

1. Time Limits

1.1 Change to the incremental time limit – 75 to 80 minutes

B9 (b) If both team captains agree then the match may be played with an alternative time limit of ~~75~~ **80 minutes (60-65 minutes in the bottom division)** plus an increment of 10 seconds per move to finish the game.

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: D.Sudar

The option of incremental time limits was introduced this season. I expect most teams will have found matches finishing early at around 10.15pm or 10.20pm. This is not surprising. For a game to last three hours, and with both players having 1 minute left, then at least 96 moves will have been played. The change from 75 to 80 minutes seeks to restore the full three hour playing session.

This change would create the possibility of some matches going beyond three hours – but how frequently? The Championship and U155 sections of the County Championship were played with a time limit of 80 minutes Plus 10 seconds. Of the nearly 80 games played only two went beyond three hours, and then only by two or three minutes. The OPEN and MAJOR sections of the congress were played to a time limit of 95 minutes plus 10 seconds, with a notional three and a half hour session, and is equivalent to 80 minutes plus 10 seconds for a three hour session. Of the nearly 200 games just six went beyond the end of the session – three by 3 minutes, and one each by 5, 8 and 13 minutes (the latter involving a stoppage for illegal moves)

To convert that into League terms of the 14 matches and 70 games per season there will be 2 games (and therefore matches) that will overrun – one by less, and one by more than 5 minutes.

1.2 Incremental time limits to be compulsory in Division 1

Replace the current B9(a) with:

The standard time limits shall be

- (i) **Division 1 - 75/80 minutes (as determined above) plus 10 seconds per move**
- (ii) **Bottom Division – 75 minutes**
- (iii) **All other Divisions – 90 minutes**

B9(b) Add “**In Divisions below Division 1**, If both captains agree....”

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: D.Sudar

This season all teams in Division 1 played with digital clocks, and the majority preferred the incremental time limit option. This should now be made standard.

1.3 Delete from B9 ~~“All games must be played with chess clocks”~~

Also - delete “B9” from Rule D3

Proposed: R.Richmond

Seconded: D.Sudar

Playing with a clock is a requirement of Article 6 of the Laws of Chess - this is an historical relic from the time when the use of clocks was not automatic. If a club does not have a clock ready 30 minutes after the start time then under B7(b) opponents win by default – with a further penalty of a 0.5 point transfer if above bottom board - so the penalty in D3 is unnecessary.

2. ELIGIBILITY RULES - B5 , B14 , C4 & C5

2.1 Delete from C4 ~~“Once a player has played on Board 1 or 2 of a team in Division 1, he/she may not play for any lower team in Division 1.”~~

Proposer: R.Richmond

Seconded: D.Sudar

This rule is unnecessary. This was one of the two changes to the rules approved at last year’s RRM to prevent strong players playing for lower teams at the start of the season. The original proposal was amended on the night, and deprived of any real impact, to just apply to Division 1 - the only team possibly affected last season was Gambit 2. The other rule change – nominating three first team players ineligible for lower teams from the start of the season – has worked well and is all that is needed.

2.2 Eligibility of opponents of withdrawing teams

Amend B5 - A team not completing at least half of its fixtures shall have its ~~record deleted and be regarded as having withdrawn.~~ **match results removed from the league table.** ~~The games played will be graded, and will count for eligibility purposes for the team that withdraws, but will not count for eligibility purposes for the other clubs.~~ **If a team withdraws from the league after completing at least half of its fixtures, the results will stand and all games will count for eligibility for every club.** ~~The their teams~~ **remaining matches will be recorded as being defaulted.**

Delete C5 – ~~“All appearances above the bottom two boards played or won by default will count for eligibility even if that team fails to complete its fixtures”~~

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: D.Sudar

Last years' changes to B5 made explicit a contradiction in the eligibility rules between Rule B5, which allows an exception for eligibility purposes for opponents of a withdrawing team, and Rule C5 which does not.

The reason for getting rid of the exception for eligibility purposes for opponents of a withdrawing team are:

- (i) The exception does not affect eligibility for teams in the same division as the withdrawing team – it is only teams in lower divisions where it might make a difference. It could allow the usual Boards 1-3 an extra match in a lower division before they became ineligible in the normal course of events. This is contrary to the spirit of the changes to C4 last year.
- (ii) Otherwise the likelihood of it making any difference is very remote. The possible circumstances are where there is extensive doubling up of players (the usual bottom two boards for the higher team also playing Boards 1 & 2 for the next lowest team) **AND** one of the allowed appearances on Boards 1-3 for the higher team is against the team withdrawing **AND** the other allowed appearances are all used up before the end of the season.
- (iii) It is simpler. All games played or won by default count for eligibility, with no exceptions.

The changes to B5 positively states what changes will be made – ie only removal of results from the league table. This is simpler than firstly deleting results from the league table, and also for grading and eligibility purposes, and then adding back grading and eligibility. C5 is presumably a fix for the deletion of results in B5, and is consequently redundant if results are not deleted in the first place.

2.3 Tidying up the wording of the eligibility rules

Amend C4 - Once someone a player has played three times been listed on a team sheet three times in total on higher boards for any team(s) he or she that player may not play appear for a lower team. Higher boards are defined as above the bottom two boards played or won by default.

Amend B14 “ Any claim that a match has been won by default must be accompanied by a fully completed team list. That list counts for eligibility purposes i.e. as if the match had been played.”

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

This tidies up the wording. The effect of these and the changes to the eligibility rules for opponents of withdrawing teams is to concentrate the eligibility rule in one place – C4 – instead of over four rules (B5, B14, C4, C5)

3. Teams from the same club in the same Division – Rule B4

Amend B4 – “If two or more teams from the same club play in the same division, the first match(es) of the club’s ~~two highest~~ teams in that division shall be between them(selves).”

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

The current rule doesn’t cope very well with 3-teams in one division. It is still just about possible that there could be three Gambit teams in Division 1 next season, so I will use them as an example. Ga1-Ga2 must be the first match of the season, but not necessarily the first match after Christmas. Ga1-Ga3 and Ga2-Ga3 could be scheduled any time in the autumn, not necessarily as early matches. Current practice, and in accordance with the spirit of the rule, is for such matches to be scheduled at the start of each round of fixtures, and there is no particular need to restrict the order in which they are played at the start of the season.

These changes would allow Ga2-Ga3 to be the first match – Gambit usually request the 1st team does not start until the second week of matches.

4. LMC Standing Orders

4.1 Amendments to LMC Standing Orders

Last year Schedule A of the League Rules became LMCSO’s. However there are some consequential changes, and also some updating, needed to make LMCSO’s complete – chiefly the addition of a section on LMC powers currently scattered across the League Rules. The complete revised text is set out below.

League Management Committee Standing Orders

1) Purpose

The League shall be controlled by a League Management Committee which shall:

- a) Organise the League into such divisions as circumstances permit.
- b) Organise the compilation of a fixture list.
- c) Organise the distribution to clubs at least 14 days before the start of the season of the League handbook.
- d) ~~Arbitrate on all disputes, its decisions being final, and publish its decisions and interpretations.~~ (moved to 2a)

2) Powers

The Committee shall have the power to:

- a) Arbitrate on all disputes, its decisions being final, and publish its decisions and interpretations
- b) Reduce or revoke penalties if the club penalised can show this was due to circumstances not reasonably within their control (from Rule D10)
- c) Take such action on penalties as it deems equitable in dealing with the application of the rules, including imposing additional penalties (from Rule D11)
- d) Take any action it deems equitable if defaulted matches affect promotion and relegation (from Rule D9)
- e) Determine whether a player is a bona fide member of a club and apply a suitable penalty (from Rule C1)
- f) Approve or otherwise requests for a player to be allowed to play for two clubs in a season. (from Rule C3)

3) Membership

- a. The Committee shall have nine members, consisting of the League Secretary, Records Secretary and seven members elected by the NCA. Where the posts of League Secretary and Records Secretary are both held by one individual, there shall be eight elected members.
- b. The elected members must be from different clubs.
- c. Where the League Secretary and Records Secretary are both from the same club then no elected member can be from that club.

4) Procedure

- a. The quorum shall be five
- b. The Committee shall elect a chairman, who shall have a vote and a casting vote.
- c. There must be at least five members voting on any issue for a valid decision
- d. No member may vote on any issue directly concerning their club, except by joint decision of the other members where there are not five eligible to vote.
- e. Minutes will be taken of all meetings and published ~~on the NCA website.~~

5) The League Secretary shall:

- a. Have the discretion to admit new teams into the bottom division not later than 31st December
- b. Receive notification of disputes, call LMC meetings, prepare witnesses and collect relevant information.
- c. Send entry forms for the following season to all clubs by 31st May.
- d. Approve or otherwise requests for fixture re-arrangements. If the team captains fail to agree a date for a re-arranged match within 14 days may the League Secretary may choose the date and, if necessary, the venue for re-arranged fixtures” (From Rule B15)

6) The Records Secretary shall:

- a) Validate ~~and publish~~ match results, ~~send them to the grading officer and bulletin editor,~~ and compile league tables, ~~and notify offending teams of penalties imposed~~
- b) Deal as he or she deems most equitable with incorrectly formulated results

7) The Grading Results Officer shall submit all games played in the league for grading.

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

4.2 Change to LMCSO, ECSO and the Constitution (for consistency)

LMCSO A3(e) Minutes will be taken ~~and published~~ of all meetings ~~and published on the NCA website~~

Constitution 7a(iii) To ~~keep~~ **take and publish** full and correct minutes of all such meetings
–ECSO 3(d) Minutes will be ~~kept~~ **taken and published** of all meetings

The wording should be consistent across the three constitutional documents. The requirement to publish is sufficient - where else would they go if not the website? The Constitution should not mention website (since it implies we must have one) and therefore also LMCSO and ECSO. Note this is also consistent with the amended Records Secretary job description, where the suggested duty is to "publish match results".

Note: The amendment to the constitution needs a 2/3rds majority

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N. London

5. Consequential Amendments to the League Rules

There are also consequential changes to the League Rules as a result of the above. If LMCSO states the discretionary powers of LMC/LS then these do not need to be included. Instead the Rules should state that a club may request something from LMC/LS. The League Rules remain comprehensible as a stand-alone document – the right to request something (eg fixture re-arrangement, reduction of a penalty) implies the discretionary power in LMCSO's to accept or reject that request.

5.1 Add to B2

Add "**Clubs may request the late entry of additional teams by 30th November**"

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

The current LMCSO 4(a) gives the League Secretary the power to admit new teams into the bottom division "not later than 31st December". The right to request for such a late entry needs to be added to the League Rules, and a particular date set for such a request.

5.2 Amend B13

"Each team captain must ~~e-mail, post or personally deliver~~ **send** the result to the Records Secretary **and notify the League Secretary of any dispute**, within 7 days **of the match**

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

LMCSO 4(b) The League Secretary shall: "receive notification of disputes..." There needs to be a corresponding duty on captains to inform the League Secretary of disputes in the League Rules.

5.3 Amend B15 (Fixture Re-arrangements):

(a) A captain seeking to rearrange must inform the opposing captain and seek permission from the League Secretary, **explaining the compelling reason for such a request.**

~~(b) The League Secretary will decide if there is a compelling reason for the rearrangement.~~

~~(c) (b) If the League Secretary agrees to the rearrangement then, no later than 14 days after the scheduled fixture, the team captains must agree a new date and inform the League Secretary.~~

~~; otherwise the League Secretary may choose the date, and, if necessary, the venue~~

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

Re-written to take out actions by the League Secretary, now in LMCSO's

5.4 Amend D10 (appeals against penalties)

~~Replace "The LMC may revoke or reduce any of the above penalties if the club penalised can show to the Committee that the infringement was due to circumstances not reasonably within the club's control. Appeals against penalties must be submitted to the League Secretary within 28 days of notification of the penalty."~~

With "Clubs may appeal to LMC against any penalty imposed. Such appeals must be submitted to the League Secretary within 28 days of notification, and explain why the infringement was not reasonably within the club's control."

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

Re-written as something a club may request, rather than something LMC may do. The power of LMC to reduce or revoke penalties is now covered by LMCSO 2(b)

5.5 Delete D9 (Part) & D11

~~Delete from D9 "The LMC may take any action it deems equitable if defaulted matches affect promotion and relegation"~~

~~Delete D11 "The LMC may take such action on penalties as it deems equitable in dealing with the application of the rules"~~

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: N.London

These simply duplicates LMCSO

6. Penalties

6.1 General Re-write of Schedule D

Delete Rules D1-D10 inclusive, and replace with

D1 Club Penalty – The penalty for infringing B2 is a fine of £20 [Current D1]

D2 Team penalties

(a) The penalty for defaulting a match or infringing B3, B4 or B15(a) is the loss of 2 match points and a fine of £20. [Combines D2 and D9]

(b) The penalty for infringing B14 is the match is record as a double default. [Current D6]

D3 Player penalties:

(a) The penalty for playing an ineligible player in C2, C3, C4, C6, C7 or defaults above bottom board is the transfer of any game points scored by the offending player plus 0.5 game points from the offending team to their opponents , provided that the total game score shall not become negative.

[Combines D3, D7 & D8. C6 & C7 will be re-numbered if C5 is deleted]

(b) The first time a player's phone sounds the opponent shall be awarded two extra minutes. The second time the player's phone sounds the game is lost, unless the opponent cannot win by legal means, in which case the game shall be drawn [Current D5]

(c) The penalty for infringing rule B11 is the default of each board where no name is entered. [Current D4]

D4 [Current or amended D10] (Appeals against penalties) – See 5.4 above

Proposed: R.Richmond

Seconded: D.Sudar

This is intended as a general re-write, simplifying the current wording by combining D2/D9 and D3/D7/D8. The re-written D3/D7/D8 above changes the “loss” of the game in D3 to the more precise transfer of game points scored...from the offending team to their opponents - a penalty applied to the team not the individual player, and leaving the individual result unchanged for grading purposes. This is simpler than reversing a win by an ineligible player for both match score and grading purposes in the current D3, and then reversing back the result for grading in B16 (which consequently becomes redundant).

6.2 Smoking

Delete B12(b) “Smoking must not be permitted in the playing area during the match”

Add as D3(d) “**The penalty for smoking is the loss of the game (Laws of Chess, Article 12.9.6)**”

Proposed: R.Richmond

Seconded: D.Sudar

Smoking is now prohibited under the Laws of Chess (Article 11.3.4) and therefore the current B12(b) [exceptions to the Laws of Chess] is unnecessary.

The Laws of Chess offer a variety of possible penalties for smoking, so the Rules need to specify one. Under the existing D3 this is the loss of the game – the penalty prescribed in Article 12.9.6. Since this is a loss under the Laws of Chess it is also a loss for grading purposes, so there needs to be a separate rule to distinguish it from the other cases in the current D3.

6.3 Delete B16.

~~All games played in the league will be graded. Where penalties are applied under league rules, the actual game result will be used for grading.~~

Proposed: R.Richmond Seconded: D.Sudar

This adds nothing to the requirement in LMCSO for the grader to submit grading (and no grader, no grading). Other actions required by league officers / LMC (eg LS – send league entry forms by May 31 , RS – Compile League tables , LMC – organise the compilation of the fixtures etc) do not appear in the league rules. For discussion of the “penalty” sentence see above.

The table below gives the conversion from the old to the new Schedule D

Old	New
D1 Return of League Entry Forms	D1
D2 Loss of matches by default	D2(a)
D3 (Except B9 & B12b)	D3(a)
D3 – B9 All games to be played with clocks	Delete
D3 – B12b Smoking	D3(d)
D4 – Default	D3 (c)
D5 – Mobile Phones	D3 (b)
D6 – Full team list for defaulted matches	D2 (b)
D7- Ineligible players	D3 (a)
D8 – Defaults above bottom board	D3 (a)
D9 – Defaulted matches	D2(a) [Part Transfers to LMCSO]
D10 – Appeals against penalties	D4
D11 – “Catch-all” penalty provision	Transfer to LMCSO