**ESMBA INTER-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP RULES**

# Players

**(a)** A player may ONLY play in the Inter County Championships for the county they are registered with each season

The player **MUST BE** registered with the ESMBA through that County.

Addendum to rules:

1 (a) A player cannot play for two counties in the same season.

 (b) If a player considers there are exceptional circumstances that justify a transfer during a season, they may approach the ESMBA Management Committee for permission to transfer. The ESMBA Management Committee will decide any such application.

1. A player residing in a county which does not play ICC may register and play in any county he or she chooses.

1. Players wishing to transfer counties without moving residence must be registered with their new County for one whole season before eligible to play in the ICC They will be allowed to play in all other county competitions including the ICC Rinks.

1. Any player registering for a different county at the start of a new season must ensure they have a new ESMBA number before playing in any games.

# Playing Ineligible Players

A County that plays an ineligible player or players will forfeit the game points for the games in which that player or players took part. Those points will be awarded to the opposition. All shots accrued during these games by the offending county will be lost. The shots accrued by the non-offending team will be retained. In addition, there will be a 2-point penalty imposed for each game in which an ineligible player took part**.**

# Venues & Equipment

All venues used for the playing of ICC championship matches must conform to the following standard*:*

Playing Area:

1. The actual playing area shall be flat, of an acceptably high standard and shall be a minimum size of 15.25 metres in length and 9.15 metres wide.
2. Four mats shall be laid in this area with a minimum distance of 380mm between each mat.
3. For an 8 mat venue the room size will be at least double the size.

Room Area:

1. In addition to the minimum playing area detailed above there shall also be an additional space of 1 metre behind each mat, at each end, to allow

players/wheelchairs to be behind the fender. If this additional space is not available behind the mats, the width of the playing area required shall be increased to 10.7 metres – and mats shall then be laid with a minimum space of 1 metre between each mat in order that players may stand at the side, but clear of, the mats.

1. Sufficient space shall also be available to allow access to all mats for disabled bowlers and no team shall be prevented from playing disabled bowlers for whatever reason. Where an indoor rink or other enclosed area is used the home team MUST provide facilities/personnel to enable disabled bowlers to access the area as necessary.
2. There shall be a space of at least 1 metre between the outer mats and the spectator seating area, to allow access from one end to the other for wheelchair bowlers and there shall be a minimum space of 150mm between any mat and any wall or other such obstacle.
3. There shall be sufficient seating space for non-playing members of the visiting team, within viewing area of the mats.

Lighting:

The lighting shall be of sufficient intensity to provide ample lighting in ALL areas of all playing mats.

Hygiene:

The room shall be of an acceptable standard of hygiene and cleanliness.

Equipment:

1. Jacks weighing two pounds must be used for all games.
2. The four mats must be of a similar playing speed and of the same make.

# Responsibilities of the Home Team

The home team must ensure a minimum of tea/coffee for the visiting team, including the reserves and the umpire(s) is available.

The home team will be responsible for emailing the result of the match to the ICC Secretary within 48 hours of the completion of the fixture. The score sheet must be completed in full, signed by **both counties** **and the umpire(s)** and returned by the due date.

The home county association shall provide a registered umpire for each home match and bear all costs for this appointment. In the event that the home county cannot provide an umpire for the match, they should consult the ESMBA Web Site/Area Manger/Umpires Director for a list of registered umpires.

Failure to provide an umpire without consulting the umpire’s director and ICC Secretary firstly and within a minimum of seven days’ notice in advance may result in the home team forfeiting the fixture and the points awarded to the opponents.

 Umpire’s expenses are as current ESMBA expenses policy.Registered umpires that are playing members of either team may be used provided that there are two such umpires and they are playing in opposite sessions.

# Teams, Formats and Scoring

For format of ICC competition, see Appendices 1 & 2.

Teams may make a maximum of two substitutions between the morning and afternoon sessions. No player may play more than two games nor play twice in any one session. Players may change disciplines between sessions but may not play on the same mat twice nor against the same opponents twice (see Appendices 1 & 2). Substitutions must be notified to the Umpire and if a substitution causes two opponents to be playing against each other for a second time then the substitution notified to the Umpire first will be allowed to take place and the second will not be allowed.

Two bowls must be used by each player, except for the singles players who will use four. If bowls stickers are used then they must be of the same colour and design on all bowls used by all members of the team. Only one set of stickers may be used on a bowl.

Singles and Pairs games will consist of 15 ends, Triples 13 ends and Fours 11 ends.

Two points will be awarded for each individual game won with one point each for a drawn game. There will be two additional match points for the team with the highest shots score in each discipline – Singles, Pairs, Triples and Fours – a total of 8 additional match points. These points will be shared in the event of tied shots in a discipline.

In the knockout stages should the points be the same for both teams, after the match points have been awarded, the team with the higher game points (excluding match points) will be declared the winner.

In the event of game points also being equal, the captains will nominate three players from each team who will each play a one end four-bowl singles play off and the team winning two of the three matches will be awarded the match. The team Captains will draw the mats to be played on. The players will toss for each mat individually, the player who wins the toss can choose to either place the jack or to go first. All three mats will start simultaneously Each player can kill the jack once on their mat the second time they forfeit their mat.

# Dress

Full dress regulations will be in force at all stages of the competition. Counties may opt for their own team tops, provided they conform to ESMBA standard, and ALL players are dressed the same, otherwise it must be standard grey/black and whites i.e. a plain white collared shirt and mid-grey/black trousers or tailored shorts for men and a plain white collared blouse with either a mid-grey/black bowls skirt, crop or tailored trousers or shorts, for ladies with either plain white or county colour sweaters, jumpers, cardigans etc. Only footwear manufactured by recognised bowls manufacturers may be worn on the mat and they must be changed into at the venue

No Jeans or Cargo trousers

# Times

Round robin matches will commence at a time agreed by both counties. If no mutual time can be agreed games will start at 10:00am. There will be a No practice roll up.

Counties playing one fixture on eight mats (see Appendix 2) the start time may be adjusted accordingly.

In Knock-out rounds matches will commence at 10.00am and there will be NO roll ups.

# Fixtures

**The listed dates are fixed and are not open to any postponement other than through an exceptional circumstance. Once fixtures have been issued, the E.S.M.B.A. ICC** **Secretary** **must be consulted and their agreement in writing given before any changes are made including change of dates/venue etc.**

***Any County that rearranges a fixture without prior agreement from the*** ICC Secretary ***will be subject to penalty, as decided by the Management Committee.*** Teams, after consulting with theICC Secretary, may agree to reverse a fixture for the convenience of organising a home venue but otherwise all matches must be played on the specified weekend. This and other rules go to the root of everyone’s acceptance into the competitions and must be clearly understood and accepted by every county.

The ESMBA Committee will review all instances of a team failing to fulfil a fixture on the set date and may, in the case of round-robin matches, agree to the fixture being played on another date. The defaulting county will be liable to repay any unavoidable costs incurred by their opponents (e.g. room hire, loss of revenue and umpire costs) and may be subject to a fine by the ESMBA. If a match is cancelled without genuine reason and cannot be rearranged zero points will be awarded until the end of the season. The non offending team will have zero points awarded until the end of the round robin games and then the average home or away points (dependant on fixture cancelled) for that team will be awarded. The offending team will receive no average points and will also be deducted 20pts for the current season and 20pts for the following season.

Teams who have confirmed their participation in the knock out rounds and subsequently withdraw will be deducted 10 pts at the start of the next competitive season they compete in.

# Progression to Knock Out Stages

When all round robin matches are complete, the team with the highest number of points will be the winner of the group. If teams are level on points the shot difference will be used to decide the final places. If teams are still equal, the shots ‘for’ will be used.

The knockout stages will commence following a draw from the participating groups in which the two top teams from each group will go forward to the main championship competition for

Preliminary knock out round matches will be played at neutral venues where possible to minimise travelling for both teams.

The quarterfinals, semi-finals and final will be played at neutral venues were possible. Individual trophies will be presented to the players who play in the finals, although extra trophies may be provided by prior arrangement.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE RULES MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVISION BY THE ESMBA AS THE NEED ARISES AND SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH APPENDICES 1 & 2.**

**APPENDIX 1 –** *Teams and Formats for Competitions*

# Inter County Championship

All team will consist of 20 players grouped as two singles, two pairs, two triples and two

fours.

A team shall not play with less than 16 players. If a team is short of players the missing players shall be as follows: -

One player missing – player 2 in four 1

Two players missing – player 2 in both fours

Three players missing – player 2 in both fours plus player 2 in triple 1

Four players missing – player 2 in both fours plus player 2 in both triples.

Fixtures shall commence on time if a minimum of 16 players are present. Players arriving late shall be allowed to join the match at the next round of any session. (Common sense should be used if players are delayed due to accident etc, and confirmation is received that they will arrive.)

A match will consist of two playing sessions, morning and afternoon, with a mutually agreed lunch break between sessions. Each session will be split into two rounds of games; the first round will include two singles and two pairs and the second round two triples and two fours. Subject to both counties agreeing, the playing format may be changed before play commences so singles and fours play the first session and pairs and triples the second session. After the lunch break the same format will be repeated, but with all teams playing alternative opponents and on different mats. (See Appendix 2).

Prior to the start of the game the two Captains shall toss a coin, and the winner shall have the option of playing first or second. This shall be applicable to all mats for all sessions.

The two singles games in each session shall each be marked by a marker. All scorecards shall be marked on the mat with the exception of the singles games where the marker shall mark one card and a member of either team shall mark the second card. To ensure agreement, scorecards should be checked regularly and ideally at least alternate ends. In accordance with the ESMBA Rules of the Game markers shall only answer SPECIFIC QUESTIONS asked by the players and shall give NO OTHER information.

Captains/Managers are allowed to liaise with their team players during a game.

 Counties with more than one team must nominate eight players for both teams which can only play for that team. The eight nominated players list must be sent to the ICC secretary no later than 20th September 2025.The nominated players must play a minimum of 50% of the round robin matches. Failure to play 50% will result in the team being penalised 5pts points for each offending player.

All Players may not play for more than one team on the same weekend or in matches that were **originally scheduled** to be played on the same weekend.

Players cannot change teams once they have played three games in the round robin or in any knockout game.

It is a condition of entry that the County has an active Safeguarding Officer

**APPENDIX 2** *– Inter County Competition Playing Order*

 **Mat 1 Mat 2 Mat 3 Mat 4**

**Session 1 (morning)**

**Round 1**

**Home Team** Single 1 Single 2 Pair 1 Pair 2

 vs vs vs vs

**Visitors** Single 1 Single 2 Pair 1 Pair 2

**Round 2**

**Home Team** Triple 1 Triple 2 Four 1 Four 2

 vs vs vs vs

**Visitors** Triple 1 Triple 2 Four 1 Four 2

**Session 2 (afternoon)**

**Round 1**

**Home Team** Pair 2 Pair 1 Single 2 Single 1

 vs vs vs vs

**Visitors** Pair 1 Pair 2 Single 1 Single 2

**Round 2**

**Home Team** Four 2 Four 1 Triple 2 Triple 1

 vs vs vs vs

**Visitors** Four 1 Four 2 Triple 1 Triple 2

**Counties whose venue is registered as an eight mat venue and who only have one visiting team for a match on any particular day may, if prior agreement is obtained from the visiting team, play Round One and Round Two of each Session together at the same time on the eight mats as detailed below:**

# Session 1(morning)

**Rd 1& 2 Mat 1 Mat 2 Mat 3 Mat 4 Mat 5 Mat 6 Mat 7 Mat 8**

**Home** Single 1 Single 2 Four 1 Four 2 Pair 1 Pair 2 Triple 1 Triple 2

 vs vs vs vs vs vs vs vs

**Visitors** Single 1 Single 2 Four 1 Four 2 Pair 1 Pair 2 Triple 1 Triple 2

**Session 2 (afternoon)**

**Rd 1& 2 Mat 1 Mat 2 Mat 3 Mat 4 Mat 5 Mat 6 Mat 7 Mat 8**

**Home** Four 2 Four 1 Single 2 Single 1 Triple 2 Triple 1 Pair 2 Pair 1

 vs vs vs vs vs vs vs vs

**Visitors** Four 1Four 2Single 1Single 2Triple 1Triple 2Pair 1Pair 2