

Gwent County Chess Association

Rules governing play in the Gwent League, Gwent QP League, and the Gwent Knockout Cup Competitions.

Amended according to GCA AGM June 2025

General Rules

1) **League Entry**

- a. All clubs meeting regularly in the County of Gwent are eligible for participation in the Gwent Knockout Cup competitions on payment of the entry fee.
- b. Entry into the Gwent League is by the online entry form (see Appendix for links) and on payment of the entry fee.
- c. Entry into the Gwent Quick-play League is by the online entry form.
- d. Newly formed clubs will be exempt from entry fees in their first year of membership of the Association.

2) **Fees**

The entry fee for a team in each team competition held within the Gwent County Chess Association shall be £3. Entry to the Gwent Quick Play League is free.

3) **Teams**

Teams in the Gwent League will comprise four players in division 1 and three players in lower divisions. The number of players per team may be altered by the League controller at their discretion. Teams in the Gwent Knockout Open Cup will be composed of six players; teams in the Gwent Knockout U1750 and U1500 Cups will be composed of four players; teams in the Gwent QP league will comprise 4 players.

4) **Scoring**

Positions in all leagues shall be decided first by match points (2 points for a win, 1 for a draw and 0 for a loss), then on game points (1 for a win, ½ for a draw and 0 for a loss). Ties will be resolved first by match points then game points between the teams involved.

5) **Promotion and Relegation**

Currently, promotion and relegation between divisions will not happen. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

6) **Eligibility**

Eligible clubs may enter as many teams as they wish, subject to the following conditions:

- a. All players must be registered with their club, the Gwent County Chess Association, and the Welsh Chess Union. The registration fee of the Gwent County Chess Association will be £4 for adults and £2 for juniors.
- b. A player will be regarded as registered only if he or she has paid all the appropriate registration fees, with the exceptions listed below:
 - i. Players aged 75 and over on the 1st of September shall not pay GCCA registration fees.
 - ii. Players who have not been registered with the Association or the Welsh Chess Union at any time in the previous 5 years will be exempt from the Association's registration fee in their first year of membership
- c. The League Controller must be kept informed of any changes to the name and contact details of the captain of each team throughout the season.
- d. Players may only represent one club in the League each season, except that:
 - i. The Executive Committee has the authority to set this aside in exceptional circumstances (e.g., to prevent a club from closing).

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- ii. A newly formed club may include one nominated player from another club in its team(s) during its first year of competition. The nominated player will still be able to play for his/her own club, subject to any other provisions of Rule 4.
- e. For clubs with more than 1 team in division 2, players with a rating of 1600 and above can only play for one team in that division. There is no such restriction in division 3.
- f. Players graded over 1800 cannot play in divisions below division 1. Players graded over 1600 cannot play in division 3. However, this rule may be waived by the League Controller under exceptional circumstances, for example if a club can only field one division 2 team consisting of 3 or 4 low or unrated players and one player above 1800, then they may be permitted to play the higher rated player in that division.
- g. Players can only play 1 game for each round in the same division.
- h. Players may only play for one team in each KO Cup. Teams made up of players from different clubs are allowed.
- i. To participate in any club based GCCA competition, clubs must sign and agree to the GCCA code of conduct.

7) Player Registration

If a player is not registered with the Gwent County Chess Association within three weeks of playing a match or is otherwise ineligible to play in a match under General Rule 6, his or her team will be penalised by forfeiture of points scored on that board and all boards below it.

8) Fixtures

The Controller will determine all fixtures. Matches or individual fixtures may be played prior to the fixture date providing both captains agree. Where a club has more than one team in a division the fixtures between them must be played by the end of February, otherwise they will be scored 0-0. All matches within the league must be completed by 30th April. Failure to do so will result in the match being scored 0-0. The League Controller may extend the season as appropriate.

9) Postponement Requests

Applications for postponement of any match must be lodged with the Controller and the opposing captain and such requests may be granted at the Controller's discretion. Two possible dates for the re-arranged match must be given by the home team (via text or email) to the away team within a week of when the League controller agrees to the postponement; one of these dates must then be accepted by the away team (via text or email) within a further week, or at least one week before the re-arranged date, whichever is earlier. The two dates will fall on the normal club night of the home team unless agreed by both teams. Failure to re-arrange will result in a n-0 match loss for the non-complying team, where n= the number of players in a team. Except for reasons of inclement weather, matches shall not be cancelled later than the day before the opposing team's club night of the previous week. Any internal matches within a club (A v B etc.) which are postponed, must be re-arranged, and played within 6 weeks of the original match date and by the end of February. Failure to do so will result in the match being scored 0-0. The re-arranged date will be supplied to the League Controller by the home team once agreed.

10) Playing Conditions

It is the responsibility of the home club to ensure that playing conditions are suitable for the playing of chess and any club failing to provide adequate amenities will forfeit its right to hold home matches. Changes of venue must be notified to the League Controller and to the County Secretary.

11) Rating Lists

All ratings referred to in the above rules are the published WCU July ratings.

12) Mobile Phones

Players will be allowed to take mobiles into the playing room but are requested where possible to have ringtones switched off. Where the sound of a player's mobile phone interrupts a game, this does not automatically incur a penalty but a second occurrence for the same player in the same match will result in a default win for the opponent.

13) Matters Arising

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On all other matters arising from these rules, the League Controller's decision shall be final.

Playing Rules

1) Rules

Except as otherwise provided in these rules, all games shall be played in accordance with the current FIDE Laws of Chess as accepted by the Welsh Chess Union. The time limit for classical games is all moves in 1 hour, plus a 20 second increment per move for the whole game.

2) Team Board Order

- a) Where there is a difference of more than 100 rating points in the latest published rating list (150 if the lower rated player is a junior) between two players, the higher-rated player must play on a higher board than the lower-rated player. Any protest against a team's board order must be made to the opposing captain prior to the start of the match and a written complaint must then be sent to the Controller within three days of the match being played. If the complaint is upheld by the controller, the team infringing the rules will be penalised by forfeiture of all points scored in the match concerned with effect from the highest incorrectly graded board downwards.
- b) A player may only be substituted into a team after the start of a match if the player does not exceed a 100-point (150 points for Juniors) difference between boards.
- c) The restriction in 2b), does not apply to the Gwent QP League.

3) Quick Play League Rules

- a) The time limit is all moves in 10 minutes plus a 10 second increment per move.
- b) There will be 4 games per board, per round.
- c) Each game will see colours reversed.
- d) The away team will have white in the first game.
- e) The games will not be rated.
- f) There are no rating restrictions on board order, but once assigned a player must stay on that board for the whole round.

4) Clocks

Digital clocks shall be used on all occasions. Clubs who cannot provide clocks for all boards shall advise their opponents not less than two days before the match to allow the visiting team to make arrangements in order to supply their own clocks should they wish to do so. If clubs fail to comply, those boards without clocks shall be forfeit.

5) Start Times

Play in each match shall begin no later than 7:15PM

6) Defaults

- a) Classical time limits: Each player shall be allowed 1 hour to elapse before defaulting the game, unless the player has been substituted within that time by an appropriately graded player (see Playing Rule 2(b)).
- b) Quick Play League:
 - i) Each player will be allowed 15 minutes to arrive after the match starts. Captains should note and agree the match start time.
 - ii) Where a player is absent, clocks will NOT be started during this time.
 - iii) The clock will be started 15 minutes after the agreed start time.
 - iv) After the first flag fall, the game is scored as a loss for the absent player.
 - v) Colours are then reversed, the clocks will be reset and immediately started for round 2.

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vi) If the player still hasn't arrived at the second flag fall and a substitute player is not possible, then the result is scored as a 4-0 loss for the absent player.

vii) If a substitute player is found, then they can only start in a round where the flag has not fallen.

7) **Colour Allocation**

Colours will be allotted alternately from board one downwards with the away team having white on board 1. In the Gwent Knockout Cup competitions, the captains shall toss a coin for choice of colour.

8) **Recording Moves**

a) Where matches use classical time limits with increments per move, players must record all the moves.

b) In the Gwent QP League, recording of the moves is optional.

9) **Results**

a) Home captains must send the results of each match to the Controller not more than three days after the match using the online results card.

b) Each club shall forward a complete and up-to-date set of results should the controller so request.

10) **Unfinished Matches**

a) In the event of a match being started but not finished through exceptional circumstances, the Controller shall make arrangements as are necessary to resolve the unfinished games.

b) Teams or individual players will not be penalised for lateness or non-arrival due to severe adverse weather conditions if the controller is satisfied that such conditions prevailed.

11) **Tie Breaks**

In the event that a match in the Gwent Knockout Cup competitions should end with scores equal after the conclusion of all games, the method of board count shall be used to determine the winner. If board count fails to decide between the teams, then Board Elimination shall be used. If both methods fail to secure a result, the match shall be replayed at the venue of the away team with colours reversed.

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Appendix

Web Links

Gwent County Chess Association:

<https://gwentchess.org.uk/>

Gwent League Web Site:

Contains match cards for reporting results and full league results

[Gwent Chess League](#)