

# Cuppers/League Rules and Procedures

May 2023

## Team Selection

1. A college Cuppers' or League Open team comprises five players of any gender. A college Cuppers' or League Women's team comprises three female players. Players must be bona fide student members of the college concerned subject to the following qualifications.
2. Colleges may be allowed, at the discretion of the organiser (normally the College Officer), in consultation with the appropriate Blues' Captain and Senior Member, to combine. Such combinations apply separately for the League and Cuppers competitions for the relevant season, e.g. Colleges may combine only for Cuppers and have a separate team or teams in the League. **Registrations of all proposals for combinations of colleges must be made with the organiser BEFORE the start of the relevant competition.**
3. University entities other than colleges (e.g. departments) may be allowed to enter the League, but not the Cuppers, at the discretion of the organiser, in consultation with the appropriate Blues' Captain and Senior Member.
4. All Cuppers' teams, and women's league teams, may have ONE non-student player (e.g. SCR member, research fellow, other member of staff, or associate/honorary MCR member, provided that they are a member of the relevant college). Open League and Cuppers teams may also have one 'orphan' player on the following conditions.
5. An orphan player is a player who is a student member of the university who does not have an affiliated college OR whose college does not have a team in either the League or Cuppers (the inclusion of a single player from such a college in another college team does not count as a 'combination of colleges' under 2 above). Only teams with fewer than two squad players (Blues and Squirrels) may field an orphan player. Teams with two or more squad players (Blues and Squirrels) may not field any orphan players.
6. Any player who has been knocked out of Cuppers (including a player who has played for a team that lost in the week that he/she played) may not go on to play for another team. For example, a player who played in a losing college 2nd team may not then represent the college 1st team at a later stage, or vice versa.
7. If a team is a combination of two colleges, it may not include an orphan player.
8. Blues Squad members are eligible to play in Cuppers but not in the League (although Women's Blues Squad Members may play in the Open League). Blues Squads will be established and published on the website early in Michaelmas Term each season. Changes to the squads once decided by the Captains apply immediately i.e. anyone leaving or joining the squad becomes eligible or ineligible, as appropriate, to play in the league. Former Blues who are no longer in a Blues Squad are eligible to play in the league.
9. The usual rules of team matches will apply particularly in that the individuals must play in a bona fide order which can be defended by previous results. Once declared a team cannot be changed unless the opposing Captain agrees. Once the first individual tie has been played a team may not be changed in any circumstances save that the lowest string (i.e. 5 for open teams, 3 for women's) may be changed with the approval of the organiser if he/she becomes injured or otherwise unavailable. The new player must not be better than any of the remaining members of the team. If any other string(s) is/are injured or otherwise become(s) unavailable after the first individual tie has been played

that/those string(s) must be forfeited.

10. A player may only play for a maximum of one League team and one Cuppers team each season. However, female players may play for one team each in both the Open and Women's Leagues/Cuppers.
11. It is particularly important that clarification on exceptional items such as students transferring colleges mid-season should be obtained from the organiser in good time (i.e. allowing for consultation as indicated in 2 above).
12. Should any college team be found to have played a tie in contravention of the above rules that team will be excluded from the competition for the term (League) or season (Cuppers).
13. Appeals relating to any of the above rules should be addressed by the relevant college Captain to the organiser as soon as possible. The organiser will consult the appropriate Blue's Captain and Senior Member in coming to a decision. This decision is final. (If any of the officers are involved in the relevant competition, i.e. if they are a member of one of the colleges concerned, then the President will also be consulted. The officer(s) directly involved will be excluded from the consultation.)

**Notes:**

- a. Where the term 'team' is used above it is intended to cover the selected team for a single match.
- b. Where colleges have two teams, a certain amount of flexibility is allowed in moving players between teams in cases of injury or temporary absence. However, in general, it is expected that first team players should not play for the second team. This does not preclude a second team player playing temporarily (i.e. up to two matches per term for the League and two per season for Cuppers) in the first team to cover injury or absence. It is appreciated that exceptions to this rule may be appropriate from time to time – **applications for exceptions should be made to the organiser**. Where colleges have more than two teams, the same principles should apply in moving players between second and third teams.

## League Organisation

1. The college leagues are to be organised by the OUSRC College Officer. Separate women's leagues are to be organised by the OUSRC College Officer if there is sufficient demand.
2. The college leagues may be split into two separate groups: a main league for college first teams, and a reserve team league for second and third teams.

### Main League

3. The main league shall be divided into the following divisions, each comprising 6 teams:
  - Premiership
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Division
  - Parallel divisions (i.e. 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B etc) as required to accommodate the remaining teams
4. At the end of each league iteration, the following movements shall occur:
  - Premiership: bottom two teams relegated.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Division: top two teams promoted, bottom 4 teams relegated.
  - Lower divisions: top two teams promoted, bottom 2 teams relegated. Teams may also

be re-shuffled between parallel divisions at the organiser's discretion.

### Reserve Team League

5. Assuming a sufficient number of teams, the reserve team league shall be organised in the same manner as the main league. Otherwise it shall simply comprise 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> divisions, with the top / bottom two teams in each being promoted / relegated at the end of each iteration of the leagues.

### League Format

1. League matches will be played in a round-robin format within each division.
2. Matches between college teams shall be played over 5 strings, with games played according to the [World Singles Squash Rules 2020](#) (Click for full version. In brief, best of 5 games to 11, point-a-rally scoring.)
3. Overall match scoring shall be based on the total number of games won at each string. A bonus of 4 points will be awarded to the winning team if at least three matches have been won. An example is shown below:

	Team A	Team B
1 <sup>st</sup> String	3	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> String	3	2
3 <sup>rd</sup> String	3	2
4 <sup>th</sup> String	0	3
5 <sup>th</sup> String	0	3
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>

But the final score is 13-12 to Team A as they have won the fixture, and have played at least three matches, and so are eligible for the bonus of 4 points.

Equivalently, in the women's league, a bonus of 2 points will be awarded to the winning team if at least two matches have been won.

### Cuppers Format

1. Cuppers matches will be played in a knockout format. The placement of teams for the first round will be as follows. The Cuppers organiser will use his or her best knowledge of the teams to determine the top four seeds (A, B, C, D), e.g. using the League standings from the previous season. Team A will be placed at the top, Team B at the bottom, and Teams C and D randomly placed in the middle two positions. (This will ensure that if Teams A and B meet, it will only be in the final round; and if Teams A/B meet Teams C/D, it will only be in the semi-finals.) All other team placements will be random.
2. If the starting number of teams is not a power of 2 (i.e. if it is not 8, 16, 32, 64, etc), it will be necessary to give some teams a "bye" in the first round. The organiser will ensure that byes are given to the top teams, to the best of his or her knowledge, in descending order.
3. Matches between college teams shall be played over 5 strings, with games played according to the [World Singles Squash Rules 2020](#) (Click for full version. In brief, best of 5 games to 11, point-a-rally scoring.)
4. Matches shall be played as best of 5 strings – i.e. If three players from one team win their matches, that team wins overall regardless of the number of games won. In the case of a tie (for example if not all matches have been played by the deadline), the total number of

games won will be used to determine the winning team.

## Disputes

1. In any fixture there shall be no home or away team – captains and players should decide between themselves where matches are to be played. If players have genuine concerns about the quality or safety of a proposed court these should be respected, and an alternative should be found. If a decision cannot be made the issue should be referred to the league/cuppers organiser.
2. Once a team order has been declared, that order cannot be changed unless the opposing captain agrees. Once any string has been played, the order may not be changed under any circumstances save that, with the approval of the league/cuppers organiser, the 5<sup>th</sup> string player may be replaced. Any substitute player may not be of a higher standard than the remaining members of the team, and may not play / have played in any other fixture scheduled for the same week. The only exception to this rule is that the 1<sup>st</sup> string of a college 2<sup>nd</sup> team may, with the agreement of the league/cuppers organiser, act as a substitute 5<sup>th</sup> string for their college 1<sup>st</sup> team as well.
3. If a player at any string fails to complete a match due to injury or for other reasons, they shall be considered to have forfeited that string, but will keep their score in games (e.g. if in a match player A is winning 2-0 but retires due to injury, player B will be considered to have won that string 3-2).
4. Team Captains may claim a string as a 3-0 forfeit in the following circumstances:
  - Opponent fails to respond within a week of initial contact.
  - Opponent fails to agree to a match time despite repeated and reasonable suggestions.
  - Opponent fails to show up to an agreed match time and venue.
  - Opposing team fails to field a player at that string.
5. Team Captains may claim a match as a 15-0 forfeit in the following circumstances:
  - Opposing captain fails to respond within a week of initial contact.
  - Opposing team fails to show up to an agreed match time and venue.
6. If a player, team or captain fails to comply with the above rules, they may be penalised at the discretion of the league/cuppers organiser (in agreement with the OUSRC Senior Member and President). Penalties may include, but are not limited to:
  - Forfeiture of matches
  - Deduction of points
  - Disqualification from the leagues
  - Financial penalties.
7. Any other disputes or appeals regarding the above rules should be referred to the league/cuppers organiser by the appropriate captain. Disputes or complaints involving the league/cuppers organiser (e.g. relating to a team in which he/she plays) should be referred to the OUSRC President.