# **COMPETITION AND GAME RULES**

1. The ECA adopts the Rules of Curling of the World Curling Federation in respect of all games, matches and competitions among its members.
2. An Organising Committee will be convened for each competition in the absence of any individual being nominated and accepting the post of competitions convener.
3. The committee (or competitions convener) shall have discretion to amend the playing format in the event of late withdrawals and shall coordinate with all teams entered.
4. The ECA Championships will be organised following the guidelines below which may be modified where circumstances warrant.
5. The ECA will organise Championships to decide upon its representatives at WCF Championships to which the Association has made an entry. Teams entered in an ECA Championship must consist of eligible members of the Association as defined under the Constitution of the ECA and by any rules of the associated WCF Championship.
6. Entries from teams wishing to participate in an ECA Championship will be made direct to the address on the official entry form and must be received by the closing date, as specified at the Annual General Meeting and listed on the entry form, accompanied by the appropriate entry fee and any additional money specified on the entry form for the advance payment of ice in the Championship.
7. There must be a minimum of 3 players included on the entry form except that entries to the Mixed Doubles Championship must name both team members. Note that there are no alternates allowed in the Mixed Doubles Championship. Where a minor (aged under **16** at the time of completion of the entry form) is an entrant, parental (or legal guardian) consent must also be obtained on the form AND that junior must be accompanied by a non-playing / coaching adult or parent, unless the parent is playing with them.
8. Changes or additions to the names submitted on the entry form, and confirmation of the full team line-up must be notified in writing / by email to the Competitions Convenor and Chief Umpire at least 24 hours before the start of an ECA Championship (the start of a Championship is defined as the time listed for the beginning of official pre-Championship practice or for the beginning of the pre-game practice for the first session of play, if there is no official pre-Championship practice) at which point at least 4 (2 in Mixed Doubles) players must be registered. No changes will be allowed after this time except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Competitions Convenor or Chief Umpire. If a team requires to use a coach during the championship their identity must be declared to the Chief Umpire no later than the end of the pre-championship team meeting.
9. The level of entry fees will be determined by the Competition convener and approved by the committee, then communicated with the entry forms. The entry fee must be paid along with the submission of the entry form and will be non-refundable after the closing date for entries.
10. Should a team be found to have fielded an ineligible player in a Championship then the team will be disqualified from that Championship and the results of all their games in that Championship will be declared null and void. If this action should materially alter the outcome of the Championship then the ECA Council will review whether any replayed or additional games are required to ensure fairness.
11. The maximum number of teams which may compete in the final stage of an ECA Championship (hereinafter called ‘the Finals’) will be 8. In the case of more than 8 teams entering an ECA, a draw by lots will be made to select X-7 teams where X is the total number of entries. Those teams selected will participate in a qualifying competition to reduce the number to 1.
12. The top 3 teams in the equivalent previous year’s Championship (if one took place) shall be exempt from this selection process if there are at least 3 members of the previous year’s team included in their entry. Any team eliminated in the qualifying competition shall have its entry fee less £20 returned. A player who has been a member of a team eliminated in the qualifying stages of a Championship will not be eligible to play for another team in the Finals.
13. Where there is only one entry for a particular ECA Championship that team shall be deemed to be England’s representatives at the appropriate WCF Championship if approved by the ECA Council. No prizes shall be awarded and the Championship will be identified in official records as ‘Uncontested’.
14. All ECA Championships shall be played under the WCF Rules of Curling and Rules of Competition.
15. The length of the games in an ECA Championship shall be equivalent to those in the corresponding WCF Championship. Extra ends shall be played if the game is tied after this number of ends. One point will be awarded for a win and Zero for a loss. A minimum of 6 ends will be played.
16. The system of play at the qualifying competition shall, if possible, follow that for the Finals. In any event a team shall not be eliminated unless it has lost a minimum of two games.
17. In the Finals for all formats the preferred playing format will be as follows:
* 2 entries Best of 5 games
* 3 entries  Double Round Robin
* 4 entries Double Round Robin
* 5 entries Double Round Robin
* 6 entries Single Round Robin
* 7 entries Single Round Robin
* 8 entries Single Round Robin
1. Where a single round robin is played the top three teams will play a further mini round robin (Championship Round Robin) taking their records from the original round robin through to the Championship Round Robin stage. When a Championships Round Robin is played, in each match in the championship round robin the higher ranked team at the start of the championship round robin gets the option of either (a) choice of stones or (b) choice of first/second practice. The lower ranked team at the start of the championship round robin gets the option (a) or (b) not taken by the higher ranked team.

If at the completion of the round robin stages a team is unbeaten they will be declared the champion (or after the extra mini round robin in the case of 6, 7 or 8 entries).

1. In the case of 3, 4 or 5 entries, or after the extra mini round robin, when at the completion of the round robin stages NO TEAM is unbeaten, a final will be played between the teams ranked 1 and 2 to decide the champion.
2. Where the draw leads to two teams playing three games on the same day those two teams will be drawn to play each other in the last session of the day if possible, considering the parameters that otherwise lead to a fair draw being made. These parameters which may not all be met include: equal number of first and second practices; no more than two consecutive first / second practices; allocation of games for each team equally across all available sheets and stone sets; no team shall play in consecutive sessions on the same sheet but may do so if they have a bye in between their participation.
3. Each team will play Last Stone Draws, as laid down in the WCF Rules, before each game in the Round Robin stage of a Championship to determine which team has choice of first or last stone at the first end.
4. The teams will be ranked after the Round Robin as follows:
5. Teams will be ranked according to their win/loss record;
6. If two teams are tied, the results of the game(s) between them in the Round Robin will determine who is ranked higher. If in a double round robin, they have won one game each then they will be considered equal for this ranking step and step (iv) below will be used to rank them;
7. Where three or more teams are tied, the record of the games between the tied teams shall provide the ranking (should this procedure provide a ranking for some teams but not all, then the record of the games between the remaining teams that are still tied shall determine the ranking);
8. For all remaining teams whose ranking cannot be determined by (i) or (ii) or (iii), ranking is determined using the Draw Shot Challenge (DSC). The DSC is the average distance of the Last Stone Draws (LSD) which were played by a team during the Round Robin portion of a competition. The team with the lowest DSC will be ranked highest. If the DSCs are equal, then the team with the best non-equal LSD receives the higher ranking.
9. NO tie-breaker games will be played in any Championship

24 Teams in all ECA Championships should play their games wearing matching tops. This applies to any garment that will be at any point the outer layer when a player is on the ice.

25 In addition to these rules, any additional specific rules for any ECA Championship will be issued to competitors at least 2 weeks before the Championship commences.