

M.T.B.A. League Rules and Regulations

League Definition – Qualifications

RULE 101: A league of four or more teams participating in the game of Tenpins, under the management of a league committee and in accordance with a prepared schedule, rules and prize list (if any) accepted by the league is eligible to apply for sanction to the MTBA.

A team may consist of one or more bowlers as decided by the league. Each team shall determine whether it will include additional members, unless the league adopts a rule setting the maximum number of members on a team.

Three consecutive games are to be bowled by each team every time the league is scheduled to bowl, unless otherwise provided by league rules. To be considered official in league play, all games must be bowled and conducted in strict compliance with the playing rules.

A team must retain at least three of its registered bowlers (for a 4-men team) and at least 2 of its registered bowlers (for a trios league) in order to maintain its status in that particular Division for the following League Season. These 3/2 persons must have bowled at least 12 games in the league that just concluded. This does not apply to new participating teams. – **If this rule is not adhered to, the team will have to start from the entry division.**

A regular member of a team is a bowler who is listed on the roster submitted by the team captain or who is named by the captain as a replacement during the season.

A mixed league is where there are a fixed number of male, female and/or junior bowlers.

A closed league is defined as one in which membership is restricted to a particular industry, organization, etc.

NOTE: Leagues generally decide to award games on basis of games won and lost or according to a point system. In the four-point system, one point is awarded to winning team for each game bowled, and an extra point going to the team recording the greatest total number of pins for the series.

Membership Fee Payment Requirements

RULE 102: All bowlers participating in an MTBA or sanctioned league must complete an individual membership application and pay or provide proof of payment of the required dues in effect for the current season before commencement of the player's first series. This rule also applies to substitute players entering a league after it has been sanctioned.

The score of any bowler who is not a current member or who has not duly completed their Team's Registration Form will be considered null and void, and a blind score will be awarded.

Teams of the 1st division must pay an entry fee of 50€, teams in 2nd division must pay an entry fee of 25€, while teams 3rd division must pay an entry fee of 20€. This must be paid by end of January for divisions 1 and 2, and mid February for division 3. (refer to rule 133).

Special Contests

RULE 103: When a league conducts special contests for its own members and such contests comply with rules, which govern sanctioned league or tournament play, MTBA Awards and Recognition will be extended automatically. This also applies to play-offs between the champions of divisions in a league that is made up of two or more divisions that bowl separate schedules.

League Sanctions

RULE 104: Any league consisting of four teams or more organized for the purpose of bowling the game of Tenpins, according to a pre-arranged schedule, may apply for a regular league sanction provided all eligible teams and members thereof affiliate with and pay the MTBA dues required provided:

1. The lanes on which it bowls are certified by the MTBA.
2. Its application for sanction and the membership fees are submitted on or before the expiration of the grace period.
3. A copy of its rules and regulations is submitted to the MTBA for approval.

All disputes are to be settled without delay and in accordance with Malta Tenpin Bowling Association Rules. Should recourse be required to be made to the Malta Tenpin Bowling Association, then this must be made in writing, within forty eight hours.

A nominal charge will be made by the Malta Tenpin Bowling Association in order to give its sanction to each league. This charge will cover administration expenses, including ensuring compliance by the league of all Association Rules. Currently, these charges are:

Singles League	€35
Doubles Leagues	€50
Trios and Four-Person Team Leagues	€60

Bowler's Responsibility. It is understood that the bowler herself/himself must ascertain personally from the MTBA whether the league or tournament has been sanctioned. The excuse that the bowler was in ignorance of the fact that the league or tournament had not been sanctioned will not be accepted.

A league sanction shall entitle all members to compete for individual and team high score awards, provided in the case of teams, that each team in the league is similarly organized and that every MTBA requirement has been complied with when a claim for high score award recognition is submitted.

When special contests, limited to members of a league granted a sanction are held, and conducted accordingly, high score recognition will be extended automatically under the same terms and conditions as outlined immediately above.

League Sanctions - Temporary Sanction

RULE 105: A league sanctioned the previous season is deemed temporarily sanctioned at the start of its current schedule for twenty-one days counting the first day of competition. The league will be eligible for all membership services while temporarily sanctioned.

The grace period is for the purpose of providing protection during the time required for the league secretary to complete the sanction application, collect individual membership dues and file the application and fees with the General Secretary of the Association.

A league which was not sanctioned the previous season may apply to the MTBA for such temporary sanction.

Match Point System

RULE 106: Leagues that decide team position standings by awarding individual points and points for team scores must follow these rules unless the league has adopted a different procedure:

1. The team scheduled on the odd lane enters its line-up first.
2. No change may be made in the order of players in the line-up during a series. A substitute must take the replaced bowler's position in the line-up. In the case of the National League, this is not played on a Match Point System, therefore a team can change the line-up of the players after each game.
3. When there is an absentee or vacancy the individual match points shall be awarded to the team winning the game. If each team has the same number of absentees and/or vacancies, the players present must be placed in opposition to each other for individual matches and the winning team credited with the points for the absentees or vacancies.

If one of two teams has an absentee or vacancy and a player of the opposing team is unable to complete the series, any game in progress shall be completed with no change in the competing team line-up. However, the line-up of the team that lost its player must be changed if necessary, to comply with the provision of paragraph three above, for any subsequent game(s) in the series.

Handicapping

RULE 107: Handicapping is a means of placing bowlers with varying degrees of skill on as equitable a basis as possible for scheduled competition.

Should a bowler not have an established average, then a new handicap will be calculated after the first complete series (three-games) is bowled. Therefore, if a bowler plays 1 or 2 games as his first series, his/her handicap will be considered as "0" until all 3 games are played. **That means handicap will be given from the 4th game onwards and will never be retrospective.**

When figuring handicap or averages, fractions are to be dropped. (e.g. 159.9 is taken as 159).

Handicap will be calculated at 80% of 190 scratch, while division 3 will be calculated 80% of 180. Each division will have a maximum handicap of: Div III 45; Div II 30 and Div I 15.

Average - How Determined

RULE 108: A bowling average is determined by dividing the total number of pins credited to a bowler in one league by the number of games bowled in that league in a season.

Extra pins or fractions must be disregarded in using averages for handicapping or classification purposes. When calculating a person's handicap or average, fractions are to be dropped. (e.g. 159.9 is taken as 159).

Averages - How Established

RULE 109: When a bowler has more than one average and the individual average is used to determine the handicap or classification of the bowler, one of the following methods shall be selected to arrive at an average for league or tournament:

- a. The highest average based on a minimum of twelve games.
- b. A composite average.
- c. A composite average maintained in a league, in which the bowler has competed in at least twelve games.

Highest Average - The best average in one of the several sanctioned leagues in which a player competes.

Composite Average is the average of a bowler who bowls in two or more sanctioned leagues in a season. The average is determined by adding the total pins for all the leagues and dividing the result by the total number of games bowled in those leagues.

Established averages, which are used to determine the handicap or classification of a bowler, must be based on a minimum of twelve games in one league, unless otherwise specified in the league rules. This established average will be used for the first twelve games of the league. Should a bowler not have an established average, then a new average/handicap will be calculated after the first complete three-game series is bowled.

Any Tournament Directors may at their option require that the entering average, based on either the high or composite system, shall not be more than ten pins below the same type of average for the previous season.

Individual averages, which are used to determine the handicap or classification of a bowler, must be based on a minimum of twelve games in one league, unless otherwise specified in the tournament rules.

Officers

RULE 110: Each league shall have a League Secretary. The term League Secretary will mean "One or more persons who are part of the MTBA committee" and could be playing in that same division. If an issue arises where the team of the acting league secretary is affected by that decision, then, the matter shall be forwarded to the MTBA committee.

Rules and Regulations

RULE 111: Such bowling league shall have a set of rules, which provide for its regular activities. It may provide a league committee to whom the duties may be distributed.

Duties of the League Secretary

The league secretary must:

1. Enforce all rules and regulations of the league.
2. Furnish the league controller with a copy of the standing sheet when requested with complete details of the competing league bowlers of that season.

3. Collect all membership fees with completed applications for each new player who joins the league during the season and forward them to the MTBA Treasurer within seven days of collection.

Failure on the part of the league secretary to comply with the provisions of these rules or fulfil other duties as may be prescribed by the league meetings shall be cause for removal from office and/or suspension of membership in the MTBA.

Strict Compliance of All Rules

RULE 112: Such leagues and the teams comprising its membership must conduct and play all its games in strict compliance with the Rules and Regulations governing such games, as adopted by the MTBA.

Team Captains Authority

RULE 113: A team captain is a member of the league authorized to organize and enter a team in conformity with the Laws, Rules and Regulations of the MTBA in league play. The captain is the team representative and shall perform the following duties:

1. Collect MTBA/league and tournament dues or weekly fees, where applicable, from each member of the team and hand such fees to the league secretary. No arrears may be agreed to.
2. Be responsible for the eligibility of the team and its members under the rules of the league.
3. Be responsible for the conduct and attendance of the team in league play.
4. It is within the captain's authority to permanently remove any player from the team. Good and sufficient reason for the removal must be furnished to the MTBA, if requested.
5. Enter the names of the team players in the score card before the start of each scheduled series.
6. Sign the score cards and have the scores verified by the opposing captain unless the system is computerized.
7. Pay each member of the team within 15 days after receiving prize money in accordance with verbal or written agreements. A dispute over prize distribution shall be decided by the league committee / MTBA, if so demanded.

Bowlers - Qualifications

RULE 114: In order to be eligible for MTBA membership, a person must be qualified under the rules of the MTBA. Such bowler may be a member of one or more bowling teams.

League Play

RULE 115: All games of Tenpins, to be considered official in league play, must actually be bowled and conducted in strict compliance with the following playing rules hereafter.

Teams shall be composed of the number of players fixed by the rules of the particular league in which the competition is held.

All teams MUST have a minimum of 1 legal line-up, plus 1 registered player at all times and may have up to eight registered bowlers at any one time. The upper limit of eight registered bowlers may be waived only in the case of teams, made up of bowlers in the officially recognised *Special Olympics* category. An official coach would also be permitted to be present in the lane area for such a team.

Legal Line-up/Absentees

RULE 116: A Legal Line-up in play is:

1. Three or more eligible players in five-player team leagues.
2. Two or more eligible players in four-player team leagues.
3. One or more eligible player in three or two player team leagues.

If a team fails to come with a legal line up all 8 points will be forfeited.

A league may include in its rules the number of players from a team's roster who must be present to count towards a legal line-up. When a lesser number is present to start any game of the series at the time scheduled by the league, the game shall be forfeited.

The matter of eligibility must be established by league rule. However, a bowler is eligible if his score is to be counted in deciding league games whether he/she is a substitute or regular bowler and is in possession of a current membership card.

When leagues include series totals in points won and a team forfeits one or more games in a series, that team shall receive a zero for the games it forfeits in deciding the winner of the series point. Members of the team forfeiting a game or games under the provisions of this rule shall be allowed to bowl along with the team winning by forfeiture and have scores bowled included in league records to qualify for all league and MTBA individual awards.

The League Committee may adopt rules providing for the use of blind score and handicaps in deciding league games. Blind scores may only be used when a legal line-up is present.

In the case of a 4 Men Team and / or a Trios Team a Blind score will count as 120 pins with no handicap awarded.

League Series - How Bowled

RULE 117: Two lanes immediately adjoining each other shall be used in each game of league play. The first game of a series shall start on the lane where the team is scheduled with each succeeding game starting on the lane where the team finished its previous game. At the option of the league, each game may be bowled on a different pair of lanes, but a full game must be bowled on each pair, with the exception of equipment failure (viz RULE 124).

Order of Bowling

RULE 118: Members of competing teams shall successively and in regular order bowl one frame on one lane, and for the next frame use the other lane and alternate until five frames are bowled on each lane of the pair.

NOTE: It is permissible for the lead-off player to bowl prior to or while the Anchor player is bowling on the other lane when two teams are bowling against each other.

Commencement Time

RULE 119: The league shall be assumed to have commenced once the league secretary or his substitute has approved the official starting time. The official starting time for all MTBA is at 20:30 hours for all Divisions. All teams must be prepared to start at this time.

Tardy Players

RULE 120: A tardy player shall be permitted to begin bowling from the first frame with the score to count, provided that the game on **any of the adjoining lanes** has not progressed beyond the 3rd frame. **Otherwise**, a 120 blind score is **to be** given. If a team refuses to start bowling because a full line-up is not present, the league secretary can declare the frames / game as null. (Please note that for lanes at the far end like 19-20, then the adjoining lanes are 17-18 and 11-12, and vice versa for lanes 11-12, ie. 13-14 and 19-20).

Bowling Out

RULE 121: A bowler, with the consent of the opposing team captain, may finish the final game of a series before his team-mates or opponents, provided the game had already concluded the 7th frame. A player bowling out should do so while the others continue to play if possible.

Score Recognition - Tardy Players - Bowling Out

RULE 122: When a bowler is a legal tardy player and he/she is allowed to bowl out, the score counts in deciding the game. This score is included in the bowler's average and qualifies for MTBA awards. The score also counts for special league awards unless otherwise provided by league rule.

Bowlers in Corresponding Positions

RULE 123: When two bowlers in corresponding positions in the line-up of opposing teams are ready to bowl, the bowler on the right is to bowl first. If the pins are not set up for the bowler on the right, the bowler on the left may wait until the opponents' pins are properly set.

Interrupted Game

RULE 124: If equipment failure on a pair of lanes would delay the progress of a series, league officers can authorize the game and series to be completed on another pair of certified lanes. An interrupted game and series shall be resumed from the point of interruption.

Competition Limited to One Team

RULE 125: A player may not compete in more than one team in the same league for the regularly scheduled games each week. Under no condition may a bowler play in more than one team in the same scheduled game or league, except in the case where a bowler is acting as a substitute with another team.

NOTE: Leagues divided into divisions are considered as one league.

Transferring Team Membership – Registering New Players

RULE 126A: A bowler listed on a team's roster, but who has not yet bowled in that league, may transfer to another team in the league during the season provided the captain of the team consents to the player's release.

RULE 126B: A team can register a new bowler any time during a specific season. A new bowler can even be registered during the last week of the league if the need arises.

Substitutes

RULE 127: A bowler who replaces a team member who is scheduled to participate in an MTBA sanctioned league, and whose scores count for the games bowled, is considered a substitute. A substitute must be a member of the MTBA, where required.

Should a team not have enough players available for a scheduled fixture, the team captain may either: 1) Request a 'make-up' from the other team involved. Or 2) make use of not more than two substitutes. Said substitutes can be bowlers from any other division other than that which the teams concerned form part of. Substitutes must have an average established over at least 12 games in the National Leagues and such average cannot exceed that which corresponds to the Division the competing teams form part of. An exception is given to Special Olympic bowlers, and junior players, who are not registered to play in a league, in which case their average will be derived from the composite average over at least 12 games of that current year.

The averages cannot exceed: Div I – 180 ave Div II – 160 ave Div III – 150 average. Handicap is to be worked according to such averages.

Since it is not always possible to provide a spare shirt in the correct size, a substitute can wear a different shirt than that of the team he/she will be bowling for. This is applicable for all divisions.

A substitute that plays at least 12 games in the role of substitute in a particular Division and builds an average exceeding the threshold set for each Division, then such person will automatically be ineligible to play as substitute in that particular Division.

If someone plays as a substitute and either does not have an average over at least 12 games in the National League or supersedes the average capping as listed above his/her score will be considered as a blind score even if someone notices later during the league until the league for that season is over.

Substitutes can play in all weeks of the scheduled league matches and are free of charge for division 2 & 3 players. For division 1, the first three substitutes used are free of charge. If more than three substitutes are used in any particular season, a 12€ fee has to be paid each time a substitute is registered. Also, if a substitute is used during the last week of the league during division 1 only, the 12€ fee must be paid irrelevant of how many substitutes were used.

The bowling centre and the league secretary must be informed of the use of substitutes by 8:00pm to ensure correct input of line-ups. This can be communicated via an email to the Eden Superbowl, copying the league secretary.

Pacers

RULE 128: Teams or individuals may not pace on the same pair of lanes with a team or individual competing in a sanctioned tournament, except that in individual tournaments when necessary to provide or to maintain equality of competitive conditions, the tournament management may permit pacers to bowl. No pacers shall be permitted subsequently to enter or compete in the tournament. Pacers do not qualify for any MTBA awards.

Failure to Complete Game

RULE 129: When a player is unable to complete a game because of disability, injury or emergency, the team of which he is a member shall count his actual score for the frames bowled in the game total, plus one-tenth of his blind score for each of the remaining frames in the game. The bowler's handicap will be calculated pro rata for the frames bowled. The frames bowled shall not be used in determining the bowler's average.

When a player does not complete a game for reasons other than disability, injury or emergency, the player's team shall count zero for each remaining frame in the game.

If there is any doubt of a player's reason for not being able to continue a game, the league secretary shall decide, and the player may be reported to the Association's Disciplinary Committee.

Forfeit - Lack of Legal Line-up

RULE 130: When less than a minimum legal line-up is present to complete the first frame of any game of the series, the game shall be forfeited unless a league has a rule to allow the required number of players for a minimum legal line-up to enter the game by a designated frame. A frame shall be considered completed when all bowlers present on each team have made their last deliveries in that frame.

Forfeit - Failure to Appear

RULE 131: When one of two teams scheduled against each other fails to present a minimum legal line-up and postponement was not requested, the games are forfeited. Further disciplinary action will also be taken (viz RULE 135).

Any team, which fails to appear three times within the same season, will be liable to disciplinary action. **First offence is a verbal warning, second offence is a written warning, 3rd offence will pay DOUBLE the fine in Rule 135.**

Forfeit - Lack of Legal Line-up on Both Teams

RULE 132: If two teams scheduled to bowl each other and each of the teams do not have legal line-ups and were not granted a postponement, both teams shall forfeit these games. Further disciplinary action may also be taken (viz RULE 135).

Forfeiture and Recognition of Games

RULE 133: A team or participant whose league or membership dues are not fully paid by the date set by the MTBA shall forfeit their games. Memberships and entry fee have to be paid by no later than end January for divisions 1 and 2, and mid February for division 3. Failure to pay fees by that date will result in a deduction of 2 points in every subsequent match, until fine is paid. Failure to renew membership will render bowler ineligible for subsequent matches, until membership is paid. (This is not applicable for new members who join the association at a later date).

Forfeit - Refusal to Bowl

RULE 134: A team that refuses to bowl with less than a full line-up forfeits any games it declines to bowl. Further disciplinary action will also be taken (viz RULE 135).

Forfeits - Further Disciplinary Action

RULE 135: Teams competing with incomplete line-ups will be required to furnish the league secretary with the name/s of those bowlers who were expected to make an appearance and failed to do so. The team concerned will automatically be fined the lineage per missing bowler and the bowlers concerned will be liable to disciplinary action. The team captain is responsible for the payment of any fines, which must be settled prior to the team's next league match. **These fines will be doubled during the last week.**

Bowling Unopposed and/or Against an Incomplete Line-up

RULE 136: Opposing teams must bowl each other at the same time except:

1. When a forfeit is declared.
2. When a league adopts specific rules permitting a team or individual members to bowl unopposed before or after a scheduled league match. If a league adopts a rule to allow teams and/or individuals to bowl unopposed, the procedures for postponing and pre-bowling outlined in the Rules 140 through 143 apply, unless the league had adopted other rules to govern bowling unopposed.

When bowling a scheduled league match unopposed (forfeit), a four men team must bowl within **forty eight** pins, while trios league will bowl within **thirty six** pins of the current combined average of the team members present to be awarded the respective game points. With regards to the Series, the total team score must be within 120 pins of the current combined average of the team members present in order for the series points to be awarded. (Both figures include handicap).

In the case that the team bowling unopposed has at least one team member without an established average, then they must bowl within forty eight / thirty six pins of the current team average from the latest Standing List to be awarded the respective game points and the total team score must be within **144** pins for 4 men teams and **108** pins for trios league of the current team average from the latest Standing List in order for the series points to be awarded. (Both figures include handicap).

When bowling a scheduled league match against an incomplete line-up, the scores count in deciding league and team totals, but individual scores only qualify if the individual's average increases.

Postponement - Request

RULE 137: Only 1 postponement can be requested by same team in one round, unless a bowler is abroad on either National Duty or is abroad to play an Open Tournament. Only in such cases there can be more than 1 request in one round. The request for a make-up which is not bowling related carries an Administration Fee of **15€**. If the make up is requested for bowling duties, the Administration fee is waived off.

A postponement must be requested at least **48** forty eight hours before the scheduled time on an MTBA Postponement Form. Should both team captains agree, postponements will also be accepted

after this deadline. The league secretary must grant a postponement when a team cannot appear for reasons beyond its control and will not have the minimum required line-up. If a team asks for a postponement because one (1) of the players is on National Duty or because a player is abroad to bowl for an International Open, then the opposing team **CANNOT** refuse the postponement. However, the team captain has to advise the opposing team about the make-up **3 weeks** before the match is supposed to be played to provide ample time to set the make up. The team captain requesting the make-up should also inform the league secretary via email as soon as the request is made (i.e. 3 weeks in advance). Form has to be filled 2 weeks in advance with both team captains' signature on it. Failure to ask for a make-up before the 3-week period, the opposing team has the right to refuse such make up.

In no case shall a league adopt legislation, which would have the effect of establishing an absolutely no postponement rule throughout. Games have to be played before the next scheduled league matches

Postponement - Time Limit for Scheduling

RULE 138: Postponed games must be bowled prior to the next league match of scheduled competition for either team. **If games are not played within the timeframe BOTH teams will get zero pinfall.** However, if a team has at least ONE of its registered bowlers abroad on M.T.B.A. National Duty, then the match/es involved can be rescheduled to another date up to 1 week after the next league match prior to the approval of the league secretary. Handicaps for the rescheduled games will be taken as at on the day that the match is bowled.

During the final week of the league, all make-ups must be played before the last scheduled league match. However, substitutes may be allowed even during the last week.

The provision of this paragraph overrides Rule 137.

Postponement - Procedures to Follow

RULE 139: When a postponement has been granted, the following procedures shall apply:

The league secretary shall notify the Bowling Centre of the change in schedule and arrange for the postponed games to be bowled on the originally scheduled pair of lanes. If the original lanes are not available, the league secretary may authorize the teams to use alternative lanes, provided they are used by the league in bowling its schedule.

The captains of the teams involved shall agree on a date for bowling the postponed match. If the captains cannot agree on a date, the league secretary shall set a date and notify both team captains of the date and time set. In this case, the team which should be inconvenienced the least should be that team which had not requested the postponement.

A league postponement form has to be filled by both team captains and is to be passed on to the league secretary at least forty eight hours before play, accompanied by the appropriate Administrative Fee.

Postponed games must be bowled under the same conditions and rules governing normal/sanctioned league play.

If a pair of lanes normally used by the league is not available, the league secretary may authorize the games to be bowled on another pair of certified lanes even though the lanes are not normally used by the league.

The scores of any postponed matches not duly applied for on the above-mentioned form will not be accepted, and no points will be awarded to either team involved.

Postponement - Figuring Handicaps

RULE 140: In bowling postponed or pre-bowled games in handicap leagues, the handicap is figured as of the date the games are bowled. All games bowled prior to the pre-bowled or postponed match shall be included in determining handicap.

League Tie Games

RULE 141: When a tie game occurs, each of the two teams involved in the tie shall be credited in the standing with having won one-half game, and with the loss of one-half game.

There shall be no play-off of such ties. In leagues using the points award system, when a tie occurs, each of the teams shall be credited with one-half the value of the point(s) normally awarded. There shall be no play-off of such ties.

Play-offs

RULE 142: With a tie on points at the end of the league, total pinfall, including handicap, will decide the placing, however a play-off is necessary to determine the champion when a tie exists for first place at the end of the league schedule when two or more teams have equal points and pinfall.

Under no conditions may the play-offs consist of less than one game. In the absence of a league rule, the play-off shall consist of the same number of games and be conducted under the same conditions and rules governing league play rules during the season. Total pins from the play-off shall decide the winner unless otherwise provided in the league rules.

If a tie still exists at the end of a play-off, each team will bowl an additional frame. This frame is to be bowled by each team on the lane where it bowled the final frame of the last game and it shall be scored like a tenth frame. If the tie is still unbroken, the teams involved will alternate lanes for each additional complete frame needed to break the tie.

NOTE: Play-off games do not count towards individual averages or special league prizes. When a play-off is necessary, the league secretary shall arrange to have lanes available.

Withdrawals - Resignations - Expulsions

RULE 143: If a team or individual must withdraw from a league during the season, one week's notice must be given along with a satisfactory reason for resigning. If it is a team captain who is withdrawing he/she shall give notice to the league secretary, while if it is a member who is resigning from a team, then he/she shall give notice to both the team captain and the league secretary.

If proper notice is not given, or a team is expelled from a league, entry fees, prizes or any other awards the team or individual may have been eligible for will be forfeited; the member(s) shall also be subject to disciplinary action by the MTBA.

If an individual is withdrawn/withdraws from a team, they may not play with any other team in that league in that same season.

De-registration must be made on the appropriate MTBA form.

Bye - Uneven Number of Teams

RULE 144: When a league starts the season with an uneven number of teams or a team is dismissed or withdraws and is not replaced, the team scheduled against the non-existent team cannot be credited with the points by forfeit.

The teams and/or individuals scheduled against the missing team must earn the points for the games, unless the MTBA Board of Directors, by majority vote, decides to use the bye system.

On disqualification/withdrawal of a team, the points earned by that team will not be awarded to their previous opponents against whom they had won the points.

Should there be an uneven number of teams, and a new team registers half way through the season, that team will be allowed to join the season after the full first round of that particular season.

Dismissal - League Officer or Member

RULE 145: A member may be dismissed from the league or an officer removed from league Office only for any of the following reasons:

1. Conduct derogatory to the best interest of the league.
2. Any deliberate action which can be proven to be detrimental to the best interest of the players, team or league.
3. Violation of MTBA rules.

If a league files a written charge asking for the removal of a league officer or dismissal of a team member, these procedures must be followed:

1. Within one week after receipt of the written complaint, the league president must schedule a meeting of the Board of Directors and the Disciplinary Board shall be notified. The meeting should be held at the earliest possible date.
2. Written notice and a copy of the complaint shall be provided to the member(s) charged. Such notice should be sent by registered mail, e-mail or be hand delivered, and shall notify the member of the date, time and place of meeting, as well as of his/her right to attend and offer a defence.
3. A roster shall be prepared listing those present and absent.
4. Minutes of the meeting and all documents and material relating to the charges must be maintained.
5. The member(s) involved shall be notified in writing of the Board's decision, and of the right to Appeal that decision to the Appeals Board. An Appeal from a decision on a protest must be filed in writing within seven days of notification, or within forty eight hours when notification occurs in the final two weeks of the league schedule, or as a result of a play-off competition.

A member dismissed from the league forfeits all franchise, prizes and awards for which he/she may have been eligible.

Dismissal - Non-payment of Fees - Improper Withdrawal

RULE 146: When a league member is accused of failing to pay league fees or withdrawing without sufficient cause, the league must try to resolve the matter.

A complaint shall be submitted, in writing, to a league Officer, and the league shall proceed as follows:

1. The President should schedule a meeting of the Board of Directors, and the Disciplinary Board notified. The meeting should be held at the earliest possible date.
2. Written notice and a copy of the complaint shall be provided to the member(s) charged. Such notice should be sent by registered mail or hand delivered, and shall notify the member of the date, time and place of meeting, as well as of his/her right to attend and offer a defence.
3. A roster shall be prepared listing those present and absent.
4. Minutes of the meeting and all documents relating to the charges must be maintained.
5. The member(s) involved shall be notified of the Board's decision.

Scoring

RULE 147: In non-computerized league play, scores must be recorded on a score sheet in view of the opposing players. Every frame bowled by each player shall be recorded. Each team shall also record the scores of each game in a score-book kept by the team captain or someone appointed by the captain for this purpose.

The score-sheet is the official record and the team score-books must agree with the score-sheet at the end of each game. After the score-books are verified and signed by the opposing team captains, these are the league's official record for the season, and must be handed in (duly completed) to the league secretary. Failing this, no points will be awarded to the offending team/s.

Scoring - Errors

RULE 148: Errors in scoring or calculation must be corrected by a league Official immediately upon discovery. Any questionable errors in scoring or calculation shall be decided by the league secretary, or any committee member.

NOTE: If an error is discovered later on in the league, then the error must still be changed.

Scores - Lost

RULE 149: A league game(s) or frame(s) within a game, which are irretrievably lost in the scoring process, is null and void. The game(s) or frame(s) must be re-bowled unless the league secretary rules otherwise.

If all scores on a pair of lanes are documented or can be retrieved, then the game shall be continued from the point of interruption.

Prizes - Proprietors and Their Employees

RULE 150: When a tournament is sponsored by the management of a bowling establishment and the scheduled games are bowled solely in that establishment, the Owner or employees of the establishment shall be disqualified from receiving individual or all events prizes except that this shall not apply in Annual/National Championships/Tournaments of the MTBA.

All other tournaments and leagues may, by rule, restrict the Owner of the bowling establishment or his employees from qualifying for individual or all event prizes when the games of the league or tournament are bowled solely in the establishments with which they are associated.

Prize - Qualification

RULE 151: Team - Team prizes shall be distributed according to verbal or written agreements, if there is a dispute on the division of team prizes; it shall be decided by the league committee/MTBA. No team can win more than one prize in any group of prizes, unless otherwise provided by league rule.

Individual - In order to qualify for individual league prizes, a player must actually bowl the required number of games. The following provisions also apply, unless otherwise provided by league rule.

To win Hi-Average and most Improved Awards, a bowler must have bowled at least 51% of the games in that league. To qualify for any other individual award, a bowler must have bowled a minimum of 34% of the games in that league. An established bowler may win any individual trophy during the first four weeks of a league (i.e. when their handicap is still frozen).

National Leagues together with the National Leagues' Knock-Out Competition, (should the latter take place), terminate with the Presentation Dinner/Presentation of Trophies, and as such, any trophy winner who fails to participate in this event will forfeit his/her award unless that person should have a valid reason for their non-appearance. This validity will be decided on by the M.T.B.A. Board of Directors after receipt of a written explanation, accompanied by an Administrative Fee of €5.00 (non refundable).

A member, who withdrew without sufficient reason, is dismissed or suspended, shall be disqualified from receiving any individual or all event prizes.

Changing Delivery

RULE 152: If because of injury or disability a bowler finds it necessary to change delivery from left handed to right handed or vice versa, the league committee/MTBA, by majority vote, may permit the bowler to establish a new average. If approval is obtained, the bowler must establish a new average.

Disputes - Protests

RULE 153: All disputes, complaints or protests relating to any controversy or violation in the league involving any MTBA or league rules, may be directed to the MTBA Disciplinary Committee in accordance with these rules. It is, however, within the League Committee's authority to adopt and enforce any of its own league rules, but the rules must not be inconsistent with the rules of the MTBA.

The League Committee may declare forfeited, or null and void, any protested or disputed games, and decide upon any other matter arising in its league. The decision of the Committee shall be Final, except where an Appeal is made to the MTBA, for further consideration.

Protest Procedures

RULE 154: A protest involving eligibility of players or infringement of playing rules must be confirmed in writing to the league secretary or the MTBA not later than forty-eight hours after the series in which the infraction occurred. If a written protest is not filed within that time, the series stands.

Each protest must be specific in itself and cannot be constituted to cover any prior violation.

An appeal from a decision on a protest must be filed in writing within forty-eight hours of notification of the decision in question.

Protests and appeals must each be accompanied by an Administrative Fee of € 15, which will be refunded should the applicant prove to be correct in the respective contestation.

Prizes for positions involved cannot be distributed until the protest or appeal is resolved.

Special Additions

Rule 155: The number of teams relegated and promoted from each division will be determined according to the total number teams registered therein, and all teams will be suitably advised by League Officials prior to the commencement of the league. Should a place become vacant for any reason whatsoever, then that place will be taken by the team in the highest relegation position of the division in question, followed by the team which finished in the penultimate place of that same division and so on. Should ALL the 'should be' relegated teams decline to fill the vacant place, then the teams in the next lower division will be offered this opportunity in their order of placing in the League just concluded.

Note: Should a league position still be available once the above rule has been applied for any reason whatsoever, then the MTBA Committee will decide what action is to be taken. Said decision will be final.

Rule 156: A team which earns promotion in division 2 **MAY NOT** refuse promotion. A team in division 3 can refuse to be promoted, but they cannot refuse promotion for two consecutive seasons. A player who bowls with a 3rd division team which has refused promotion, can still join a team in any higher division.

Rule 157: Bowlers who have bowled more than 11 games with their team and who form part of a team which is relegated are not obliged to remain bowling with that team in the subsequent season. They must however play in a team participating in the Division to which they were relegated or lower down. **If by any chance a player continues to bowl in a higher division all the games he/she plays will be considered as a blind score.**

Rule 158: Any new teams which are accepted for entry into these leagues must commence by bowling in the lowest division.

Rule 159: All teams participating in the **1st & 2nd DIV must play with uniform tops**. Any team member not conforming to this rule will not be permitted to bowl and a blind score awarded. **Tops can be similar with slight differences (eg a line in the collar, an extra pocket, etc). In that case a team captain should get a written approval from the league secretary.**

Rule 160: Consumption of alcohol and smoking are strictly prohibited during all 1st division matches, including Make-Ups. Any bowler who may be, in the opinion of the League Secretary, under the influence of alcohol at any time during a league fixture, will be disqualified from said fixture. On the other hand, if a bowler is caught smoking during a game, the penalty will be zero pinfall for that game. If a bowler is caught smoking between two games of a block of games, the penalty will be zero pinfall for the succeeding game. Full discretion is given to the League Secretary, to act accordingly regarding any breach of this rule.

Rule 161: Lineage will be charged weekly according to the fee established by Eden Superbowl including VAT (under current Tax Laws).

Rule 162: Should any extraordinary issues arise then the League Secretary is to discuss the issue with all Committee Members, who in turn will decide which is the best action to be taken, even if this decision is not exactly according to the rules. Should this be the case however, all team captains involved will be informed in writing beforehand.

Rule 163: Valid and complete registration forms (attached) accompanied by the required entry fee must be handed in to the League Secretary concerned or any other MTBA official by the dates specified in this application form. Only MTBA officials are authorised to accept these applications.

Amendment approved by all committee members: December 2019