

Stoke Pool League Rules Season 2026/27

1. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

Rule 1.1 – League Authority

The League shall be administered by the League Committee.

Rule 1.2 – Committee Discretion

Any matter not specifically covered within these Rules or the League Constitution shall be determined by the Committee. Such decisions shall be final and binding and shall not be subject to appeal.

Rule 1.3 – Private Voting

All disciplinary matters and disputes shall be voted upon in private by the Committee.

Rule 1.4 – Season Calendar

The Secretary shall determine:

- The commencement date of the season.
- The competition calendar.
- Merit and cup dates.
- The Annual General Meeting date.

2. LEAGUE STRUCTURE & SEASON FORMAT

Rule 2.1 – Divisions

The League shall operate with two divisions, or such number of divisions as determined by the Committee.

Rule 2.2 – Rules of Play

All matches shall be played under current International Rules.

Rule 2.3 – Match Format

League matches shall consist of:

- 12 singles frames.
- Three sessions.
- Four frames per session.

Rule 2.4 – Play-Offs

Where teams finish level in promotion, relegation, championship or trophy positions:

- A play-off match shall be played. (Frame difference and head-to-head results shall not be considered)
- Play-offs shall be played at the sponsor's venue.

Rule 2.5 – Tied Play-Offs

If a play-off finishes level:

- Three nominated players from each team shall play one frame simultaneously on three tables.
- Break order shall be determined by lag.

Rule 2.6 – Multi-Team Ties

Where more than two teams are tied:

- A mini round-robin competition shall be played.
- The top two teams shall contest a final play-off.

3. TEAM COMPOSITION & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Rule 3.1 – Grade A Players

A team may register a maximum of one Grade A player.

Rule 3.2 – Grade B Players

A team may register a maximum of two Grade B players.

Rule 3.3 – A Grade Restriction

A team containing a Grade A player may register only one Grade B player.

Rule 3.4 – Re-Grading of Players

The Committee may add a player to the Grade B list if:

- They finish within the top three of the previous season's statistics
- They move to a different team.

Rule 3.5 – County Players

Outside the Premier Division, teams may register only one County Player.

Rule 3.6 – County Player Definition

County status shall be determined by the Committee, normally applying to players who have represented Open County A or B teams within the previous three seasons.

Rule 3.7 – Transfers

- Transfers between teams are permitted (2027)
- A player or Team must contact the league secretary and submit a request
The Committee MUST ensure the leaving team is satisfied' and no financial irregularities etc are outstanding.
The Committee MUST then approve ensuring all league rules are applied (seeded players/ringers)
- The cut-off date is 50% of the league games - Cup Tied rule applies
- One transfer per player per season - One transfer per team per season
- Percentage matches played for cup finals will not include matches for previous team

Please allow 7 days for 'cooling off period' and all administrative registrations have been completed.

A new registration fee will apply.

Rule 3.8 – Dual League Participation

A player may not represent this League and another Pool League on the same playing night.

Rule 3.9 – Barred Players

- Where a player has been barred by the opposing team or venue, the player's team must fulfil the fixture without that player taking part.
- A team that refuses or fails to fulfil a fixture because of such a bar shall forfeit the match, and the result shall be recorded as an 8–4 defeat.
- Where, on the day of the fixture, it comes to light that a player is barred from the venue and consequently unable to enter the premises, and such bar has not been properly declared or observed, the League Committee shall have the discretion to order the fixture to be replayed.
- No team shall impose a bar on another team or player without reasonable cause. Any team found by the League Committee to have imposed a bar without reasonable cause shall be expelled from the League.
- The League Committee shall have sole and final authority to determine whether reasonable cause exists for any bar imposed under this Rule.
- In exercising its authority under this Rule, the League Committee shall give due regard to the rights of the venue proprietor or licence holder and will generally uphold the principle of the venue's right to refuse entry or service ("the name above the door" principle).

4. MATCH PROCEDURES

Rule 4.1 – Match Start Time

All League and Cup matches shall commence at 8:00pm.

Rule 4.2 – Practice Time

The away team shall have access to the table from 7:50pm.

Rule 4.3 – Minimum Team Requirement

Teams may compete with a minimum of two players.

Rule 4.4 – Postponements

Postponements are not permitted.

Rule 4.5 – Rearranged Fixtures

Matches may only be brought forward with approval from the Secretary.

Rule 4.6 – Lag Procedure

A lag shall determine the opening break. Following the opening frame, alternate breaks shall apply.

Rule 4.7 – Lag procedure in Cup matches

The alternate-break format specified in Rule 4.6 shall continue into the deciding frame (Frame 13)

Rule 4.8 – Choice of Break

The lag winner may choose either:

- To break or to give the break to their opponent.

5. PLAYING ORDER & LEAGUE APP RULES

Rule 5.1 – Team Entry

The official playing order MUST be entered into the League App before the lag.

Rule 5.2 – Reserve Players

Teams may nominate up to two reserve players. For the Challenge Cup (three-player side), up to three reserve players are permitted.

Rule 5.3 – Returning Players

Any substituted player returning later in the match must return to their original position.

Rule 5.4 – Responsibility for Scores

The home captain shall enter scores.

Rule 5.5 – Verification of Scores

The away captain must verify:

- Match results.
- Break and dishes.
- Recorded statistics.

Rule 5.6 – Incorrect Entry

Failure to comply with playing order, substitution rules or app procedures shall result in forfeiture of all points gained without appeal.

Rule 5.7 – Three Session Rule

Players must play one frame in each session.

Rule 5.8 – Consecutive Frames

Players may not play all their allocated frames consecutively. (3)

Rule 5.9 – Penalty

Any breach of the Three Session Rule shall result in:

- Loss of frames.
- £10 fine to the player.
- £10 fine to the team.

Rule 5.10 – Incorrect Playing Order

Where an incorrect player participates:

- Play shall stop immediately if identified during the frame.

Rule 5.11 – Completed Frames

If the frame is completed:

- An innocent winner keeps the frame.
- A guilty winner must replay the frame against the correct opponent.
- The league secretary must be informed of the error

6. PLAYER REGISTRATION

Rule 6.1

All new player registrations must be submitted to the Secretary.

Rule 6.2

Registrations may be made via WhatsApp or text message.

Rule 6.3

Players must be entered using their full name.

Rule 6.4

Registration fees must be paid at the next League Meeting.

Rule 6.5

The League reserves the right to refuse registration.

Rule 6.6

The Secretary may impose a registration deadline with four weeks' notice.

7. LEAGUE FIXTURES & CANCELLATIONS

Rule 7.1 – Cancellation Notice

Teams cancelling without 48 hours' notice (8pm Sunday) shall receive:

- £15 fine.
- Loss of home advantage in the reverse fixture where possible.

Rule 7.2 – Teams Withdrawing

If a team withdraws after completing half of the season: (or once around etc)

- First-half results shall stand if all matches completed
- Second time as above if all matches completed
- Remaining fixtures shall be void.

Rule 7.3 – Withdrawal Penalty

Any teams withdrawing before season completion shall be banned for the following season (all registered players)

8. CUP COMPETITIONS

- KO Cup and Plate played over 12 frames.
- Challenge Cup 12 frames
- Tie Break will be one 'Team Game' playing order will be as final session.
- Premier Division teams excluded from Plate competitions.
- Semi-final, Final and Play-Off eligibility requires 33% league appearances.
- Challenge Cup follows 33% league fixture (not group) rule for Finals.
- Illegal players result in automatic disqualification.
- Cup Semi-Finals and Finals shall be played at the sponsor's venue.

9. MERIT COMPETITIONS

- Singles Entry: £6.
- Doubles Entry: £5 per player.
Pairings may have the option to enter a third player (at entry ONLY) who can play at any round.
(Please note: - No swapping of players allowed once match has started.
Percentage ruling applies
- One Frame Knockout: £4 per player.
- Payment required before entry is accepted.
- All merits must be played on the advertised date.
Secretary can re-schedule finals night for any player that is involved in two events (Singles & Doubles)
Singles will take priority and be played on scheduled date.
Any player unable to play on scheduled date will automatically be excluded from the competition and prizes forfeited.
- Last 8 stages held at sponsor venue.
- Double elimination format applies to One Frame Knockout.
- Merit qualification requires 33% league appearances. (at last 8 stage and onwards)
- Failure to provide 24 hours' notice of non-attendance results in a £5 fine.

10. STATISTICS, BREAKS & DISHES

Rule 10.1 – Eight Ball Clearance

Must be completed from the player's first visit with all 15 balls on the table.

Rule 10.2 – Reverse Dish

Must be completed from the non-breaker's first visit **with all 15 balls remaining.**

Rule 10.3 – Recording Statistics

Both Break & Dish and Reverse Dish shall be recorded as Break & Dish on the App.

Rule 10.4 – Player of the Season

LeagueAppLive statistics shall determine Player of the Season.

Players will be ranked by % wins. Players must have played a minimum of 33% of frames available.

Example 2026 season Premier League played 27 matches. Frames available 81 divided by 3 = 27 frames minimum played. Team Player Statistics – Competition -Premier – Division - Premier – Minimum Played = 27 .

11. DISPUTES & APPEALS

Rule 11.1

Disputes must be submitted in writing within seven days. Email submissions are accepted.

Rule 11.2

Text messages are not accepted.

Rule 11.3

Appeals to a League disciplinary decision must be submitted to the Secretary within seven (7) days of the decision, in writing. Email accepted (No Text/WhatsApp/Messenger etc allowed)

Rule 11.4

A £20 administration fee must accompany the appeal. This fee will be refunded if the appeal is successful.

Rule 11.5

Appeals shall be heard by five impartial delegates chaired by the Chairman.

12. FEES, FINES & LEAGUE MEETINGS

- League Registration Fee: £95 To Be paid at August Meeting
- Player Registration Fee: £5.
- A minimum of Six meetings per season – Dates will be set by secretary at commencement of season.
Please Note - 2027 Season
August 30th League Fees
October 4th Player Registrations
November 1st Merits Entries.
- Draw money: £5 per meeting
- Failure to attend meetings: £10 fine, £20 second meeting, then £30 for a third meeting.
Missing a Fourth meeting will result in Expulsion from League

- One apology allowed per season
 - Venue change fee: £25.
 - Late Team registration fee: £10.
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13. DISCIPLINE & CONDUCT

- International Rule Set conduct rules will be fully supported
 - Physical or verbal abuse may result in suspension, expulsion, fines or referral to Staffordshire County Pool Association.
 - Social media abuse shall be treated as disciplinary misconduct.
 - The Committee may suspend, ban, fine or refuse registration.
 - Deliberately striking the table in anger results in immediate loss of frame.
 - **Loss of Frame – Interference with the Cue Ball**
 - a) Any player who deliberately interferes with a moving ball will immediately lose the frame.
 - b) Deliberately touching, catching, stopping, or picking up the cue ball while it is in motion is a **Loss of Frame** offence. This includes catching, stopping, or touching the cue ball as it enters or drops into a pocket.
 - c) Following a standard foul, and **only after all balls have come to rest**, the incoming player is awarded **cue ball in hand** and may pick up the cue ball and place it anywhere on the playing surface before playing their shot.
 - d) Any unauthorised contact with the cue ball while it remains in play will result in an immediate **Loss of Frame**.
 - Mobile phone use during a frame:
 - First warning.
 - Second offence results in loss of frame.
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14. EQUIPMENT & VENUE REQUIREMENTS

Rule 14.1

Dynaspheres Gold 580 balls shall be used in streamed finals.

Rule 14.2

Pro Cup balls may be used when Dynaspheres Gold 580 are unavailable.

Rule 14.3

Venues with multiple tables may change tables provided the replacement table is the same size.

Rule 14.4

The League Calendar must be displayed within the pool playing area. Failure to display the calendar shall result in a £10 fine

15. TROPHIES & AWARDS

- Where applicable, five trophies will be awarded, except in the Challenge Cup (Four), where competition-specific trophy allocations apply.
- Prize money will be awarded to League Winners and Runners-Up, as well as Merit Winners and Runners-Up.
- No prize money will be awarded for Plate competitions.
- Runners-up will receive a cash award only and will not be presented with trophies.

Presentation Evening

- Teams must have a minimum of 50% of their **signed players** in attendance at the Presentation Evening.
- The League reserves the right to charge prize-winning teams for five Presentation Evening tickets.

Trophies

- Failure to return trophies by the specified date will result in a £10 fine.
- Teams are responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing any trophies that are lost, stolen, or damaged while in their possession.

16. APPENDIX 1 – GRADED PLAYERS

Grade A

- Adam Davis
- Liam White
- Lee Kendall
- Rob Wharne
- Gaz Potts
- Neil Raybone
- Jimmy Croxton
- Andy Blurton
- Zak Shepherd
- Any player holding Ultimate Pool Professional Status.

Grade B

- Ryan Cope
- Carl Hough
- Danny Evans
- Ian Duffy
- Alex Bailey
- Daz Lightfoot
- John Price
- Lee Whitfield
- Pete Flanagan
- Rob Adams

These Rules (11 pages) were approved at the 2026/27 AGM (Sunday August 23rd) and apply for the entirety of the 2026/27 season.

Any player participating in a League match shall be deemed to have accepted these Rules and the League Constitution.

Any matters arising not covered by the constitution or internal league rules will be dealt with by the committee.

The committee's decision will be final and binding and not covered by any appeals.

This ruling will be verified at the next AGM and incorporated into the internal rules.

Further explanations of rules will be addressed in accordance with Internal rules 2026.

