

## **ANNEX A      COMPETITION RULES**

The English Curling Association will organise English Championships to decide upon its representatives at International Championships to which the Association has made an entry. Teams entered in an English Championship must consist of eligible members of the Association as defined by paragraphs 2.5 and 7.2 of the ECA Constitution and by any rules of the associated International Championship.

The winning team of an English Championship will be expected to represent England in the corresponding International Championship for which the entry has been made and in other Championships where participation is dependent upon qualification from the initial competition, except in the circumstances outlined below.

For Championships involving teams of 4 /5, if one member of the winning team is unable to participate in the respective International Championship, a substitute may be called upon subject to the approval of the ECA Council. If two or more members of the winning team are unable to participate, the ECA Council will have the discretion to replace the whole team with the runners-up from the relevant English Championship or, if the runners-up are unable to participate, with any other eligible team.

Mixed Doubles: In the event of any one member of the winning pair from an English Mixed Doubles Championship being unable to participate in the respective International Championship, the pair will be replaced in that International Championship by another pair, with first preference being given to the runners-up in the English Championship or, if the runners-up are unable to participate, the ECA Council will ask another pair to participate.

Any team which represents England in an International Championships must be accompanied by a non-playing / coaching adult if it includes a player who is under 17 years of age at the time of the competition. If this condition cannot be met then the ECA reserves the right to either replace the affected player or replace the whole team with another team.

Entries from teams wishing to participate in an English Championship will be made direct to the address on the official entry form and must be received by the closing date, as specified at the Annual General Meeting and listed on the entry form, accompanied by the appropriate entry fee and any additional money specified on the entry form for the advance payment of ice in the Championship.

There must be a minimum of 3 players included on the entry form, all of whom must have signed the form, except that entries to the Mixed Doubles Championship must name, and have signatures for, both team members. Note that there are no alternates allowed in the Mixed Doubles Championship. Where a minor (aged under **16** at the time of completion of the entry form) is an entrant, parental (or legal guardian) consent must also be obtained on the form.

Any changes and additions to the team from those submitted on the entry form must be notified in writing / by email to the Secretary or Competitions Convenor or umpire at least 24 hours prior to the start of the championship at which point at least 4 (2 in Mixed Doubles) players must be registered. No changes will be allowed after this time except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Competitions Convenor or Chief Umpire.

If a team withdraws before the closing date for entries it will forfeit its entry fee but will have any additional money paid for ice returned. If a team withdraws after the closing date for entries it will forfeit its entry fee and any additional money paid for ice, unless the hosting rink makes no charge for the unused ice. Any further money required to pay for ice will be collected at the Championship before play begins.

Should a team be found to have fielded an ineligible player in a Championship then the team will be disqualified from that Championship and the results of all their games in that Championship will be declared null and void. If this action should materially alter the outcome of the Championship then the ECA Council will review whether any replayed or additional games are required to ensure fairness.

The maximum number of teams which may compete in the final stage of an English Championship (hereinafter called 'the Finals' ) will be 8. In the case of more than 8 teams entering an English Championship, a draw by lots will be made to select X-7 teams where X is the total number of entries. Those teams selected will participate in a qualifying competition to reduce the number to 1.

The top 3 teams in the equivalent previous year's Championships (if one took place) shall be exempt from this selection process if there are at least 3 members of the previous year's team included in their entry. Any team eliminated in the qualifying competition shall have its entry fee less £20 returned. A player who has been a member of a team eliminated in the qualifying stages of a Championship will not be eligible to play for another team in the Finals.

Where there is only one entry for a particular English Championship that team shall be deemed to be England's representatives at the appropriate International Championship if approved by the ECA Council. No prizes shall be awarded and the Championship will be identified in official records as 'Uncontested'.

All English Championships shall be played under the WCF Rules of Curling and Rules of Competition.

The length of the games in an English Championship shall be equivalent to those in the corresponding International Championship. Extra ends shall be played if the game is tied after this number. One point will be awarded for a win and 0 for a loss. A minimum of 6 ends will be played.

The system of play at the qualifying competition shall, if possible, follow that for the Finals. In any event a team shall not be eliminated unless it has lost a minimum of two games.

In the Finals the preferred playing format will be as follows:

- 2 entries            Best of 5 games
- 3 entries            Triple Round robin
- 4 entries            Double Round Robin
- 5 entries            Double Round Robin (Single Round Robin for Mixed)
- 6 entries            Double Round Robin (Men and Ladies)  
                              Single Round Robin (Senior, Mixed, Mixed Doubles, Junior)
- 7 entries            Single Round Robin
- 8 entries            Single Round Robin

Except as described in the next paragraph, a final will be played between the top two teams in all Championships with more than two entries after the conclusion of the Round Robin unless the top ranked team has won all their games AND has finished the Round Robin stage at least 2 points clear of the second ranked team when they will be declared the winners.

Until further notice, where the Mixed Championship has 5 or 6 entries a single round robin will be followed by a Page Play Off (PPO) series with the bottom two teams eliminated after the round robin stage. Where there are three teams in the PPO the teams ranked first and second will play the first game, the loser of that game will play the team ranked third and the winner of that game will then play the winner of the first game in the final. Where there are 4 teams in the PPO the teams ranked 1 and 2 will play and the teams ranked 3 and 4 will play. The winner of the 1v 2 game will progress to the final and the loser will play the winner of the 3v4 game with the winner of that game progressing to the final.

Where the draw leads to two teams playing three games on the same day those two teams will be drawn to play each other in the last session of the day if possible, taking into account the parameters that otherwise lead to a fair draw being made. These parameters which may not all be met include: equal number of first and second practices; no more than two consecutive first / second practices; allocation of games for each team equally across all available sheets and stone sets; no team shall play in consecutive sessions on the same sheet but may do so if they have a bye in between their participation.

**NO tie-breaker games will be played in any Championship.**

Each team will play Last Stone Draws, as laid down in the WCF Rules, before each game in the Round Robin stage of a Championship to determine which team has choice of first or last stone at the first end.

The teams will be ranked after the Round Robin as follows:

(i) Teams will be ranked according to their win/loss record;

(ii) If two teams are tied, the results of the game(s) between them in the Round Robin will determine who is ranked higher. If in a double round robin they have won one game each then they will be considered equal for this ranking step and step (iv) below will be used to rank them;

(iii) Where three or more teams are tied, the record of the games between the tied teams shall provide the ranking (should this procedure provide a ranking for some teams but not all, then the record of the games between the remaining teams that are still tied shall determine the ranking);

(iv) For all remaining teams whose ranking cannot be determined by (i) or (ii) or (iii), ranking is determined using the Draw Shot Challenge (DSC). The DSC is the average distance of the Last Stone Draws (LSD) which were played by a team during the Round Robin portion of a competition. The team with the lowest DSC will be ranked highest. If the DSCs are equal, then the team with the best non-equal LSD receives the higher ranking.

Teams in all Championships should play their games wearing matching tops. This applies to any garment that will be at any point the outer layer when a player is on the ice.

In addition to these rules, any additional specific rules for any Championship will be issued to competitors at least 2 weeks before the Championship commences.