**LADIES SECTION RULES**

**1. COUNTY MATCHES**

(a) Unbadged players working towards their County Badge – to qualify for the above

Year 1: must enter and play in at least 2 Championship competitions and win 1 round.

Year 2: Players presented with Colts Badge at the price fixed by the Association must enter and play in at least 3 Championship competitions and win 2 rounds.

Year 3: Players presented with County Badge at the price fixed by the Association must enter and play in at least 3 Championship competitions.

Qualifying competitions are: Fours, Triples, Pairs, Singles, Two Wood Singles and Senior Fours.

If the unbadged singles winner has not entered the required number of competitions or gained the number of rounds, she automatically receives her 1st County game and Colts Badge the following year.

In the year a lady qualifies for a Full County Badge, she cannot play in the unbadged singles in that year or subsequent years.

1. For existing fully badged players to be considered for selection in a County Game they must have entered and played in three county competitions in the previous year (these are the preliminary rounds leading to The National Championships). **If a badged player substitutes in a prelim/first round of a competition, which constitutes the team, this game will count as one of the three required.** In the event of personal illness or injury, the above restrictions are waived for one year provided a letter of confirmation is submitted signed by two officers of the club. **Johns Trophy/Walker:** Ladies who are County players, who played in any County competitions the previous year and have entered County Competitions for the current year or at the discretion of the Selection Committee, may be considered for inclusion in the squad.

(c) Players taking part in County Matches whether home or away shall pay a flat rate, paying their own travelling expenses to the home venue.

(d) **County Uniform:** Approved county jacket (unless a current officer of the County or Past President when blazers are worn), approved navy blue skirt/trousers/cropped trousers, approved County shirt, black shoes, predominantly black handbag, and brown tights (optional), approved County hats (optional).

**Uniform for Play:** navy blue approved skirt/trousers/cropped trousers/shorts, approved County shirt and approved County jacket, regulation bowling shoes, brown tights (optional), approved County hats (optional). Approved county hats are white or county cap.

(e) Ladies moving into Bedfordshire who are County Badged players are awarded a Bedfordshire County badge in their first game.

(f) In the event of a County Match being rained off, at least 11 ends must have been played for qualification towards a Colts or County Badge (at the discretion of the Captain of the day, this can be varied dependant on the weather).

(g) A member playing three matches in the Johns Trophy and Walker Cup, shall receive the appropriate flash, at the price fixed by the Association.

(h) County discs shall be used on bowls by members playing in a County match or other occasion for identification of the Association.

(i) Ladies who no longer wish to enter and play in three county competitions each year and who have played in county friendly matches for at least five consecutive years will be eligible for at least one county friendly match each season. The request for a game is to be made in writing to the Match Secretary by the end of October and they will be sent a list of available county matches from which to choose their game.

**2. COMPETITION RULES**

(a) The County shall be divided into three zones for the purpose of running the competitions. Competitions will be played in zones up to and including the last sixteen. Unbadged singles, Champion of Champions and Officers Cup are not played in zones. Competitions, either Championship or Domestic, with less than 30 entrants shall be drawn as one zone.

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| **ZONE 1 - 2**  Ampthill Lancaster Avenue  Ashcroft Leighton Buzzard  Barton Linslade  Beech Hill Luton Town  Co-op Luton Luton West End  Dunstable Maulden  Flitwick  Houghton Regis | ZONE 3 Bedford Borough  Bedford BC  Bedford Priory  Bedford Russell Park  Bridgman  Great Barford  Kempston East  Kempston Hammers  Mowsbury Park  Sharnbrook  Stewartby  Wilstead | ZONE 4 Biggleswade Town  Eaton Socon  Fairfield  Henlow Park  Langford  Potton  Sandy Conservative  Sandy Town  Shefford  St Andrews  Stotfold |

1. All bowls must bear the appropriate WBB/BIBC stamp dated 1985 or later (see current Bowls England Yearbook). Competitors reaching the Semi-Final stages will also require an up to date stamp or a current World Bowls Stamp.
2. The competitions shall be open to all members of clubs affiliated to the Association; entry fees will be agreed at the AGM. A player shall not represent or allow her name to be submitted for more than one club.
3. All approved propositions appertaining to county competitions are valid for at least three consecutive years.
4. County competitions take preference over any leagues that are played in Bedfordshire. Leagues must in no way interfere with the running of the County Association.
5. A player having to withdraw from a competition will require a letter/email of confirmation which must be forwarded to the Competition Secretary of their Zone as soon as possible after the withdrawal and copied to their Ladies Club Secretary.
6. Choosing rinks for play: rink/s to be played on shall be made in accordance with the current Laws of the Sport (Law 3.1) For a match requiring one rink, a minimum of 2 rinks shall be offered to the opponent. For a match requiring more than one rink, the minimum offered shall be at least equal to the number of rinks required.
7. No player in a competition or match shall play on the same rink, on the day of such competition or match before play commences under penalty of disqualification.
8. List of named entrants to each competition must be emailed/sent to the County Competitions Coordinator no later than the October Council meeting.
9. All competitions shall be played according to the rules in the Bowls England Yearbook and Laws of the Sport of Bowls.
10. All competitions, those leading to the National Championship and the Domestic Competitions are to be played on the fixed date, on the green of the challenger (1st drawn). If, however, the players concerned wish to play before the fixed date they may do so by mutual consent. If games cannot be played on or before the fixed date, due to unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, a referral must be made to the Executive who will mediate.
11. If the date for a round of a competition is a day on which the challenger’s green is closed for fertilisation, the challenger shall have the option of playing the day before or the day after the date (by agreement with their opponent) or if no agreement is reached, to play the round on a neutral green on the competition round date.
12. The time for commencing a match shall be mutually agreed but no player/team shall be compelled to accept a time earlier than 6.00 pm Monday to Friday or 9.30 am on a Saturday or Sunday, nor later than 6.30 pm on any day. BE Rule.
13. Inclement weather shall mean the existence of rain or abnormal climate conditions (whether they be those of hail, snow, cold, high wind, extreme high temperature or any combinations thereof) by virtue of which it is either not reasonable or possible to play. Unusual situations not covered within the above can often arise. If a situation arises that is not covered by the above, Players, Markers, Umpires and Officials shall use their common sense and a spirit of fair play to decide on the appropriate course of action.

When a match is stopped by the Umpire and/or the Greenkeeper (or players if no officials are in attendance) play shall cease on all rinks simultaneously. Ends started but not completed shall be declared null and void;

* + - When it is not possible to resume the match on the day:
      1. If the total number of ends played equals or exceeds 10 the match shall be deemed to have been completed and the score shall stand.
      2. If the total number of ends played is less than 10, the remainder of the match shall, wherever possible be played at a later date (please refer to ‘Law 32: Game Stoppages’ for guidance).
      3. Should it not be possible to play the match to its conclusion by the closing date of the round, the winner shall be decided by the toss of a coin.

1. That the Benevolent Triples to be drawn as one zone. The greens where possible to be central within the County. If 2 venues are used, play will continue to the final four per venue. The team of 3 players shall be affiliated to the same county but not necessarily the same club. The quarter finals, semi finals and finals to be played on one day, set by the County.
2. That the Two Wood Singles competition be drawn as one zone and played on one day down to the quarter finals. (The number of greens used shall be dictated by the number of entries). If four greens are used the last two competitors from each green shall proceed to the quarter finals. If two greens are used the last four competitors from each green shall proceed to the next round. The quarter finals and semi finals shall be played on one evening, set by the County. The last two in the competition shall proceed to Finals Weekend.
3. Players taking part in the first game shall constitute the team and shall normally play together throughout the competition. Substitution shall be in accordance with Bowls England Championship Bye-Law and Laws of the Sport of Bowls as follows:

**Substitution:**

In pairs, triples and fours, the players taking part in the first game shall constitute the team and shall normally play together throughout the Championship.

One additional, and the same player, may be used as a substitute at any time provided they have not already played in the same Championship. They may play in any position.

The named entrant conceding a walkover before their first game in any Championship cannot act as a substitute in the same Championship, as this is considered a game played and lost.

The named entrant of a team cannot be a member or substitute of any other team in the same Championship.

If a substitute is required during a game then the rules in the current Laws of the Sport of Bowls apply.

1. A lady winning her Club or County four wood singles, under 25 Singles and Domestic Over 55 singles is entitled to enter the Domestic Champion of Champions competition to be played the following year.
2. In all county single handed competitions, the game must be marked by an affiliated member whether they are qualified Club Umpires or not up to quarter Final stage. Men may mark these games provided they are not related to the competitors.
3. Semi-Finals of Championship games will be played on neutral greens organised by the Competition Team to be arranged once semi finalists are known. Semi finals of domestic competitions will also be on neutral greens, equidistant between the two clubs as far as possible, and organised by the challenger. Finals to be played on the President’s green where appropriate. *Note: Once venue is confirmed by the challenger, it is suggested that the Competition Co-ordinator or Secretaries be informed so that they can communicate this information to the wider audience.*
4. A 23-metre tape should be provided by all clubs for use at competitions.
5. Persons not engaged in the game shall be situated clear of and beyond the limits of the rink of play and clear of the verges and shall preserve an attitude of strict neutrality, neither by word nor act, disturb or advise the players.
6. Club Umpires must wear regulation dress. Duties are clearly described in the Laws of the Sport of Bowls (Crystal Mark Edition).
7. For the Semi-Final & Final an umpire shall be appointed. If no qualified umpire is available, then either a qualified club umpire or some other competent person shall be appointed. Players calling the umpire onto the green should remove all bowls except those taken out and those requiring measuring.
8. No lady may enter any singles competition (either two or four wood singles) if she knowingly is unable to play in the final. If a player was not aware of this prior to entering the competition, she must withdraw as soon as she knows she cannot play in the final without playing any further matches in those competitions. If dates for county finals have already been published, it is incumbent on every player to find out when these are.
9. BOWLING SANDALS ARE BANNED: anyone contravening this rule has no recourse to compensation in case of injury or skin condition arising thereof.
10. Smoking and Alcohol. Please refer to Bowls England Laws of the Sport Rule Book regarding this.

**3. DRESS FOR COUNTY COMPETITIONS**

1. The dress for all **preliminary** **rounds** both National and Domestic is grey tailored trousers, skirts, cut-offs or shorts or registered club colours.
2. Plain white/cream shirt with sleeves or club shirts may be worn with the trousers, skirts, cut offs or shorts.
3. Club or cream/white cardigans/jacket may be worn with the above.
4. Semi-Finals and Finals: cream/white regulation trousers, skirts, cut-offs or shorts, blouses or club shirt (sleeveless blouses or jumpers are not permitted). Cream/white or club cardigans/jacket. Registered club colours also permitted.
5. Benevolent Triples last 8 and Two Wood last 16 - cream/white with club colours. Registered club colours also permitted.
6. President and County Day: cream/white with club colours (current Executive and Past Presidents wear County Uniform – see 1(d)). Registered club colours also permitted.
7. The wearing of hats whilst play is in progress is optional at all times. When worn, hats must be of an approved style in white or approved county cap.
8. A regulation sun hat or baseball cap approved by Bowls England may be worn for health & safety reasons.
9. A plain green/white visor may be worn.
10. In inclement weather appropriate bowls waterproofs may be worn.
11. Regulation bowling shoes must be worn.
12. Tights or Stockings are optional at all times. If worn they must be in shades of brown. Plain white socks may be worn with trousers. If “footies” are worn they must not be visible above the shoe.
13. National Championships – Leamington Spa. Responsibility for presenting themselves dressed in accordance with Bowls England rules lies with the County Finalists. See Bowls England Yearbook.
14. ANY INFRINGEMENT OF THESE RULES CAN RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION.

**4. INFRINGEMENT OF RULES**

Every Member should have a copy of these Rules and Constitution and be bound thereby. In case of infringement by any Member/Club, such Member/Club shall be liable for expulsion from the Association on the decision of a Special General Meeting called to discuss the matter.

Any questions arising not provided for in the foregoing shall be brought before the Executive of the Association whose decision shall be Final.

No alteration or addition to the above rules shall be made except at the October Council meeting or special Council Meeting called for that purpose.

**Updated 12.10.23 following Council meeting**