

Attachment - Historical Review

A History of the Winter league Rules from AGM and Committee minutes

Prior to there being an Executive Committee each club could send two representatives to each meeting. 64 members at the 3rd December 1987 meeting set up the East and West leagues much as we play now. Following that winter season 85 people at a meeting on 11th April 1988 heard a report from a rules sub committee item 7 c) *“That the playing by some clubs of considerably less people than the maximum 16 was causing considerable disquiet.... they dismissed the idea of replacing the 16 in a team with 8 ... they concluded the fairest way was a deduction of 25% of the shots scored in every game that included one or more people bowling for a second time....”*

At the AGM 27th June 1988 the Executive Committee was set up Although many rules for playing carpet bowls were amended there was no mention of the Rules Sub Committee's idea as set out above. At the end of the next winter season at a meeting 24th April 1989 item 11 c)

“Much attention was paid to the issue that is clearly the most emotive in carpet bowls and has been for a number of years....(playing with less than 16 players)... there is much argument as to whether an advantage is gained but the truth or otherwise is irrelevant. What is important is that it causes more concern and bad feeling than anything else.....

Various ideas were put forward including the 25% penalty for playing twice and possibly teams of 8, up to 2 per club, no decisions made but ideas to be floated at the next AGM.

Following the 26th June 1989 AGM the Executive met immediately following the AGM discussion and brought in the rules 'choosing by lot' we have played to ever since .

The AGM of 25th June 1990 the problem came up again and straw poll for guidance gave 18 clubs for staying at the minimum of 8 and 18 clubs wanting a new minimum of 12 and some inconclusive discussion on the 25% penalty.

The AGM of 24th June 1991 item 11 the Chairman asked for an open discussion to guide the committee about the very '*emotive subject of Winter leagues*' The problem of clubs playing less than 16 players was discussed but there was a feeling to stay as we are on a minimum number. This was agreed at committee meeting of 15th July 1991 for the next season.

At the 5th April 1993 meeting item 7 *“ ...discussion took place over the playing of only 8 people in the Tithe Barn Sproughton team for their last 3 matches where there was an average of 15 in their previous 4 fixtures.this action was against the spirit of the game but not against the rules and that this move had been decisive in them avoiding relegation at the expense of Martlesham. Sproughton had obtained 17 points in the last 3 matches whereas they had scored just 7 in the previous 4. The Chairman, Treasurer and Press Officer had all been proffered different reasons for the reduction in players”*

The AGM of 28th June 1993 was again dealing with suggestions for the Executive committee to consider penalizing clubs playing with less than 16 or rewarding clubs fielding full teams with bonus points.

In 1994 at the 16th May meeting item 8 the committee established a minimum of 10 players.

In 1995 4th April item 7 the league Secretary reported receiving complaints ... *“regarding clubs taking advantage of the rules and fielding less than the full 16 bowlers”*

In 1995/6 the clubs were circulated for their views on the Winter league format and these were considered at the meeting 5th February 1996. The Secretary summarized the 30 clubs comments..

“which were overwhelmingly in favour of maintaining the 16 in a team of 4 games of fours. There were, however, 7 unsolicited suggestions that the minimum number playing should be increased from 10 to 12 and it was decided that member's views be sought on this. Other suggestions ... from members (included) ...that whatever numbers in a team were settled on it should not be allowed for people to play twice.”

The 31 clubs who responded on the question of minimum numbers.. *“with 23 wishing for a minimum of 12 players”* Meeting of 8th April 1996 item 7 b)

However the committee at meeting 22nd July 1996 item 8 b) decided to let it remain at 10.

The Committee meeting of 20th July 1998 item 12 a) *“Winter leagues .. A lively discussion took place.....Burstall proposed that penalties should be incurred by teams not fielding 16 players.....if less than 14 players attend, the opposing captain should determine the teams by drawing out the players and the positions for all 4 games. This proposal was rejected by the committee”*

After the subject was brought up again at the 1999 AGM the committee meeting of 19th July decided *“... those who shall play a second time shall be chosen by lottery from all available players.....drawn by the opposing captain...”*

This did not survive as a permanent change to the rules

Meeting of 3rd April 2000 item 5 c) resulting from a complaint about players playing twice it was decided *“a sub committee be formed to look into this matter”*

The AGM of 19th June referred to the ongoing problem of the winter league format and that the minimum number would be 12.

Following this at the Committee meeting of 2nd October 2000

item 11. *“Winter League Format 2001 – A discussion took place on this and it will be placed on every agenda until a solution is found”.*

Although the committee decided to leave the problem alone it did not go away and resurfaced in a discussion reported 25th November 2002 item 12 b) (no details)

At the meeting 24th March 2003 item 13. to the surprise of many the rules were changed to a minimum of 10 to encourage small clubs to join. This was not effective.

At the AGM 14th June 2004 in Any Other Business item 11 b) *“Ray White of Polstead said that the matter of playing less than 16 players in league matches should be addressed”*

The resulting overwhelming and vociferous support against the system allowing players to play twice or suggesting penalties in such cases resulted in support for David Bailey(Burstall) who *“said that the committee in the past have promised to address this problem and urges them to look at this more seriously.”*

A meeting of 20th September 2004 item 11. recognised the strong feelings of clubs for change and appointed a sub committee to report back with options and recommendations.

A full report with recommendations was circulated to all committee members before the meeting of 24th January 2005 and was discussed at item 11. *The committee unanimously voted for the option recommended for a minimum of 12 players with no one playing twice as opposed for another option of a minimum of 12 with penalties where players played twice.*

At the meeting on 21st March item 3 b) correspondence from clubs critical of the decision to change was considered and a decision to set out again the reasons for change was made with a request for support for the new system next season.