results of the match are not submitted within a further ten days no points shall be awarded to the offending team in respect of the match.

- 6.2.** Clubs lodging an objection must do so in writing to the divisional controller within ten days of the alleged offence/incident. After this period no objection or claim will be allowed. All appeals must:
- [a] be accompanied by a fee of €15, which will be refunded if the objection is upheld,
 - [b] be signed by the secretary of the club and captain of the team making the objection, and, if relevant, the individual player or players involved from that team.
- 6.3.** An appeal may be made against a divisional controller's decision. This shall be addressed to the leagues controller and must be submitted within ten days from the date of posting of the divisional controller's decision. The leagues controller will consult one or more divisional controllers (excluding the controller whose decision is being appealed) and will convey a decision in writing to the appellant club's secretary. This decision in turn may be appealed to the LCU executive committee within ten days from the posting of the leagues controller's decision. Appeals submitted to both the leagues controller and to the LCU executive committee must be accompanied by the fee set out in rule 6.2[a] and also contain the signatures set out in rule 6.2 [b].
- 6.4.** The decision of the LCU executive committee shall be final in all matters pertaining to the competitions of the union.
- 6.5.** Where points are deducted from a team or its players the result(s) of the game(s) shall stand for rating purposes.
- 6.6.** Where a club requests a controller or committee in writing to make a decision on any contentious item relating to the leagues, the decision shall be communicated to that club, in writing, within seven (7) days of arriving at that decision.
- 6.7** The divisional controller shall decide on an objection within 21 days of an objection being lodged by a club. An appeal to the league controller shall be decided within 21 days of its being lodged. All decisions shall be notified in writing.

7. Trophies and Prizes

- 7.1. All LCU trophies shall be held for one year by the tournament winners, who shall be responsible for the safe custody of the trophy and who shall be obliged to make good the loss of, or damage to, the said trophy.
- 7.2. Board prizes shall be awarded annually in all sections to players scoring at least 75% of the available score. Points scored by a player in a higher division or in play-offs will not be credited for the purpose of determining a board prize. Appeals relating to board prizes must be lodged with the controller within 17 days of the date on which the awards are announced.

8. Playing Venues

- 8.1. Clubs must ensure that the venue for their matches is agreed beforehand with their opponents.
- 8.2. The publication of a club's normal playing venue in the list of secretaries shall be deemed sufficient for this rule.

9. Players with Disabilities

- 9.1. Players with physical disabilities may play their "away" games at their own club's venue, provided the opposing club's premises do not have appropriate access for such players. This concession applies only to players with disabilities themselves and not to other team members, unless the assistance of a particular team member is required to ensure that the player with a disability is able to play his/her match.
- 9.2. Players with physical disabilities may take toilet breaks during matches by stopping the clocks after making their moves, provided they have informed their opponents before making their move.
- 9.3. Players with disabilities affecting hand movements and those with visual impairments who use tactile boards are exempted for the 'touch move' and 'scoring' rules: and shall

have a choice as to whether the clock shall be to the right or left side of the board irrespective of the colour of their pieces.

10. Rules for Conclusion of Game

10.1 The game is won by a player:

- (a) In accordance with Article 5.1 of the FIDE rules, or
- (b) Whose opponent's time expires i.e., whose time elapses before the game is otherwise finished subject to rule 10.2 below?

10.2 The game is drawn:

- (a) In accordance with Article 5.2 of the FIDE rules;
- (b) Where both players time has expired before a claim for a win under rule 1(b) has been made;
- (c) Where a player can demonstrate the forced repetition of the position in accordance with Article 10.5 of the FIDE rules;
- (d) Where both players have insufficient material for checkmate;
- (e) Where one player has insufficient material for checkmate and the opponent's time expires first:
- (f) Where, after a player's time has expired, she/he checkmates his/her opponent before a claim is made under rule 1(b) above.

10.3 A player who has offered a draw shall not, before completing a further six moves be entitled to make another offer. No player shall be entitled to offer more than three draws in any one game.

10.4 The obligation to record a game ceases for a player who has less than five minutes remaining before the time control. A claim for a draw by repetition of position (other than demonstrated forced repetition of the position referred to in rule 10.2(c) above) cannot be made by a player who has not recorded the appropriate moves.

10.5 A player who has ceased to record the game must press the clock with the hand used to make the last move.

10.6 Illegal moves which are subsequently discovered must be corrected if the player making such a move is still recording the game. Where the moves are not being

so recorded an illegal move incurs the loss of the game provided the opponent makes a claim before touching a piece for his/her next move. Capture of a king illegally left in check constitutes such a claim. (Note: this rule may not apply in other tournaments)

11. Rules for Novices Division

- Novice player means any player rated below 1000 according to ICU or unrated.
- The time control for games in this division shall be a minimum of 1 hour per player.
- Teams in this division will consist of 4 players and can include up to two players who are not novices.
- Any player declared as a player in this division can also be declared on a team in a higher division.
- The novices division is not division 7 of the Leinster Chess League it is a stand alone division with no relegation/promotion to any other division.
- Rules for the Novices division will be communicated separately on commencement of that division each season.