

E.S.M.B.A. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RULES

1. Official ESMBA entry forms for all disciplines of the National Championships will be issued each year to counties for distribution to all clubs/teams within their county allowing sufficient time for players to submit their entry before the local closing date. These forms will also be available from the ESMBA website.

2. Counties shall fully publicise each event within their county and must organise local qualifying heats of the Championship, on behalf of the ESMBA, in order to determine the counties representatives who will go forward in each discipline to the National Finals. These heats may be run combined with a county's own county championships if desired. The ESMBA will deem that this will be classed as the same competition in regard to substitutions (Rule 19 & 20) and when submitting final placings.

3. Counties shall not organise local qualifying heats on days that are designated in the ESMBA Calendar when the ESMBA are holding or participating in an event, (AGM, International events, England Squad days, ESMBA Open Competitions, ICC, ICC Rinks, TLH Qualifiers, Management meetings). Qualifiers can be played if no players are affected by a clash. If this rule is not abided by then your National Allocations will be affected.

4. The ESMBA National Championships are open to all ESMBA players registered before the closing date of the local county heats OR the final closing date set by the ESMBA – whichever is the earlier.

5. Heats must be properly organised on a competitive basis, WITH A MINIMUM OF FOUR TEAMS IN EACH DISCIPLINE (except for the Under 18s Singles and the Mixed Fours) and in accordance with the full ESMBA rules. All qualifying heats should start on a league basis, determined by an open draw. This must be followed by knockout stages.

However where less than eight teams are entered the competition should be organised on a league basis, ensuring that every team plays every other team to determine the order of qualification. The mats for qualifying rounds should also be of similar speed and preferably of the same make wherever possible.

6. The Minimum number of ends to be played in the National qualifying heats per discipline are

Singles 9 ends

Pairs 8 ends

Triples 7 ends

Fours 7 ends

7. Counties with less than the minimum four entries may with the agreement of an adjoining county play in their qualifying heat but only with players from the same registered county. This solution is particularly encouraged between two or more neighbouring counties with low or insufficient entries.

8. Players entering the local national qualifying heats must do so with the express intention of attending the National Finals if they are allocated a place at the finals. If a team drops out they lose their place.

9. Players who qualify for the finals and then don't attend may be subject to disciplinary action by the ESMBA and may be barred from entering the National Finals the following year unless exceptional circumstances prevail. Authority to take similar action is delegated to County Associations if players having entered their local heat, then fail to turn up and play.

10. If a county has a team withdraw from the National Finals once qualified then that place will be reallocated by the ESMBA Competition Organiser using the allocations algorithm. The place does not automatically go to another team from the county that's withdrawing. Rules 8 & 9 may also be enforced.

11. Counties must ensure that official completed entry forms, together with full payment, are received by the ESMBA Competition Organiser BEFORE the competition is played, or prior to the ESMBA closing date – whichever is the sooner. No entry will be accepted without payment or after the closing date.

12. Once an entry has been received by the County or ESMBA competition organiser, players may not change places with other players in the same event.

- 13.** The qualifying heats must be completed by 31st January. The completed results sheet, detailing the names of first to fourth on the day for each discipline must be sent to the ESMBA Competition Organiser within seven days of the event.
- 14.** All qualifiers who attend the National Championship finals must be correctly dressed in accordance with the published dress code.
- 15.** The ESMBA reserve the absolute right after thorough investigation to reject or exclude any entry it deems to be either inappropriate or unacceptable.
- 16.** Substitutes may be used at any stage of the local heats/finals, provided it is prior to the commencement of play. The relevant county committee/heats organiser must be satisfied with the reason for the substitution, and the ESMBA Competition Organiser has been notified in writing and given permission for the substitution to go ahead. Any substitutions that are not authorised by the ESMBA Competition Organiser may result in that team being disqualified as there is a contingency in the ESMBA rules for a team to play short.
- 17.** Once a substitute has played, the original player(s) may take no further part in the event. However, if a nominated substitute has not yet played then the original player(s) may return to play.
- 18.** Substitutes in the National Finals are only allowed under exceptional circumstances and only with the express written permission of both the ESMBA Competition Organiser and the relevant county committee. The circumstances and reasons for substitution must be clearly and fully explained. Players giving reasons which are deemed to be unacceptable may be subject to disciplinary action as per rules 9 & 10.
- 19.** Substitutes in the National Finals must not have previously played in the same event during qualification.
- 20.** The number of substitutes allowed in each discipline is as follows:
- Singles and Pairs - No substitutes allowed.
- Triples - 1 substitute is allowed.
- Fours - 2 substitutes are allowed.
- 21.** Each event/discipline of the Championships are deemed to be a separate event.
- 22.** It is the duty of all players to attend at the published time and date. Should a player(s) arrive after play commences, they may only join play at the start of their next scheduled game.
- 23.** The ESMBA reserve the absolute right to interpret the rules and/or act as is deemed appropriate for the running of the Championships at every level of play
- 24.** The National Championships comprise of separate events/disciplines all of which are equally open to members of any gender with the exception of the Mixed Fours Competition, which is restricted to an entry of a team comprising of two male and two female members.
- The Under 18s Singles when entrants must still be 17 before September 1st and the Over 55 Pairs when entrants must be 55 before September 1st.
- 25.** The ESMBA Competition Organiser will determine the allocation of places at the National Finals, in each event/discipline in accordance with an algorithm which considers the number of entrants from a county as a proportion of the total number of entrants nationally and the size of the county's registered membership.
- 26.** It is a condition of entry that the County has an active Safeguarding Officer.
- 27.** Any further clarification of these rules or playing guidelines can be obtained from the ESMBA Competition Organiser.

SPECIFIC RULES APPLICABLE TO THE FINAL STAGES

- (a) Round One of each discipline will be conducted as a League with each team playing against all other teams in the league group.
- (b) Scoring for Round One shall be 2 points for a win and 1 point for a draw. Upon completion of the league, in the event of two or more teams being equal on points, shot difference shall be used to decide which team is placed higher in the group. In the event of two teams still being equal the result of the game between the two teams shall decide who is placed highest and if that game should have resulted in a draw the number of ends won shall be the deciding factor.
- (c) Round Two onwards shall be a Knockout Competition.
- (d) Players must sign in with the Competition Organiser once all members of the team have arrived and at least 30 minutes before the scheduled commencement of the first game.
- (e) All competitors are responsible for ensuring that they are at the correct mat at the correct time but should note that listed timings are only approximate and that after the initial game is finished players can start their subsequent games as soon as their designated mat and opponents becomes available.

THE ORGANISERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER THE PLAYING TIMES IN THE PROGRAMME AND IT IS ADVISED THAT PLAYERS DO NOT LEAVE THE VENUE AT ANY TIME UNLESS IT IS AN EMERGENCY.

Players who intend to leave the arena for any period MUST ensure that the Organisers are aware of their whereabouts.

- (f) If a team does not take the mat within 10 minutes of being called to the mat, unless exceptional circumstances prevail of which the organisers are aware, then the game will be forfeited, and the following action will be taken:

DURING ROUND ONE

The 2 points for the game and 1 shot per end will be awarded to the opposition.

Additionally, 1 point will be deducted from the team's points tally.

DURING ROUND TWO ONWARDS

The opponent(s) will progress to the next round.

- (g) If players are missing from a team, then the following will apply.

Singles - if the player is missing the game will be forfeited and rule (g) will apply.

Pairs - if a player is missing the game will be forfeited and rule (g) will apply.

Triples & Fours - if one player is missing the standard ESMBA Rules will apply.

Triples and Fours - if two players are missing the game will be forfeited and rule (g) will apply.

- (h) The Dress code for the National Championships is quite clear and is detailed in the appendix.

APPENDIX – ESMBA Dress Code.

The ESMBA Dress Code is in force at all stages of the National Championships. In all team events all players must be dressed in the same attire.

Male

White shirt with collar, matching polo shirt, or ESMBA approved (see shirt design below) county or club top.

Mid Grey or Black trousers will be permitted. All players must wear the same colour (no jeans, combats or shorts)

Female

White blouse with collar, matching polo shirt, or ESMBA approved (see shirt design below) county or club top.

Mid Grey or Black trousers, skirts, or cropped trousers will be permitted. All players must wear the same colour (no jeans or shorts)

Footwear

Only footwear manufactured by recognised bowls manufacturers may be worn on the mat and they must be changed into at the venue.

Shirt Design

Shirts, blouses, and polo shirts may be in club, league, or county colours – England shirts may not be worn.

No names, initials or logos are permitted on the front or back of any garment, unless previously approved by the ESMBA.

Any names, initials or logos must be in keeping with the size of the ESMBA logo and no bigger than the breast pocket on a shirt, unless previously approved by the ESMBA.

In disciplines with more than one player, ALL players must be dressed in the same colours.

Please be aware that non-compliance with the Dress Code may result in the offending player/s being asked to leave the bowling mat.