

Squash and Racketball League Rules

Updated July 2025.

	Qualification for Entry into the Leagues
1(a)	Each Club and Sports Centre must be affiliated to England Squash.
1(b)	All players must be affiliated members of the club they represent, as noted in the Dorset Squash Constitution.
1(c)	An entry fee, as agreed at the Annual General Meeting, must be sent to the League Co-ordinator. This may be paid in full (to accompany the registration form) to reach the specified account via BACS by the stated date.
1(d)	Entry fees are non-refundable.
	Teams
2(a)	Clubs may enter as many teams as they like, provided enough court time is available.
2(b)	Any new team entering the Dorset Leagues will be placed in a suitable division at the discretion of the League Coordinator.

	Players
3(a)	Only players named on the nomination list in League Master for the relevant period may play in any matches. Initial nominations must be entered on the League Master website prior to a specified date when the season begins. The team that players are registered for will be the team they will remain in for the entire season. For the second half of the season nominations must be entered by a specified date when the second half begins. <i>The nominations are locked while the season is in progress.</i> The nomination list for any team must contain at least as many players as make up a side for the particular league. Any team wishing to bring in a new (or unregistered) player, after the nomination deadline, once the season is underway, may enter the leagues providing they are placed into the correct team at the appropriate string as agreed by the Club and League Coordinator. Any request of adding a new (or unregistered) player must be emailed to the league coordinator by the end of the month, to be implemented on the first of the following month by the League Coordinator (<i>For example, any change to apply in November must have been requested by midnight on 31st October</i>). Allowance and decision on timings are at the discretion of the league coordinator. Players not listed in nominations will be deemed a missing player and forfeit the string. As they are treated as a missing player teams must play their available players at the top of the order (see 4G)
3(b)	Teams will play in a registered, fixed, squad order throughout the season as per the nomination team lists in League Master mutually agreed by clubs and team captains.
3(c)	Each player playing out of their registered playing order will be deemed to have lost that rubber by 3 games to 0 and all lower rubbers. Penalty- Each player playing out of their registered playing order will be deemed to have lost that rubber 3 games to 0. All lower rubbers will also have been deemed to have lost 3 games to 0.
3(d)	Teams may only change their playing order during the season after notification of the change, by email, to the League Co-ordinator. If the change is agreed the League Co-ordinator will notify the team as to when the change can be implemented. <i>Any request of a change in order must be emailed to the League Coordinator by the end of the month, to be implemented on the 1st of the following month on League Master (For example, any change to apply in November must have been requested by midnight on 31st October).</i> <i>See also Re-registration 9d</i>
3(e)	Any player may now play in the last 3 matches of the season provided they are on the nomination list. However, if it is considered a strong player is simply there to gain unfair

	advantage at the very end of the season it will be the discretion of the League coordinator and Committee to adjudicate. Penalty: The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers will have been deemed to have lost by 3 games to 0.
3(f)	All players must be fully paid up and current members of England Squash to play in the leagues.
3(g)	England Squash membership numbers must be added to the website within League Master prior to the first match of the season. It is the responsibility of each individual player and club to ensure their members are paid and current England Squash members.
3(h)	If the England Squash membership number is not supplied, current or valid on League Master Captains will not be able to enter the result for that individual and will be deemed to have lost that rubber 3 games to 0.
3(i)	When players play for a 'higher team', they play at the bottom of the higher team (at No.4 string). Penalty: Each player playing out of their registered playing order will be deemed to have lost that rubber 3 games to 0 <u>and all lower rubbers.</u> An exception to this rule (captain's may use their discretion) may be allowed if there is a large difference in playing standards, in placing the player in a higher position than at the bottom (when 'playing up'). Both Captains must agree before the start of the match, a note made in 'League Master' within the 'match report' area (home team) <u>and the League coordinator should be notified by email.</u> <i>League Master software (teams list) assumes all players in the 1st team are better than all players in the 2nd team, all players in 2nd team are better than 3rd team and so on. When players play for a 'higher team', they play at the bottom of the higher team. You can clearly see their rankings when results entered. For example, 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5 (first number refers to the team and second number refers to the string they have been nominated for). It is therefore clear when someone had played out of order.</i>

	Matches
4(a)	All matches will be played in accordance with England Squash or UK Racketball rules as published on the website and will be to the best of 5 games Link here: http://www.uk-racketball.com/rules-of-racketball.html In addition, it is expected all players should conduct themselves at all times in a sporting and polite manner. No abusive behaviour or foul language will be tolerated. All disputes or queries should be sent by email to the league coordinator.
4(b)	Matches will be played to the best of five games with PAR (Point a rally) scoring to 11 points. If the score is 10-10 a player must win by 2 clear points. This applies to all 5 games. Divisions 2 and 3 Squash will use PAR scoring to 15 points.
4(c)	All matches must be played by a fixed date at the League Coordinator's discretion. One match to be played at home and one away, unless the numbers in the leagues are small; a third round of matches may be scheduled and match fees are linked to the hosting club and shared between teams. Should one of the three matches not be played then it should to be treated as home and away with the individual club responsible for the match fee. All 1st round matches to be played before any 2nd round fixtures have started (including re arranged fixtures) in line with the two nomination periods. - Penalty 3 points
4(d)	Matches will be played on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays as scheduled by the League Co-ordinator. Other nights may be used if mutually agreed between the two captains.
4(e)	A team will consist of 4 players in order of ability in accordance with Rule 3 (a, b, i).
4(f)	A team may not play with less than 3 players
4(g)	Any team arriving with one or more players short (and known before or at the start of the match) shall play its available players at the top of its order and shall forfeit string 4 if one player is short, and strings 3 and 4 if two players are short, and so on. Please refer to 4h for official arrival time allowance.
4(h)	Unless previously agreed with their opponents, teams should have three players ready to play by 15 minutes after the start time and four players ready one hour after the start time. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers <i>Where possible and in most cases all players should arrive the venue before the specified start time. It is recommended and good practice for Home teams to have 4 players ready at the start of the match (2 ready for marking and 2 ready to play).</i>
4(i)	Written team lists must be exchanged by the match start time, as determined in Rule 3 (b).

4(j)	The Home team is responsible for marking matches. Where possible, each match should have a marker and referee (one from each side). Dorset Squash recommend that each team should include a qualified referee.
4(k)	Any differences should be amicably settled between the Team Captains at the time if possible. If this cannot be achieved, both Team Captains should email to the League Co-ordinator within one week of the date of the match. If the league coordinator cannot settle the matter or the team's dispute the decision, the matter can be escalated to the Dorset Squash Committee whose decision will be final.
4(l)	A Karakal black ball will be the recommended ball in Division 1 and 2- A Karakal blue ball is recommended for the blue ball league. If two opponents agree to play with a different colour ball they may do so providing both captains agree.
4(m)	The home team is responsible for providing sufficient court time for all rubbers. If there is insufficient time to complete a match, the home team will concede all unfinished rubbers, unless the delay is due to the late arrival of the away team. Both team captains should email details to the League Co-ordinator within one week of the date of the match explaining the circumstances.
4(n)	Match results must be entered on the League Master web site within 48hrs of the fixture start time. It is the HOME team's responsibility to enter the result. Penalty- 3 points will be deducted from the Home Team unless the League Coordinator has been advised that there will be a delay. It is AWAY team's responsibility to verify the score on League Master within 48 hrs after the results are entered. <i>It is assumed it is in the interests of the away team to verify the result by checking a copy of the match card (or a photo taken on a smart phone). If the away team do not verify within the time limit it will be deemed complete and locked to both sides.</i>

4(o)	Match cards should still be completed and held by the home team for reference in case of disputes. (It is recommended that the Away team also keep a record in case of dispute). <i>Note: A smart phone could be used to record the score.</i>
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4(p)	Where a player is [INVALID] with no current ES link on the result, select blank on the website (blank automatically updates to walkover after verification): Penalty: that rubber will concede 3 points.
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	Fixtures
5(a)	The fixture list will be devised by the League Coordinator and be emailed to all club representatives at least two weeks before the first match of the season and uploaded on the website.
5(b)	There will be two opportunities to re-arrange matches without penalty: 1. After the fixtures are issued until the start of the season. 2. During the Christmas break. Revised dates should be given to the league coordinator before the start of the season and before the start of the second half of the season respectively. Only under exceptional circumstances, e.g. extreme weather or courts unavailable, matches may be re-arranged without penalty (see Rule 6c.) The league coordinator should be notified immediately if this is the case.
5(c)	HONOURING FIXTURES All matches must be played on the day arranged and in accordance with the Fixture Lists. Under no circumstances is unavailability of players an acceptable reason for a match to be rearranged. <i>It is understood that contrary to this rule, teams ring up and rearrange fixtures and the opposing teams feel obliged to accede. This simply creates problems further down the line. If you do rearrange and the match is subsequently not played neither team gets any points.</i> REARRANGING FIXTURES: If during the season a team wishes to rearrange a match then this can be permitted subject to the following conditions: i) Both team captains agree to a change ii) At least 4 days' notice must be given to the to the league coordinator and the other team iii) 5 points will be deducted from the team requesting the change (reduced to 3 points providing a new date agreed before the original has lapsed).

	iv) The rearranged fixture date must be given to the League Coordinator before the original date has passed so the new date can be updated on League Master. New arranged dates must be within the nomination period. CANCELLED FIXTURES i) For not fulfilling a fixture and cancelling: Opponents awarded 20 points. Defaulting club 0 points for the match. ii) If a team with less than three players arrives (see rule 4f) it will be deemed not to have fulfilled the fixture and a 'team walkover' will be awarded to the opposition 20-0. iii) Any team not fulfilling a fixture on the third occasion a team shall be withdrawn from the league. If in the first half all fixtures will be voided; if in the second half all 2nd half fixtures only will be voided. iv) If a fixture is cancelled with less than 48 hrs notice. Teams should seek to agree the amount of 'out of pocket' expenses between themselves. If there is any disagreement it will be passed onto the league coordinator and discussed at the following Dorset Squash and Racketball Committee meeting. This also includes teams who are short of 1 or two players.
5(d)	Teams failing to complete their fixtures will either have all match scores voided or a walkover given at the discretion of the League Co-ordinator.
	Points System
6(a)	Individual matches will be best of five games. The winning team will be the team with the most matches. Should the match score be even (i.e. 2-2) the team winning the most games wins, if this is also even (e.g. 9-9) then individual game points will decide the overall winner. If the score is equal the result is a draw.
6(b)	One point will be awarded for each individual game plus five bonus points to the winning team. Three bonus points to each team in the event of a draw.

	League positions, Promotion and Relegation
7(a)	Teams will be ranked in order as follows: - Highest number of points - Highest number of matches won - Tied teams will be ranked by matches against each other by rubbers won, then games won and then points won

7(b)	The top team in each division will automatically be promoted and the bottom team relegated in each division except for the top team in the top division and the bottom team the bottom division. Contrary to the rule it is well known teams have refused promotion in recent times. This is not allowed. Division 3 racketball (blue ball) will operate as an independent league (agreed the AGM on 5th July 2023).
7(c)	The teams finishing in second place and second from bottom will be promoted/relegated at the discretion of the League Co-ordinator.
7(d)	The League Coordinator may adjust the league to compensate for teams joining and leaving the league and teams that are obviously in the wrong division the previous season. This also applies to divisions that have become too large or too small to enable a balanced fixture list.

	Playing for Higher Teams
8(a)	No player shall play in a lower team than they are registered for. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers. <u>In addition, ineligibility of promotion to the offending team at the discretion of the League Coordinator.</u> Possible ineligibility of promotion to the offending team at the discretion of the League Coordinator.
8(b)	Players may play for a higher team than the one they are registered for 5 times (just 5 times allowed too if representing more than one higher team), this includes Cup matches as well as league matches. On the 6th time that they play for a higher team they will automatically be re-registered for that team and will not be able to play for any other team during the season. If a league is small in size (5 teams or less) players will be restricted to four 'play ups' (or otherwise) at the League coordinators discretion.
8(c)	If, in the League Co-ordinator's opinion, the player playing for a higher team is obviously playing in the wrong position in the higher team, i.e. they win and every other player loses or vice versa the following penalty will be applied. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers <i>The player playing for the 'higher team' should always play at no.4 unless both captains agree the player is too strong for that position and the League Coordinator is informed.</i>

	Re-Registration of Players
9(a)	No player may be registered for two different clubs in the same season for the same discipline e.g racketball or squash; a player may play squash for one club and racketball for another. An exception might be allowed if a player is not getting sufficient matches so re registration may be considered at the discretion of the League Coordinator and committee.
9(b)	If a player would like to change club, they should email the League Coordinator, who will advise whether the re registration will be allowed.
9(c)	In the event of a significant change in playing strength, a player may be either re registered for a lower team or change their team playing order. Any request of a change in team order during the season must be emailed to and agreed by the League Coordinator by the end of the month, to be implemented on the 1 st of the following month on League Master (For example, any change to apply in November must have been requested by midnight on 31 st October).
9(d)	Any request of adding a new (unregistered/unnominated) player during the season must be emailed to the league coordinator by the end of the month, to be implemented on the first day of the following month if agreed by the League Coordinator (<i>For example, any change to apply in November must have been requested by midnight on 31st October</i>).
9(e)	Players from a team withdrawing from the league will not be eligible to play for a lower team. An exception could be considered by the League Coordinator and Committee where individual players are at the appropriate level to play in a lower team. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers

	Clubs with more than one Team in the same Division
10(a)	No club shall have more than three teams in any division. <i>It is not recommended to have more than 2 teams from the same club in any division as management of the teams is very challenging.</i>
10(b)	If more than one team from one club is in the division, there can be no interchanging of players within the teams, except in the lowest division where players from the lower designated team may play for the higher team. This is currently allowed in Division 3 squash and division 3 (blue ball) racketball leagues only. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers
10(c)	Clubs may split the strength of its teams if they wish.

10(d)	Players playing up from a lower division may only play for one of the teams. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers
10(e)	Matches between clubs with two teams in the same division must be played in the first half of each half of each period. If a Club has three teams in the same division, the fixtures of the third team will not be affected by this rule. Penalty - The offending team(s) will be penalised 10 League Points
10(f)	Players from a team withdrawing from the league will not be eligible to play for the other team in that division. Penalty - The team will forfeit the rubber of the offending player and all lower rubbers
	Miscellaneous
11(a)	The home team is expected to provide suitable refreshments after the match, unless otherwise agreed prior to the match.
11(b)	The league rules will be maintained by the League Coordinator.

	Penalties, Disputes and Disciplinary Matters
12(a)	Disputes should be sent, by email, to the League Co-ordinator within 7 days of a match/incident.
12(b)	Matters of discipline should be sent, by email, to the League Co-ordinator.
12(c)	The League Co-ordinator will rule on any disputes or issues. If the ruling is contested an appeal can be lodged with the Dorset Squash Committee whose decision will be final.

These rules were discussed on 7th November, 14th November 2022 and 1st March 2023 at the Rules Working Group and also at the LMC on 23rd November 2022 and 17th April 2023. The rules have been discussed again at the Spring Meeting in March 2024, League Committee on 29th May and at the AGM on 10th July.

Rules for 2025 have been updated and agreed in line with LMC meetings 2024/5 and through discussion /voting at the AGM on Tuesday 8th July 2025. A and B week scheduled to separate squash and racketball and to be trialled for one year. Four person teams for squash also trialled for one year. Rule 10B 'two teams from the same club/division' will continue to allow interchanging of players from the lower to higher team in the bottom division only (in racketball this is not currently permitted in any black ball leagues). Rule 3e: Players are now permitted to play in the final 3 matches providing they are already on the nomination list (see rule 3e for further detail). Rule 4C has been clarified regarding match fees for 3rd round fixtures. Rule 5C has been updated. In addition, players are expected to stay for match tea unless hosting teams have been contacted in advance. Rule 5C Rearranging matches penalty reduced from 5 to 3 points if the new date is agreed and published before the original date has passed.

David Beater, League Coordinator – July 2025