

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY KNOCKOUT CUP RULES (RINKS) 2025/26 v2**1. Eligibility**

- a. Only players registered with both the ESMBA, and the County are eligible to play.
- b. Teams will comprise of 8 players, playing as two teams of fours. ESMBA Rules concerning shortage of players apply.
- c. Players may only play for one team in the Club where they are registered that has entered in the Cup or if knocked out play in the same team in the Plate competition. Players from clubs not entered in the KO Cup may play for another club in the Cup.
- d. A maximum of two players from Clubs not entered in the Cup may play for another Club's team in the Cup or Plate.
- e. Any requests for transfer to a new Club after the start of the season must be made in writing to the Membership Secretary who will refer the matter to the Management Committee.
- f. In the event of a team fielding an ineligible player the game shall be forfeited to the opposition.
- g. **Teams that enter the KO Cup must ensure that they have no league fixtures arranged for the date on which the KO Cup Final is scheduled to be played.**
- h. In KO cup matches all players taking part in the match shall constitute the team and will normally play together throughout the match. One additional player may be used as a substitute if one of the original players becomes ill or unavailable during a match. Details of any player change during a match should be recorded in the "comments" section of the results form. Please also see the Policy about playing with a disability which is on the County website.

2. Season

The Knockout Cup season will run from 1st September to the 15th March with the semi-finals and finals being held at Worthing Pavilion on a date to be confirmed when the county diary is published. The timetable for each round will be sent out to Club Contacts with the details of the draw and can also be viewed on the County website. There is an entry fee of £6.00 per team.

3. Arrangement of Matches

- a. The home teams must offer at least 3 dates including one weekend date to their opponents. Matches may be played at any time of the week, mutually agreeable to both teams. Times that are offered for the commencement of evening matches must be reasonable and take into consideration the distance the opponents are required to travel. If any team feels that the dates offered are unreasonable, they should contact the KO Cup Secretary immediately. If midweek dates commencing at an appropriate time cannot be offered, then at least two weekend dates must be offered.
- b. Weekend dates when County Premier or A team matches are scheduled may be rejected by the away team. In such a case an alternative weekend or midweek date (as appropriate) must be offered. If the home team cannot offer 3 valid dates, then they may elect to play away or at a neutral venue or alternatively home advantage will revert to the opponents who must then offer appropriate dates within seven days.
- c. Dates for the completion of rounds are as shown on the Cup and Plate Draw for the season. The team drawn at home must offer dates to the away team before 1st September for first round matches and record dates on the Fixture Form WSC-FIX01. Dates for subsequent

matches should be arranged within 14 days of the previous round being completed. Clubs who do not have access to the County website should contact the KO Cup Secretary to ascertain who their next opponents are. If the home team fails to offer valid dates within the timescale, then home advantage and choice of dates shall revert to the away team who must then offer appropriate dates within seven days.

- d. The team offered dates shall accept, in writing, one of the dates offered within seven days of the dates being offered. Should the team offered dates be unable to accept any of valid dates offered then they shall forfeit the match.
- e. In the offering and accepting of dates for Knock Out Cup matches the Cup match should take priority over any friendly match and, if necessary and with the prior agreement of the League Secretary, a League match may be re-arranged to allow the Cup match to be played.
- f. Away team match fees should be equal to the fees paid by the home team players up to a maximum of £5 per player.
- g. If two teams from the same Club are drawn to play against one another the Management Committee reserve the right to insist that a neutral observer is present. The purpose of this rule is to stop any favouritism being shown by one team in a Club to another of its Club's teams.

4. Fixture List

Both Clubs shall be responsible for notifying the KO Cup Secretary of the dates of Knockout Cup fixtures once they are arranged using Fixture Form WSC-FIX01.

5. Match Format

- a. The format will be two mats with a minimum separation of 15 inches between the mats and a minimum distance between mat and the sidewalls of 6 inches and between mats and spectator area of 18 inches. 32-ounce jacks must be used. All matches to be played over 18 ends. Two trial ends to be played prior to the start of the game. All ESMBA rules will apply.
- b. No player in a Cup match shall play on the same mat on the day of such a match before play commences, under penalty of disqualification from the Cup competition for the rest of the season.
- c. The captains shall each complete two score cards with the names of the players on them. The home captain shall indicate which is Knockout Cup mat 1 and which is Knockout Cup mat 2 and then each captain shall mark one of these mat numbers on each of their two score cards. The players shall then play on the mat as numbered on the card.
- d. Captains to toss for the mat at the commencement of play. (No trial ends comment deleted)
- e. At the end of the game the scores from the two mats shall be added together and the team with the highest aggregate shots scored shall be declared the winner.
- f. If after 18 ends the result is a draw then extra end(s) must be played by the same teams on both mats until a result is obtained.
- g. The Home team must send the Match Result Form to the Knockout Cup Secretary within four days. The form must be completed and signed by both match captains.

6. Uncompleted Matches

Should a match be started and be unable to be completed for reasons outside the control of either Club the following will apply:

- i. if the aggregate of both mats is 17 or fewer ends that have been completed the match will be re-arranged and replayed as a new match. A revised date for the match shall be arranged to enable the match to be played prior to the closing date for the round.

This revised date shall be notified to the League and Knockout Cup Organiser within 14 days of the date of the incomplete match.

- ii. if the aggregate of both mats is 18 ends or more that have been played the match will be considered as completed and the score will stand.

7. Re-arrangement of Matches

- a. Should it become necessary, and in exceptional circumstances only, a match may be re-arranged subject to the agreement of the KO Cup Secretary.
- b. Exceptional circumstances are defined as:
 - i. The non-availability of the venue over which the Club has no control.
 - ii. The precedence of a higher-level competition i.e. Inter County.
 - iii. A shortage of players due to illness or accident.
 - iv. Extreme weather conditions i.e. heavy snow or strong winds (see also 7d).
- c. Should a match have to be re-arranged the Club responsible for the non-fulfilment must in advance give a written explanation (or if less than 48 hours before the match a verbal notification followed by a written one) to the KO Cup Secretary as to why the match had to be re-arranged. They should then contact the opposition to arrange a revised date. Clubs should be aware that when a postponement is requested due to 'lack of players' the KO Cup Secretary will request from the Club details of why each of their registered players is unable to play on that particular date. This is to enable the Management Committee to be in full possession of facts in order to decide if 'exceptional circumstances' apply. This revised date shall be notified to the KO Cup Secretary within 7 days of the date that the re-arrangement was notified.

When seeking to arrange a revised date, all possible days/dates and timings should be explored and offered within the time frame that is allowed for completion of that knockout round. Due consideration and views should be given to the 'non guilty' party in endeavouring to find a suitable date and for a 'guilty party' to accept one of these dates. If a possible date clashes with an arranged League fixture it is permitted to make a request to the League Secretary to move the League fixture. This is at the discretion of the League Secretary and can be refused if it unfairly effects any 'non guilty club' that is involved in the decision making.

- d. In the event of the Met Office issuing a weather warning, 24 hours ahead of the fixture date, which includes an 'amber / red' likely impact on risk of travel, either club may seek agreement to postpone by liaising with the opposition and KO Cup Secretary. Any costs incurred due to postponement to be shared by the clubs concerned.
- e. This revised date when arranged, shall be notified to the KO Cup Secretary, by both Clubs, within 7 days of the decision to re-arrange the match. Where teams are unable to agree on a date for the rearranged match, both teams shall notify the KO Cup Secretary in writing within seven days giving reasons why they are unable to agree on a revised date. The matter will then be discussed by the KO Cup Secretary with members of the Management Committee who shall decide upon a date and, if necessary, a venue after hearing representations from both Clubs. This decision will be binding on both teams.
- f. The Club responsible for the non-fulfilment of any match must meet any costs incurred for the original match arrangements. All non-fulfilled matches must be re-arranged to be completed within the published timescale. A match can only be conceded with the specific agreement of the KO Cup Secretary.

- g. The reasons for any re-arrangement of a match will be subject to review by the County Management Committee and action may be taken against the Club responsible for the non-fulfilment.

8. Non-fulfilment of Fixtures on Agreed Dates

- a. Any Club whose team fails to fulfil a fixture in the KO Cup on the agreed date - other than where such fixtures are postponed due to exceptional circumstances as laid down within these Rules – shall automatically forfeit the match and have the number of teams it is permitted to enter into the KO Cup in the following season reduced by one.
- b. The Management Committee may decide to take further action against any Club that has a team that fails to travel to fulfil its obligations in the KO Cup.
- c. Any Club that fails to fulfil a fixture on the agreed date shall be responsible for any reasonable costs incurred by any opponents they were scheduled to play.

9. Dress.

Full ESMBA dress regulations will be in force at all stages of the competition. Clubs may dress in their own colours provided that all players are the same; otherwise, it must be mid-grey below the waist and white above. Proprietary bowling shoes or bowling sandals must be worn whilst playing on the rink mats.

10. Bowls Stickers

Bowls stickers, if used, must be the same on all of the team members bowls.

11. Disputes

In all disputes and in any interpretation of these rules the County Management Committee's decision will be final.

History of Changes:

2025/26

(v1) 7c (2nd paragraph) Updated to clarify the responsibility between clubs when rearranging a Knockout match due to 'exceptional circumstances'.

(v2) 5g. The Home team must send the Match Result Form to the Knockout Cup Secretary within four days. The form must be completed and signed by both match captains.

2024/25

1 Eligibility

c. [First sentence replaced with] "Players may only play for one team in the Club where they are registered that has entered the Cup or if knocked out play in the same team in the Plate competition."

d. [Replaced with] "A maximum of two players from Clubs not entered in the Cup may play for another Club's team in the Cup or Plate."

2 Season

Westergate changed to Worthing Pavilion!

3 Arrangement of matches.

In the third sentence: "Dates for subsequent matches should be arranged" (currently says completed) within 14 days of the previous round being completed.