Southampton Chess League Code of Conduct

Revised 29 August 2024

This Code of Conduct provides guidelines, in addition to the League Rules, as to what is expected from clubs and players. Players and club officers are also referred to the following related ECF policy documents:

- Safeguarding: https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Safeguarding-Children-Policy.pdf
- Safe Play: https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Safe-Play.pdf

1. All games are to be played according to the FIDE Laws of Chess (https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/E012023), except as provided for in the SCL rules. It is therefore desirable that all players, and especially team captains, have a good working knowledge of both the Laws of Chess and the SCL Rules.

   Persistent refusal by a player to comply with the Laws of Chess may be penalised by the loss of the game (as determined by team captains acting as arbiters or after referral to the SCL Committee).

2. Article 12 (The Conduct of the Players) of the FIDE rules is simplified for SCL purposes as:

   a. Players shall take no action that will bring the game of chess into disrepute. This covers a wide range of 'bad behaviour' including shouting, verbal, or physical abuse, deliberately knocking pieces over, deliberate illegal plays, tampering with clocks …

   b. A player should not leave the playing area (includes toilets, smoking area) during play without permission from the opposing team captain acting as an arbiter.

   c. During play, the players are forbidden to use any notes, sources of information or advice (e.g. book, phone, computer, person), or analyse any game on another chessboard.

   d. It is forbidden to distract or annoy opponents in any manner whatsoever. This includes unreasonable claims, unreasonable offers of a draw or causing noise in the playing area.

   Any offences that cannot be resolved by the team captains on the night should be reported to the SCL Committee, who will investigate. Penalties that may be applied include loss of game, exclusion from one or more matches, or expulsion from the league.

3. Every club taking part in the league should supply to the league committee a list of their match captains with their telephone numbers prior to the commencement of the season.

4. If clubs want any factors taken into consideration in the league fixture list it is their responsibility to contact the Fixtures Secretary. For School, University and College teams it would be helpful to know their term dates in advance.

5. Clubs should pay their league fees by 1st December at the latest.

6. If a team withdraws from any division after the constitution of the league has been determined for that season the usual procedure will be to reduce the number of relegations from that division.

7. If a team withdraws from any division before the constitution of the league has been determined than the vacancy will normally be filled by increasing the number of promotions to that division.

8. Clubs are expected to replace any nominated players if it becomes apparent that the player(s) will not play for the team.

9. If clubs wish to rearrange matches they should endeavour to give their opponents as much notice as possible of their intentions. All postponements should be notified to the League Secretary, Fixtures Secretary and HCA Webmaster. If clubs find it difficult to rearrange any fixture they should contact the league committee. Team captains are expected to act in a fair and sporting way when making or responding to postponement requests. If transport is an issue, a possible solution may be to swap home and away fixtures.
10. When a captain knows in advance that a full team will not be raised, the opposing captain should be informed in good time to avoid any unnecessary travel for players.
11. If anyone notices an irregularity in the playing of a match, they should report this to the committee immediately. Any delay in doing so may prevent timely and appropriate action being taken (see rule 16 on disputes).