**GUIDELINES AND RULES FOR THE OXFORDSHIRE BRONZE LEAGUE**

 **Updated following AGM on 6/10/25**

1. **AIM OF THE LEAGUE & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

 To give Bronze Players (active HC 20.5 to ideally 30.0) the opportunity to play Competitive Match Play off Scratch.

 The Bronze League is open to any Club in Oxfordshire affiliated to EWGA and the Oxfordshire Ladies County Golf Association.

To be eligible to play in the Bronze League, players must have submitted a minimum of 3 handicap acceptable cards over 18 holes (i.e. General Play or competitions) within a rolling 12 month period to confirm that they have an up to date handicap.

1. **FORMAT OF COMPETITION**

The League is played in Four Divisions (broadly geographical). Matches are played both Home and Away each year.

If the number of Clubs decreases the League should revert to two Divisions. In the event of change, a Meeting should be convened of participating Clubs to agree the future format.

It was agreed at the end of season meeting in Oct 2022, following a lengthy review, that there would be an update to the cycle of the divisions. The clubs would be divided into 3 sets (North, South and Central) - according to their geographical location and travel times within Oxfordshire. From these 3 sets, 4 divisions would be formed each season.

The details of the divisions are attached in the ‘5 year cycle of divisions from 2023’ and allow for an ongoing cycle until further notice.

1. **THE SEMI-FINALS**

The winning Club from each Division will go into a draw for the Semi-Finals. When the draw is made, the first Club name drawn will play against the second Club drawn. The third Club name drawn will play against the fourth Club. The Semi-Finals should be played between the 2nd and 30th September. The matches will be played at a neutral Club chosen in alphabetical order, one from Group 1 and one from Group 2 (details in Administrator’s file).

The League Administrator and another Club member will make the draw and will be the arbitrator if a dispute arises.

The teams must play in reverse Handicap order i.e. Highest Handicapper out first, in case the Match is tied. In this eventuality - the last Match out i.e. the Lowest Handicapper will play sudden death Match Play from the 1st Tee.

The toss of a coin will determine the Club to Tee-Off first.

1. **THE FINAL**

The Final is to be organised by the League Administrator and should be played at the Club of the Administrator unless that Club is in the Final (if this occurs the nearest neutral Course available should be arranged) to be played no later than the 3rd week of October. The Toss of a coin will determine the Club to Tee-Off first.

 The teams must play in reverse Handicap order i.e. Highest Handicapper out first, in case the Match is tied. In this eventuality - the last Match out i.e. the Lowest Handicapper will play sudden death Match Play from the 1st Tee.

**Caddies** to be allowed for the Finals only. They can be of either gender and, according to the Rules of Golf, are allowed to advise throughout the course, including the greens. As a courtesy, please inform other Clubs if you are using a Caddy.

The end of season Lunch and Presentation will be held on the same day as the Final and will be organised by the League Administrator. The Trophies will be presented to the Winners and Runners-up.

The Lunch is open to Club Lady Captains, Vice-Captains, any Team Member who participated in Matches during the season and anyone who has caddied in the Final.

Engraving of Trophies is the responsibility of the Winners and Runners Up.

1. **ADMINISTRATION**

A different participating Club handles Administration of the League each year in alphabetical order.

1. **DISPUTES/DIFFICULTIES**

An Ad-hoc Committee, made up of the minimum of 5 Representatives from different Clubs, should be convened when necessary, to arbitrate on any disputes or difficulties. Representatives to be chosen based on experience within the Bronze League.

If a player in a Team within the League is a Member of more than one Club in Oxfordshire she must represent the Club which is her Home Club. Membership of a Club outside the County is not relevant. Corporate members are not eligible to play.

Breach of this Rule would incur a penalty. The forfeiture of the offending individual’s Match. A win for the opponent is by a margin of 7-6.

1. **ORGANISING MATCHES**

The host Captain is responsible for organising the fixture and all Match dates for the following season should be finalised by 30th November. The dates of these matches to be communicated to the Administrator by November 30th.

In case of difficulties in organising a Match - 3 dates should be given, one of which should be a weekend. If a fixture is not finalised by November 30th, the penalty will be elimination from the League for one season. This course of action will be determined by an Ad-hoc Committee (see under Disputes/Difficulties).

New Clubs joining the League will be included in the following season’s fixture list at the Administrator’s and Captains’ discretion.

1. **MATCHES**

Matches are to be played in Singles format off scratch. Each individual Result (Actual Score) of each individual Match must be recorded in case of a tie, when all results will be needed for count back.

A Team consists of Five players with active Handicaps between 20.5 and ideally 30. Corporate Members of Clubs are not eligible. A player may play in a Bronze league match if their handicap is eligible in the 7 days previous (i.e. A player who has a handicap index of 20.5 or greater is eligible to play even if their HI falls below 20.5 in the 7 days previous to the match).

If a Team member is 30 minutes or more late arriving for the Tee-off time - the individual Match will be forfeited and the opponent will be credited with a 7-6 Win. (Exception to this Rule is at the Discretions of the Captains).

In exceptional circumstances only, a Club which is unable to produce a Team of Five will be allowed to play with a Team of Four (but no less), provided that the Team’s Captain notifies this to the other Team Captain at the earliest opportunity in advance of the Match. The highest handicap match will be forfeited by that Club with a score recorded as a Win for the full Team by a margin of 7-6 for that match.

If a Club fails to produce a Team (other than as permitted above) a Bye will be given to the Club who did produce a Team, awarding them 2 points as for a Win by a designated margin of 3-2 overall for games scored (but with the other Team scoring 0 for games won).

If a Course is closed due to bad weather, the Match must be re-arranged if possible, otherwise 1 Point each will be awarded. (See Section on Discontinuance of play / inclement weather for further clarification)

Players are to go out in strict exact Handicap order, lowest first, except in the Final and Semi-Finals when the order is reversed.

**All Division Matches to be completed by 31st August.**

**Caddies** to be allowed for the Finals only. They can be of either gender and, according to the Rules of Golf, are able to advise throughout the course including the Greens. As a courtesy, please inform other Clubs if you are using a Caddy.

GPs (Sky caddies) - Sky caddies may be used if Clubs where Match is to be played allow their use. These must be for distance only (not wind direction or strength).

**Spectators** are only permitted in the Final and then only on 1st Tee and 18th Green. If the Course layout allows, Spectators are also allowed at 9th Green and 10th Tee. Spectators are not allowed to follow Teams around the Course.

**Buggies** may be used *without* a doctor’s note in all matches.

**Refreshments:** Post match refreshments and costs will be agreed between the Captains based on whatever the host club are able to offer. Consumption of refreshments brought from home *after the match* whilst on host club premises is not appropriate.

1. **RESULTS**

Results of each Match must be sent to the Bronze League Administrator as soon as possible after each Match. The Home Captain should email the result immediately and then send in the signed Sheets, signed by both Captains, after completing their team’s final home match.

The League Table will be updated by the administrator and sent to the webmaster at OLCGA for posting on the website every couple of weeks.

The winners of each Division will not be formally communicated to the club representatives until all matches have been completed. This does not preclude club Bronze League organisers viewing the results on the website at any time should they wish.

All matches to be completed by the end of August 31st regardless of whether a club is a Divisional winner or not.

If clubs decide not to play their match, by mutual consent, they record the result as 0:0 (0 games and 0 points each) - NOT a draw.

If one club decides they wish to play but the other club refuses or cannot muster a team, then the club wishing to play scores a 5:0 win and 2 points.

1. **SCORING**

Two Points for a Team Win. One Point for a Half.

1. **NOTES TO ADMINISTRATOR**

At the end of the Season, add up the Points to determine the Finalists. If there is a Points Tie - total up the number of individual games won for every Match played. If still tied, total the winning margins of individual Matches. If still tied, total the losing margins of individual Matches - in this instance the least number of lost holes decides the Winner. (see EWGA Handbook -County Golf Championship’ Number 16 -Sub-Divisional and Divisional Ties - if clarification is needed).

1. **DISCONTINUANCE OF PLAY/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

**Thunderstorms** - Captains should call their Teams off the Course, marking the place where individual play stopped. Play should resume after the storm, unless the Course is closed. See Rule Book for clarification. Rule 6-8 [rules of golf]

 I**n extreme weather** or poor course conditions, the two team captains may, either before or during the match, agree to call off the match and play on a different date. A mutually agreed date must be arranged as soon as possible.

**The results of any completed matches will stand**. Uncompleted matches must be replayed from the start with any of both Clubs’ Bronze category players able to participate - excepting those who played in any matches already concluded.

If someone falls ill/injured during play or once the player has arrived but before play commences, a Result should be calculated on the holes won i.e. if player A was 3 holes up on the 13th and is taken ill on the 14th Tee -whilst player B would win the Match, the Result would be a winning margin of 2. It would take player B 3 holes to draw level, with 2 holes left to play.

If a calculation is not possible because a player falls ill/injured at the Match venue before or during the first few holes and/or the winning margin is greater than 7-6 when calculated, then it has been agreed that the maximum winning margin should be 7-6.