

NORTH CHESHIRE LEAGUE – Rules 2024

- 1 a) First teams consist of 7 male players; Second teams shall consist of 8 male players. All competitors must have a Handicap Index as per the World Handicapping System. All competitors must be a member of the club they are playing for. Any competitor who is a member of more than one club may only play for one of these clubs in any one season.

b) A maximum of 2 players aged 16 to 18 years of age on the date of the match with the requisite handicap may play in each team.

c) Individual players cannot play for both 1st and 2nd teams in the same round of matches. The penalty for contravention is that the individual point in the second game shall be awarded to the non-defaulting team.

d) Caddies are not permitted at any stage in the competition.
- 2 First team is for players with a **Handicap Index** up to and including 9.9; the second team is for players with a **Handicap Index** from 7.0 to 16.0. Players can compete off a lower handicap to ensure they qualify. Club professionals and assistants are allowed to play in first team matches off scratch. Professionals/ assistants shall normally play the opposing professional/ assistant. If one team does not field a professional/ assistant, then the other professional/ assistant shall play the lowest handicap player and normal handicap allowance shall apply. (This could mean that a professional/ assistant playing against a plus handicap amateur will receive shots.)
- 3 Teams shall play in Course Handicap order. Where Course Handicaps are equal, Handicap Index shall be referred to in order to ensure the correct order. Matches shall be over 18 holes with each player playing for one individual point. Matches are to be played off the **same tees for all fixtures**, with the default being the markers of the day for the Club's back set of tees. Any difference to tee selection must be advised at least 72 hours before the match, to enable Captains to check eligibility when selecting teams.
- 4 Qualifying League match points, in addition to the individual points are as follows:
 - 2 points for a home win
 - 4 points for an away win
 - 1 point for a home draw
 - 2 points for an away draw
 - 0 points for a loss (home or away)

Total match and individual points make up the league tables.

Finals, semi-finals and semi-final eliminators are decided by individual points only.
- 5 Playing format shall be singles match play; stroke allowance shall be full difference of Course Handicaps.
- 6 The competition shall be a mixture of qualifying league matches followed by a knockout format. Each club shall enter a First Team and a Second Team.

Qualifying Leagues

The eight clubs shall initially play in a Qualifying League (one 1st Team and one 2nd Team). Each team shall play each of the other teams only once. Four teams shall have four home matches and three away matches and four teams shall have three home matches and four away matches. This arrangement will alternate in subsequent years (i.e. the four teams who had four home matches in year 1 will have three home matches in year 2 and the three teams who had three home matches in year 1 will have four home matches in year 2, and so on).

After completion of the Qualifying Leagues, the top six teams shall compete on a knockout basis for the North Cheshire League.

In the event of a tie for qualifying places, the total individual points for and against shall be taken into account. The team with the greater individual points difference shall qualify in the higher position (i.e. the same as Football League goal difference).

Knockout Stage - North Cheshire League

Eliminator

The Third placed team in the Qualifying League shall play the Sixth placed team (match A) and the Fourth placed team shall play the Fifth placed team (Match B) in a single match eliminator. The higher placed team from the Qualifying League shall play at home in the Eliminator.

Semi-finals

The top placed team in the Qualifying League shall play the winner of Eliminator match B, and the second placed team shall play the winner of Eliminator match A in a single match semi-final. The teams finishing in the top two positions of the Qualifying League shall play at home in the Semi-final.

Semi-final and Eliminator results are decided on individual match play results only. In the event of a tie in the Semi-final or Eliminator, the away team shall progress to the Final.

Knockout Stage – North Cheshire League Final

The two teams that advance from the Semi-finals shall contest the Final, held as a single match. All clubs participating in the league will host the finals on a rotational basis as follows:

- 2024 - Cheadle, 2025 - Lymm, 2026 - Warrington, 2027 - Birchwood, 2028 - Flixton, 2029 - Antrobus, 2030 - High Legh, 2031 - Davyhulme.

In the Final, teams shall play in reverse handicap order. If after the completion of all individual games, the overall score is tied, the players in the last match shall play sudden death starting at the first hole.

- 7 The matches shall normally be played on the published dates, but other factors may mean that team Captains will need to arrange alternative mutually convenient dates. Any re-arranged games should be played as near as possible to the original date (i.e. it doesn't have to be a Tuesday). Every effort should be made to complete all Qualifying League matches before the scheduled end of the Qualifying Leagues.
- 8 Matches shall start at the agreed time (normally 5.00 pm on Tuesdays). If a player is not ready to play by 5.45 pm, the opposition shall be entitled to claim the point. Team sheets should be made available prior to the first game teeing off.
- 9 In the event of a team defaulting on a match within one week of the agreed date due to lack of team members, the non-defaulting team shall be awarded the match and:
 - a) For 1st team league games, 4 individual match points plus the additional points for either a home or away win shall go to the non-defaulting team. For 2nd team league games, 5 individual match points plus the additional points for either a home or away win shall go to the non-defaulting team. The defaulting team shall not receive any points.
 - b) In the event of a default in any of the semi-final matches, the non-defaulting team shall progress to the final.
 - c) If a team defaults in the final the non-defaulting team shall win the trophy.
 - d) Any defaulting team shall be penalised 3 points in the following season's Qualifying League.
- 10 Both home and away team Captains shall report match results via the WhatsApp group within 24 hours of the match taking place, making it clear as to whether it is a 1st or a 2nd Team result.
- 11 After match meals – Teams shall be committed to paying for a minimum of 5 meals in 1st team matches and 6 in 2nd team matches. Away Captains must contact the Home Captain at least 48 hours in advance to confirm actual meal numbers, otherwise the away team shall be committed to pay for 7 (1st Team) or 8 (2nd Team) meals. The cost of meals shall be £10. Ideally, this should be a hot meal – a single course is sufficient. Teams are encouraged to eat together where practicable.