

HIBA COUNTY COMPETITION RULES 2026/2027

**Amended 26/08/2026*

The Laws of the Sport of Bowls shall apply in all circumstances not covered by these Hertfordshire Championship Rules.

1. ORGANISATION

The Championships are open to playing members of Clubs Affiliated to Hertfordshire Indoor Bowling Association (H.I.B.A.)

The HIBA Competition Secretary will administer Championships within the County. The HIBA Competition Secretary will issue official entry forms to each Club Secretary who will be advised of the closing date for entries to be received. The completed forms and fees are to be sent to the H.I.B.A. Hon Treasurer before said closing date.

2. Entries.

The submission of any entry on behalf of a competitor shall imply acceptance of these Rules, with one name only being listed for Pairs, Triples and Fours. Fees shall be determined by the H.I.B.A. and published with the entry forms in February/March of that year. In submitting a Championship entry Clubs undertake to accept that International Duties, National Events and Championships shall take precedence over any domestic arrangements that clubs might have. In submitting a Championship entry on behalf of its members Clubs agree that entries are accepted on the understanding that adequate playing space will be provided to the competitor to play their competition ties to completion when competitors are playing at home.

3. VENUES

All Championship ties shall be played on approved greens belonging to Affiliated Clubs which comply with the Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls. Competitors unable to use their home green because it does not comply with the foregoing requirements or for any other reason may with the agreement of the County Competition Secretary play on any green in the County, which does comply with the foregoing requirements and is available

4. RINK FEES

All competitors will be expected to pay their own rink fees.

5. ELIGIBILITY

5.1. Unless otherwise provided in these Rules, all competitors entered by an Affiliated Club shall be full playing members of that club. A competitor may only enter and play in H.I.B.A.

County Championships through one affiliated club (Even though he or she may be an eligible member of more than one club.)

Players under suspension, or expulsion from a club affiliated to the HIBA shall not participate in County Championships through that club, subject to the 'right of appeal' under the Rules and the Constitution of the H.I.B.A.

5.2 (i) For entries into age related competitions, in the Under 18 Singles events, competitors must not have attained 18 years of age on 30th April in the year of the final.

5.2 (ii) In the under 25 Singles events, competitors must not have attained 25 years of age on 30th April in the year of the final.

5.3 Entries to all H.I.B.A. Championships are accepted on the understanding that Competitors may be subject to random drug testing at any time

5.4 A Competitor entering a Team or who is a named entrant in a competition is not permitted to play in any other team in the same competition irrespective of whether or not they have actually played in their original entry. All players shall be eligible members of the same club and shall normally play together throughout the competition.

In the Pairs, Triples and Fours, players taking part in the first game constitute the original entry. One additional (and the same) player may however be used as a substitute at any time provided the player has not already played for another team in the competition and is an eligible Competitor. In Mixed Pairs, and Mixed Triples, players taking part in the first game constitute the original entry. A substitute of either gender is allowable at any time provided, that they are eligible players and have not already played for another team in the competition, they are the same players and that only one substitute is used in any game.

Mixed Fours teams to consist of two men and two ladies. Two substitutes are allowed (one man and one lady) and both may play at the same time. Once a substitute has been used, only he or she may be used as a substitute in future ties. The "Original Team" shall consist of those players who play in the first tie. A substitute may play in any position, but in a resumed game, (game interrupted through illness or any other reason) a substitute cannot play skip. See Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls Section 13 – Influences affecting play.

5.5 Players who have entered an H.I.B.A. Singles, under 18 singles or U25 Singles Championship and subsequently change membership to another Club within the County may transfer their entry with them.

5.6 Officer's Singles is open to all Officers of affiliated Clubs and to members of the County Executive Committee. The rules for the singles championship shall apply.

5.7 The County Championship winners or runners up, with the exception of the Officers Singles, all mixed Championships and both of the junior singles, are eligible for and will be

entered into the Home County I.B.A. Championships. Failure to appear may result in disqualification for the following year.

6. PLAYING ARRANGEMENTS

6.1. The player whose name appears first in a draw is designated the Challenger on behalf of themselves and, where appropriate their team, similarly the player whose name appears second is designated the Opponent.

6.2 If 2 Clubs have the same colour stickers, the 'opponent' shall remove or change their stickers

6.3 H.I.B.A. Competition finals will be played on a green nominated by the H.I.B.A. Committee on dates **and times** determined by the H.I.B.A. Competitions Secretary

6.4 All matches will be played under The Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls, all except Singles will be a maximum 3½ hours duration excluding trial ends. Play must be continuous. The delivery of the Jack (from a correctly positioned mat) shall constitute the start of an end. An end started before the 3½ hour time limit has elapsed must be completed. In the event of a tie, an extra end will be played. The start and finish time must be agreed by both players/teams from the same timepiece and entered on the scorecard. If a game is unable to continue due to unforeseen circumstances, the time remaining must be entered on the card, apart from singles. In all competitions, the same competitors must return to complete the game as soon as possible, if for either team, an original player is not available their substitute may play in any position except skip (see Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls). The H.I.B.A. Competition Secretary must be informed of the stoppage immediately and the replay date as soon as possible .

6.5 The term 'Singles game' shall be equivalent to 'singles game' or 'singlehanded game' where they occur in the 'Laws of the Sport of Indoor Bowls'. In all Singles games, unless otherwise prescribed, the winner shall be the first player to reach 21 shots.

Match Format

SINGLES = 4 bowls each player 21 shots

PAIRS = 4 bowls each player 18 ends or 3½ hours

TRIPLES = 3 bowls each player 18 ends or 3½ hours

FOURS = 2 bowls each player 18 ends or 3½ hours

6.6 The mixed games will be played in the same format as the Pairs, Triples and Fours in 6.5 above, a Mixed Pairs team being one player of each gender, the Mixed Triples team being players in any combination of mixed gender and a Mixed Fours team comprising two players of each gender. The playing positions within the teams can be in any order.

6.7 Under 18 and under 25 Singles Championship will be played in sets. The E. I. B. A. National rules 5.6 “sets play” will apply to these games. As per “sets play” rules, if the jack passes outside the side boundary of the rink it should be placed on a pre-arranged spot as per rule 6.8.

Re-Spotting the jack

6.8 For all **Singles**, pairs, triples and fours matches - If the jack passes outside the side boundary of the rink it should be placed on a pre-arranged spot on the rink which is 2 metres from the front ditch and 1 ½ metres to the left or right of the centre line, on the side that it left the rink of play. If a bowl is on the re-spot, the jack will be placed as near as possible to the bowl without touching it, between the spot and the centre of the rink. If any other bowls are in the way, the jack will be placed as near to that without touching them and the centre of the rink, in other words, directly between the two spots without touching a bowl.

Clarification on new rule for 26-27 season – all matches to use re-spots including singles

7 OFFERING DATES

In all competitions, the challenger shall offer his/her opponent the choice of 2 dates, one weekday and one weekend. Other times may be offered but only if agreed by both players/teams. These dates must be offered not less than 14 days before the closing date of each round of the Championship, to exclude Bank Holidays, at their club or a club in the County. In the event of this not happening the 2nd named becomes the Challenger and shall offer their opponent the appropriate two dates and time at their own club or a club in their County. The offer will be made not less than 7 days before the closing date, with the last date offered on or before the closing date.

When dates are offered, the arrangement must be confirmed within 72 hours and any arrangements made must be adhered to. If the opponent has previously arranged to play another H.I.B.A. Competition on one or both of the two dates offered or is on International Duty, playing E.I.B.A. National Competitions or on duty for H .I .B.A. the Challenger is required to offer alternative date/dates if requested.

Ties at weekends shall not commence before 10.00 am. Ties on weekday evenings shall be arranged to commence at a stipulated time between 6.00pm and 7.00pm other than by mutual agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached on date and time then the tie will be arranged by the H.I.B.A .Competitions Secretary.

When challenged, being on holiday, playing a Club game that is not a National competition is not sufficient reason for demanding alternative dates. Extensions will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. **Players offering dates past the fixed play-by date without the prior permission of the Competition Secretary will be subject to disqualification from the competition.**

8. Game result

8.1 A Competitor (Skip in a team game) who is challenging the result of a game, should inform their opponent or opposing skip, and the marker or umpire (if present), within 10 minutes of the end of the game, of the nature of the grievance. If the matter cannot be resolved to their satisfaction, they may make a formal complaint in writing to the H.I.B.A. Competitions Secretary within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game. If the H.I.B.A. Competitions Secretary cannot resolve the matter to the satisfaction of both parties, **they shall refer the matter to the H.I.B.A. Committee who shall adjudicate. The committee's decision shall be final.**

Their decision, subject to the right of appeal as defined in the Constitution and Rules of the H.I.B.A. shall be final.

8.2 An Umpire/Competent person is not required until the County Championship finals when an Umpire/Competent person will be arranged by the H.I.B.A. Competitions Secretary

8.3 The failure of a player or players to appear after a maximum waiting period of 30 minutes (except in exceptional circumstances) from the time fixed for the start of the game, shall cause the player(s) to forfeit the game to their opponent.

8.4 The result of a match must be emailed or telephoned to the H.I.B.A. Competition Secretary as soon as possible after the match. A conceded game must be notified to the Competition Secretary, clearly stating who conceded the game. If a first-round game is conceded a score card must be emailed or posted to the Competition Secretary within 24 hours to include all competitors' names. This constitutes their original entry team. For the team conceding the game the players become named entrants. All winning teams or singles players should keep their score cards until they are eliminated from a competition

8.5 Players are responsible for finding their next round opponents via the H.I.B.A. website or from their club's notice boards

9 DRESS CODE

Dress for early rounds of individual County Championships, subject to Club rules at which the tie is being played, shall be white or Club Coloured shirts above the waist and grey / club registered / approved colours below the waist.

Dress for H.I.B.A. County Finals shall be white or Club Coloured shirts with White / club registered / approved colours below the waist. All members of a team should be similarly dressed.

10. GENERAL MATTERS

10.1 All trophies remain the property of the H.I.B.A and must be returned to the H.I.B.A. Competitions Secretary on request

10.2 Mobile phones must not be used on the green. They should be used with discretion whilst in the vicinity of the green. There must be no flash photography until play on all rinks has been completed.

10.3 In the event of a completed match where the winning player, team or side is disqualified by default, the loser of the match will be re-instated as a winner and proceed to the following round.

10.4 Players who are in breach of these rules may incur disciplinary action by H.I.B.A. which may include suspension or disqualification from participating in any further rounds of H.I.B.A. County Championships

11. DISABLED PLAYERS

11.1 Where a competitor is a 'Wheelchair Player', the wheelchair must be of a type approved by the British Wheelchair Bowls Association (B.W.B.A)

11.2 At the point of delivery of the bowl, players using a purpose designed and approved wheelchair (PDW) must have one wheel on or over the confines of the mat. The mat must be in the normal position. Failure to observe this rule constitutes foot faulting.

11.3 The wheelchair shall be recognised as being an integral part of the wheelchair player in all instances when a bowl or jack is displaced or interfered with by the wheelchair constitutes foot-faulting

12. CODE OF CONDUCT

12.1 Scope: This code of conduct has been introduced by the H.I.B.A. and relates to all H.I.B.A. County Championship events under their direct control. The H.I.B.A. reserves the right to conduct a full enquiry into all reported incidents and take whatever action is deemed to be appropriate in the circumstances.

12.2 Method of Reporting: All complaints relating to this Code of Conduct shall be reported in writing to the H.I.B.A. Hon. **Competition** Secretary within 7 days of the date of the alleged incident.

12.3 Disciplinary Action: If the H.I.B.A. Competition Secretary considers the matter is of a serious nature, The H.I.B.A Hon. Competition Secretary will convene a meeting of the H.I.B.A Committee which may result in disciplinary action being taken against a player. The Committee by consultation will determine the next course of action.

At the conclusion of the investigation, if it is the opinion of the Committee that there is a case to answer, The Committee will meet to hear the complaint. The decision of the committee will be communicated in writing to the player(s) involved and will give details of any action proposed. Following this, a player against whom a judgement has been made has the right to appeal using the procedure defined in the Constitution of the H.I.B.A.

12.4 Abuse to the person: A player shall not abuse in any way whatsoever, any other person during the course of a game.

12.5 Abuse of Equipment: A player shall not cause wilful damage to any equipment whatsoever during the course of a game.

12.6 Drug and Alcohol Abuse: No player shall cause himself/herself to be unfit to play through either drug or alcohol abuse during the course of any event under the direct control of H.I.B.A. The H.I.B.A. reserve the right to amend or modify any County Championship rule, from time to time, as required