

Schedule G : Complaints, disputes and appeals in competitions

Competitors should, at all times, be mindful of the fact that we play our sport for fun and to make friends. Complaints should not be made lightly and never in temper. They will be damaging and will involve both the complainant and County officers in considerable effort and sometimes expense, that will on occasions result in only an inconclusive outcome. Please think very carefully indeed before initiating a formal complaint and read all relevant parts of the current GBA Competition Rules and all of this Schedule.

Note : All Championship and Competition matches are played under the current Laws of the Sport of Bowls and Bowls England Championship/Competition Rules & Regulations 50-70, incorporating GBA rule variations where appropriate. Competitors will be assumed to have read and be conversant with Appendix C of the Bowls England Rules & Regulations: Code of Conduct.

1. The following matters may not be the subject of complaints made by competitors :
 - a) The basis of the GBA's organisation of individual championships or competitions
 - b) Differences in organisation which may exist between any GBA championships or competitions
 - c) Variations in the intervals between either 'fixed dates' or 'play-by dates' from one competition to another
 - d) Adverse weather necessitating a coin-toss between individual competitors, teams or sides
2. Complaints relating to the condition of the green intended for competition play may exceptionally be made in advance of the game, but only with appropriate evidence (including still images or videos on mobile phones). If this is the case, the relevant Competition Secretary should be contacted in writing (preferably by e-mail) not later than three days prior to the game. The County Competition Secretary (MD) or the delegated member of the Divisional Competition Committee (WD) will rule on the action to be taken.
3. If a protest is against bowls this cannot be made during the match or trial ends and must be made to the bowls-owner no later than 10 minutes after the final end. The actual bowls must be delivered to the relevant Competition Secretary by the end of the following day. If thought necessary, the Competitions Secretary shall arrange in conjunction with the Divisional Competition Committee for the bowls to be tested within 24 hours or as soon as possible thereafter. Additional fees will be levied at cost to cover the testing of bowls, travel costs, travel time and any other reasonable expenses incurred to have the protest verified. These fees shall be paid by the party who loses the protest, within 7 days, otherwise they will be suspended from playing County competitions until such time as the fees are paid. The Divisional Competition Committee shall be the adjudicators and their decision shall be final.
4. If a complaint relates to deliberate non-sporting action by a competitor - which complaint may be initiated by an opponent, the coach in a side game, the umpire or a representative of the Controlling Body (the GBA) – this must be sent in writing to the County Competition Secretary (MD) or the delegated member of the Divisional Competition Committee (WD) no later than 24 hours after the final end in the game affected is completed.
5. All other complaints must be made verbally by 10.00 pm on the day of the incident to the relevant Competition Secretary. Every complaint must be followed up in writing by 10.00 am the following day to the relevant Competition Secretary (ideally in an e-mail), detailing the grounds for the appeal. Where the other player or team contests the complaint, they too must submit their case by 10.00 am the next day to the same Competition Secretary. All complaints and responses must be supported by photographic evidence (still images or videos on mobile phones). Decisions will be made by the Competition Secretaries as soon as practicable and shall be final.
6. The outcome of any appeal against a result will be decided by the Divisional Competition Committee, this decision being delivered prior to the date for the next round of the relevant competition. The process should normally include obtaining statements from all persons directly involved in the situation, either verbally or in written form (preferably in an e-mail).
7. Appeals against results may be made solely verbally, but only where the game is held on a day where several members of the Divisional Competition Committee are gathered for 'County Rounds'. The outcome will then be decided straight away by those Competition Secretaries present, if necessary involving the Umpire in the decision (if an Umpire is present).
8. In the case of any unresolved dispute over the arranging of a game, a clear statement of the circumstances and unresolved issues shall be made in writing to the County Competition Secretary (MD) or the delegated member of the Divisional Competition Committee (WD) within two days of the date on which the dispute arose.
9. Decisions of the County Competition Secretary (MD) and the members of the Divisional Competition Committee (WD) in relation to complaints and disputes are final and binding in terms of the result of a game.
10. Any further appeal against an outcome decided by the County Competition Secretary (MD) or the Divisional Competition Committee (WD) will be considered at a later date by the GBA County Administrator (who will not previously have been involved in making any such decisions). The GBA County Administrator may then make a final decision themselves, based on an objective evaluation of all the facts, or may refer the decision to a panel of three

independent GBA members. This decision will be final, but it cannot include again changing the result of the game, due to the time necessarily involved. Anyone directly involved in the appeal or the complaint must not participate in this decision. The GBA County Administrator will convey this final decision in writing.

11. In circumstances where a complaint is upheld and the result changed, but the actions of the person or persons against whom the complaint has been upheld are considered to be sufficiently serious, the Divisional Management Committee is at liberty to ban that person from future competitions for a period that they will decide. This will be so advised by the relevant Divisional Secretary. The Club Secretary of a player being banned will also be advised by the Divisional Secretary. An active ban follows someone changing clubs.