



The Bristol and District Chess League

Founded 7th October 1907

<http://chessit.co.uk>

**Annual General Meeting of the League
Thursday 28 May 2026 7.30pm
Redland Church Meeting Rooms, Redland Green BS6 7HE**

- 1. Chairman's Opening remarks**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of AGM 27 May 2025**
- 4. Reports from Officers:**
 - a. Match Secretary (Dave Tipper)
 - b. Grading Officer (Stuart Iles)
 - c. Recruitment and Publicity Officer (Jane Norton)
 - d. Junior Officers (Oli Stubbs, Jack Tye)
 - e. ECF Representative (John Paines)
 - f. Congress Report (Igor Dokleptic)
 - g. Treasurer (Jerry Humphries)
- 5. Adoption of the Accounts**
- 6. Trophies and Certificates**
- 7. Election of Officers**
- 8. Motions**
- 9. Other business**

Item 6 2025-26 Trophy Winners

Bristol Congress:

- **Open:** Zack Norris
- **Major:** Kas Coman
- **Section 3:** Miles Howells
- **Section 4:** Mauro Farina

Bristol Blitz 2026: Tom Shepherd

Bristol Rapid 2026: Oscar Garcia

Division 1: Downend and Fishponds A

Division 2: Bristol University A

Division 3: Yate and Sodbury A

Division 4: North Bristol A

Division 5: Yate and Sodbury B

Division 6: UWE A

Division 7: UWE B

Knock-out Cup Downend and Fishponds

Minor Knock-out Bath

Alan Ashby Silver Salver (for league player with most points for a single team) Will Austin

Alan Ashby U18 (for junior with most points for a single team) Selikem Amoako

Item 7 Election of Officers.

The following officers are standing for re-election

- **Chair:** Igor Doklestic
- **President:** George Miller
- **Vice-President:** James Meadows
- **ECF Representative:** John Paines
- **General Secretary:** Peter Marks
- **Junior Officers:** Jack Tye and Oli Stubbs.
- **Match Secretary:** Stuart Iles
- **Recruitment & Publicity Officer:** Jane Norton
- **Webmaster:** Dave Tipper

Additionally, the Committee proposes the following nominees:

- **Treasurer:** Ed Honey

Other roles:

- **Congress Secretary**
- **Auditor (not LMC):** Vacant

Nominations from the floor for any of these positions are permissible.

Item 8 Motions

There are 2 motions included. Both proposed by Arnav Sud.

Motion 1: Introduction of rating difference as part of board order and playing strength rule.

Proposer: Arnav Sud

Seconded: Sam Day

Background

Clubs across the league are finding it increasingly difficult to field six-player teams on a consistent basis. Variations in player availability, club reorganisations, and even occasional closures, have made the current format unsustainable. In some cases, clubs are being forced to move players between divisions simply to meet team quotas — a practice that, while understandable, compromises both fairness and the integrity of the league. Some teams are able to play in Divisions 1-4 purely on the basis of “quantity” than “quality”, leading to frustration amongst stronger players in the lower half of the League, who miss out due to not having enough players in their Club, or all being available at a given time.

Proposal

That the minimum team size for Divisions 1–4 be reduced from minimum six players to minimum four players per team.

Rationale

- Sustainability: A 4-player structure is more achievable for clubs with fluctuating membership.
- Fairness: Reduces defaults and ensures results are decided over the board.
- Accessibility: Allows smaller clubs to participate fully without excessive recruitment pressure.
- Integrity: Removes the need to shift players unethically between divisions.
- Proven Success: Similar 4-board formats operate successfully in the same league in lower divisions and some 4NCL competitions too. In fact, it will increase participation for bigger Clubs, for example a Club with 8 players available can field two teams rather than one, which is not the case with a 6 person team.

Conclusion

This proposal aims to protect participation, fairness, and long-term sustainability. A 4-player minimum ensures that clubs of all sizes can continue to compete ethically and consistently, strengthening the league as a whole. It also ensures that Chess players are able to concentrate on the game itself rather than organising themselves for meeting seasonal demand.

Motion2: Proposal to Update the League Ranking System

Proposer: Arnav Sud

Seconded: Sam Day

1. Introduction: Fairness and Game Theory (Nash Equilibrium if you like)

Fairness in competitive settings requires that teams are rewarded in proportion to their performance and that the ranking system does not inadvertently encourage strategic underperformance. Game theory evaluates whether a system is “incentive-compatible,” meaning that the optimal strategy for all teams is always to give full effort.

Ranking systems that contain thresholds or loopholes can unintentionally reward risk avoidance or passive play once a goal has been secured. Chess leagues commonly use match-based scoring, treating the match result as the primary outcome, or board-based scoring, which evaluates the totality of performance across all boards.

From a fairness and game-theory standpoint, systems that reward every unit of performance tend to offer more accurate rankings and better incentives. This proposal compares the two methods and recommends a revised system for adoption.

2. Current League Results Under the Match-Point System (2–1–0)

Team	Played	W-D-L	For	Against	Points
Bristol Four Knights	5	5-0-0	17	3	10
Yate & Sodbury B	5	5-0-0	15	5	10
Bristol Cabot A	5	4-0-1	15.5	4.5	8
Bristol University C	5	2-1-2	8	12	5
Horfield & Redland E	5	1-0-4	7	13	2
Downend & Fishponds F	5	1-0-4	6.5	13.5	2
Bristol & Clifton F	5	1-0-4	6	14	2
Portishead B	5	0-1-4	5	15	1

3. Results Calculated by Board Difference (Normalised For – Against)

Team	For	Against	RD	NS
Bristol Four Knights	17	3	14	24
Bristol Cabot A	15.5	4.5	11	21
Yate & Sodbury B	15	5	10	20
Bristol University C	8	12	-4	6
Horfield & Redland E	7	13	-6	4
Downend & Fishponds F	6.5	13.5	-7	3
Bristol & Clifton F	6	14	-8	2
Portishead B	5	15	-10	0

RD = Raw Difference, NS = Normalised Score

Normalisation is simply adding the lowest score to each score, so as to avoid negative scores, in this case (minus) 10.

4. Pros and Cons of the Match-Point System

Advantages

- Avoids excessive pressure to run up large winning margins against weaker teams.

Disadvantages

- Threshold effect: once a team secures enough points to win the match, extra wins given no reward.
- Encourages draws or risk-averse play on remaining boards.
- Does not differentiate between narrow and decisive victories.
- Season-long rankings may misrepresent true team strength.

5. Pros and Cons of the Board-Difference System

Advantages

- Rewards performance on every board; fully incentive-compatible.
- Teams always benefit from playing competitively throughout the match.
- Provides a more accurate reflection of overall team strength.
- Reduces the incentive for early draws or passive play.

Disadvantages

- Can increase volatility in league tables; heavy losses weigh more heavily.
- May encourage stronger teams to maximise margins against weaker opposition.

6. Rationale for Change

The current match-point system does not consistently reward full performance and can create strategic distortions. A board-difference approach eliminates threshold effects, aligns incentives with actual competitive effort, and provides a clearer representation of team strength over the season. Comparing the current match-point table with normalised board difference results highlights the improved fairness and accuracy of this method.

7. Proposal to the AGM

Adopt the following ranking criteria for the next season:

- Normalised board difference as the primary ranking measure.
- Total boards scored (For) as the secondary measure.
- Head-to-head results as the tertiary measure.
- Match points (2–1–0) retained only as a final tie-break.