## MEMORANDUM FOR MCF ANNUAL KNOCKOUT COMPETITIONS

**1 ELIGIBILITY OF TEAMS**

The knockout competitions are open to teams that participate in the league during the same season.

* The Reyner Shield is open to teams from A and B divisions only.
* The Wahltuch Trophy is open to teams from B and C divisions only.
* A team may enter only one of the Reyner or Wahltuch competitions, both of which have teams of 7 players (the other competitions have teams of 5 players).
* The Hartley Trophy is open to teams from D division only.
* The Alfred Milner is open to teams from E division only.

**2 ENTRIES**

Applications for entry to the Annual Knockout Competitions must reach the General Secretary and Fixtures Secretary by 1 August prior to the commencement of the season.

**3 BYES**

Prior to the first round proper (which may be the quarter or semi-finals), the number of teams competing shall be brought to a power of two. Byes shall be awarded to the number of teams required to achieve this.

Where byes are required, they shall be given in the following order:

1. To the previous winner of the knockout competition in question;
2. To the highest placed team in the previous year’s league table;
3. To the second highest placed team in the previous year’s league table

Further byes shall be decided by lot.

Note: In determining 2 and 3, a team which played in a higher division is deemed to be higher placed than one in a lower division, irrespective of their relative placings in those divisions.

**4 MATCH DATES AND VENUES**

In knockout competitions, the pairings for any preliminary round needed to reduce the number of teams competing to the power of two, plus the first round proper, shall be drawn by lot at the Fixtures Committee meeting.

For any preliminary round pairings required and for any fixtures in the first round proper which are not dependant on the result of a preliminary round match, the first team drawn shall have the fixture at home.

For all other knockout competition fixtures, the home team shall be determined by the Fixtures Secretary in accordance with the following criteria:

1. The number of earlier rounds in the knockout competition in which each team was drawn to play away (the team with the greater number shall be at home for this fixture);
2. The venue of the league fixture taking place between the teams during the season (the team playing away in the league fixture shall be at home for the knockout fixture);
3. The venues for the previous round of the knockout competition (the team playing away in the previous round shall be at home for this fixture).

In determining the venue for a fixture, criterion 1 takes precedence over 2 and 3 (**but note that matches won by default are not included)**, and criterion 2 takes precedence over 3. **Where two teams from the same club are paired together in any round preceding the final, this fixture shall be regarded as a home fixture for whichever team qualifies for the next round.**

If the venue cannot be determined by any of the above three criteria, then it shall be decided by lot.

(N.B. if a team has been given a bye in a preliminary round, this does not automatically mean being allocated an away fixture in the next round - a bye is "venue neutral")

**5 MATCH ARRANGEMENTS**

These shall be as for league matches. A player may not play for a team in the final of a knockout competition, unless he or she has already played at least two Manchester League or knockout matches during the season for the club represented by that team. This restriction shall apply only to the top 5 boards in a 7-board cup final and the top 3 boards in a 5-board final.

**6 RESOLUTION OF TIES**

In the case of a tie in any round, including the final, the tie shall be broken by board count. If the board count is even, the tie shall be broken by bottom board elimination. If all the games are drawn the match shall be won by the team which has black on board 1. Replays were abolished before the 2014-15 season competitions.

**MEMORANDUM FOR BRAMLEY-HARKER**

**INDIVIDUAL MCF CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**1 ELIGIBILITY**

All players in the Manchester League are eligible.

**2 FORMAT**

Each season there will be a championship awarded for each division of the league. The winner will be the player who scores the most points in *league* games for one team within that division (note that knockout competition games and defaults will not count).

**3 TIES**

Ties shall be resolved in accordance with the following tie-breakers applied in the order shown:-

1. Most wins.
2. Grade (lowest takes preference).
3. Highest average board number.

**4 PRIZES**

The winner of each class shall receive the sum of **£25** and a Certificate.

**5 AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these rules may only be made by Council.

**Memorandum on Estimated Grades for Ungraded Players**

**For the purpose of the MCF’s '20 point' rule (4.b), an estimated grade will be treated as if it were a 'real' ECF grade.**

An estimated grade will be assigned as early possible in the season and before the player plays in a match.

This is a responsibility shared between the registering club and the MCF. To arrive at an estimated grade the MCF will consider:

a) the club's own estimate – this will be accepted, unless there is clear evidence from a brief search of other sources (see (b) below) which make it questionable, in which case there will be a dialogue to try to agree a figure which both parties find acceptable. If agreement is not possible, the MCF will adjudicate.

b) other data, principally any previously held ECF grade(s) and any FIDE rating or record; also any period of time inactive (where relevant), age and experience (where relevant), and any recent congress results (although these will be treated with caution, being in statistical terms only a small sample to go by).

Once this estimated grade has been assigned, it will be operative throughout the season, unless:

* The club itself requests a change to their registration list, based for example on the player’s results; the MCF will then consider the request and adjudicate

or

* The MCF becomes aware of clear evidence (such as a January ECF grade based on more than 10 long-play games) of a major discrepancy (defined as a difference of more than 20 ECF points) between the estimated grade and the player’s current playing strength

The case will then be discussed immediately with the club and promptly adjudicated by the MCF on its merits, chiefly with respect to its relevance to fair competition between clubs. Discrepancies with no significant fairness implications may be disregarded, as the system will self-correct over time.

Any amendment by the MCF to an estimated grade will take immediate effect but will not be retrospective.

The MCF will normally delegate all negotiations and decisions regarding estimated grades to its Records and Registrations Secretary, but clubs will retain a right of appeal to MCF Council, whose decision will be final.

## MEMORANDUM FOR MCF TROPHIES

**1.** The winners of trophies shall be entitled to hold the respective trophies from time of presentation to the next MCF AGM, or earlier if required by the MCF.

**2.** Such winners shall not be obliged to hold such trophies and may leave them with the MCF for safe keeping. In such cases a form of acknowledgement shall be given to the winner.

**3.** In view of the element of risk of loss or damage to the several trophies belonging to the MCF, the recipients of trophies shall be required to indemnify the MCF against contingencies of loss or damage not wholly recoverable from any insurance policy in force.

## MEMORANDUM FOR COMPOSITION OF MCF DIVISIONS

**1)** Where practical there shall be ten teams in each division. An additional division may be created should the total number of entries justify this. The AGM of 19 July 2010 resolved that no Manchester League division shall contain more than ten teams for the 2011-12 and subsequent seasons.

In Divisions comprising *seven* or less teams, home and away fixtures shall be played.

Where there are more *or less* than 10 teams entering a division, the division shall be organised in whichever way the Fixtures Committee feels best meets the requirements of fair competition within the League.

A division comprising more than 10 teams will be formed only in exceptional circumstances, and in such a case Council may allow one fixture per club to be scheduled, if necessary, beyond the May 31st deadline but no later than June 15th.

**2)** The top two teams in each division have the automatic right of promotion to the next higher division.

The bottom two teams shall normally be relegated to the next lower division (except as noted in **8** and **9** below).

Ties for first place or for a promotion or relegation place will be split in the following sequence.

i) Game points scored.

ii) Individual match result.

iii) Board count of the individual match.

**3)** New teams shall normally be admitted to the lowest division.

**4)** The AGM or Council shall appoint a Fixtures Committee to compose the league in accordance with this memorandum. The Fixtures Committee shall normally consist of the President, General Secretary, Fixtures Secretary, and Records & Registrations Secretary.

**5)** If there is a vacancy in a more appropriate division an exception to the normal promotion and relegation schemes and to entry conditions may be made if a team's strength evidenced by the players grades on the team list submitted and previous results of the team indicate that normal placing would result in an unbalanced division.

**6)** The AGM should be held in time for the new season's fixtures to be produced and checked before they are issued.

The fixtures meeting should be scheduled within fourteen days of the deadline for Applications for entry in League and Match Rule 1 and the General Secretary should arrange it at a time and in a place such that all the key officers are able to attend.

This meeting will finalise the composition of divisions and make the draw for each knockout competition.

The full draw for each knockout competition (with team names, not just number codes) should be written out and checked by the Fixtures Committee before the meeting is closed. The Committee bears a collective responsibility for this process.

**7)** Any club changing its Secretary for the new season should supply at the AGM or in writing to the general secretary within seven days of the AGM the name, email, address and postcode of the new or acting secretary. This is to facilitate correct mailing of fixtures and to ensure clear lines of communication and responsibility.

**8)** The lowest division is subject to all rules, conventions and memoranda governing the League, with the exception of the following:

1. Each team in the Division shall consist of five players;
2. No player shall be eligible to play in a team if his or her ECF grading is higher than 120 at the start of the season.
3. Where a player has no ECF grading, he or she will not be eligible to play in a team if a reasonable estimate of their playing strength is greater than ECF120;
4. No team will be relegated into this division without the express consent of that team.

**9)** The penultimate division is subject to all rules, conventions and memoranda governing the League, with the exception of the following:

* Each team in the Division shall consist of five players;
* No team will be relegated into this division without the express consent of that team.

MEMORANDUM FOR MCF FIXTURES ARRANGEMENTS

As far as possible, fixtures for league and knockout competition games shall be arranged to fulfil the following conditions:

1. No club shall have more than two teams in the same division.

2. League fixtures shall start in the first week of October. Preliminary-round knockout competition fixtures may be allocated to the final two weeks of September, as long as at least 14 days’ notice is given to both clubs.

3. All fixtures shall be played before 31st May, unless Council sanctions a later date.

4. As far as possible, May should be kept clear of league fixtures, to allow for postponements and knockout competition finals.

5. No matches shall be scheduled between 22nd December and 3rd January inclusive, on any public holiday, or on the day immediately preceding or following a public holiday. Consideration will be given to special difficulties or requests notified by clubs to the Fixtures Secretary in advance.

6. The Fixtures Secretary may set aside certain weeks for knockout competition matches (see also point 17 below), although knockout matches may also be slotted into non-knockout weeks (but see points 7. and 8. below).

7. No team shall have more than one match in the same week.

8. No club shall have consecutive teams playing matches in the same week, except, if the Fixtures Secretary judges it necessary, for knockout matches scheduled after Christmas, in which case no club shall have consecutive teams playing matches, knockout or league, on the same night.

9. A club with more than one team shall not be allocated more than one home fixture on the same night unless that club's premises can accommodate the required number of matches in reasonable playing conditions, as per the MCF Rules.

10. League fixtures between the same two teams should alternate home and away from season to season.

11. However, if a team defaults a match, in the following season it should be drawn away if the same fixture occurs. If this proves impossible or impractical, the offending team should instead be allocated more away than home matches in the following season (e.g. a 4-5 home-away split in a 10-team division).

12. If a club has two teams in the same division, fixtures should be allocated such that all the opposing clubs play one of these teams at home and one away.

13. Wherever possible, during a season, a team should have an equal number of home and away league fixtures. In a division with an even number of teams, this is clearly impossible but, for instance, in a 10-team division, each team shall be allocated a 5-4 (or 4-5) split of home and away matches. If a team remains in the same division, this split should be reversed from one season to the next.

14. If a club has two teams in the same division of ten teams, one team shall be given a 5-4 split and the other a 4-5 split of home and away fixtures. The team allocated 5 home matches and 4 away matches shall be drawn at home against the other team (who will thus have a 4-5 split, but with one of its away matches being against the club's other team - this brings both teams closer to fulfilling the objectives of point 13. above).

15. A team’s fixtures should be reasonably spread over the season. Teams should have between two and four league matches scheduled before Christmas. No team shall be allocated a run of more than three consecutive home or away fixtures.

16. If a club has two teams in the same division, the Fixtures Secretary shall assign a date for the fixture, but the club may subsequently rearrange the match at their convenience, as long as it is played and reported by 31st December and as long as the Fixtures Secretary is informed of the new date in good time.

## 17. In knockout competitions, the pairings for any preliminary round needed to reduce the number of teams competing to the power of two, plus the first round proper, shall be drawn by lot at the Fixtures Committee meeting, in accordance with the Memorandum for MCF Annual Knockout Competitions.

Clubs will be informed before the start of the season of any weeks set aside for knockout matches and are expected to keep such weeks clear for as long as their team(s) remain in the competition. Failure to do so may result in a team drawn at home having to play away or in the worst case the offending team being defaulted if a satisfactory re-arrangement is not possible.

No finals in any knockout competition shall be scheduled before April 7th.

**N.B.** Clubs are asked to bear in mind that the job of the fixtures secretary is not easy. With so many divisions and the various knockout competitions, it will rarely, if ever, be possible to fulfil all the above conditions, and the fixtures secretary often has to make difficult decisions.

Please be tolerant therefore and try to make the fixtures work as published. As a last resort, a club may contact the Fixtures Secretary to request a fixture re-arrangement, in accordance with the MCF League and Match Rules, but always work through the Fixtures Secretary and please keep such requests to a minimum, since the knock-on effects on the fixtures can be very disruptive.

Courtesy

Clubs are asked to do their best to fulfil all their fixtures. Not being able to field one's best team is not a valid reason for postponing or defaulting a match. When a team is unable to fulfil a fixture, or is unable to field a full team, it is courteous to inform and apologise to the opposing club with as much notice as possible.

## MEMORANDUM ON RESOLUTION OF MCF DISPUTES

Preamble

This memorandum is designed for the resolution of disputes that cannot be resolved between the clubs concerned and that come under the rule headed disputes in the League and Match Rules.

The aims of the procedure are to:-

**a)** Resolve disputes quickly.

**b)** In the interests of justice, let each side see the other's written claim and have the opportunity of commenting on it in writing.

**It is strongly recommended that prior to entering the disputes procedure, a club contacts the disputes committee secretary to see if:-**

* **The dispute is covered by the laws of chess or MCF rules.**
* **There are precedents to the dispute.**
* **An amicable agreement can be reached.**

**The club can accept or reject any advice given and take the matter formally to dispute.**

Procedure

**1** In the event of a dispute, and within 14 days of it occurring, the club secretary or team captain shall email the disputes committee secretary, with a copy to the opposing club secretary, giving details of the dispute, their claim and post a cheque for the dispute fee (currently £5), made payable to the MCF, to the MCF Treasurer.

**2** Within seven days of receiving the email, the secretary or team captain of the opposing club shall reply by email to the disputes committee secretary, with a copy to the originator of the dispute, and post a cheque for the dispute fee, made payable to the MCF, to the MCF Treasurer.

**3** The originating club has a right of reply to the opposing club's email. If it wishes to exercise this right it must email the disputes committee secretary within five days with a copy to the opposing club.

**4** The disputes committee secretary shall then email all formal correspondence to the committee members for their consideration. If the committee members wish to clarify the submissions, they may do so by emailing the secretary or team captain of the opposing club; they may also wish to put questions by email to the players involved in the dispute.

**5** The decision will be agreed by (a majority of) the disputes committee and will be final. The secretary will email the clubs with the decision. Council will decide whether the decision should be published on the MCF website.

*Memoranda Revised 18 July 2019*