

4NCL Online Format Regulations - Season 10

1. Format of the League

Division 1	16 teams
Division 2	16 teams
Division 3	16 teams
Division 4	16 teams
Division 5	All remaining teams

2. Initial Seeding

The initial seeding will be based on the final rankings of the previous season. New team entries will start in the lowest division. The 4NCL Management Board may make some manual adjustments to the initial seeding list depending on particular factors.

3. Allocation to Divisions

Using the initial seeding system, seeds 1-16 will be assigned to Division 1, seeds 17-32 will be assigned to Division 2, seeds 33-48 will be assigned to Division 3, seeds 49-64 will be assigned to Division 4, and the remaining seeds will be assigned to Division 5. New entries will be assigned to Division 5.

4. Organisation of the Divisions

1. Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will each compromise four groups of eight teams, with the four groups in each division of broadly equal strength determined by the initial seeding process outlined above. Teams will play all of the teams in their group.

Each of the 16 teams in each group will be assigned in the following way based on their initial seeding:

	A	B
1	1	2
2	4	3
3	5	6
4	8	7
5	9	10
6	12	11
7	13	14
8	16	15

2. Division 5 will be paired as a 7-round Swiss system, using the Dutch pairing system. If there are an odd number of teams due to be paired in any given round, then triangular pairings will not be used as in the 4NCL, and instead one team will have a bye. This bye will count as 1 match point and 2 game points.

5. End of Season Team Placings

1. End of season team placings in pools will be decided in the first instance on match point totals at the end of seven rounds. If at the end of the seven rounds teams are tied on match points, the tie shall be broken using:

- a. The lower defaulted game totals over the seven rounds;
- b. The game point totals over the seven rounds;
- c. (i) The match point totals in the results between the teams which remain tied;

- (ii) The game point totals in the results between the teams which remain tied;
- (iii) The lower board count in the results between the teams which remain tied;
- (iv) The game points remaining after elimination of the bottom board or boards as necessary.

If at any stage the number of tied teams is reduced this rule is reapplied, starting with (i), to the reduced number of teams;

- d. the drawing of lots.

Tie breaks shall be applied in this order until all ties are broken.

6. Promotion and Relegation

1. Teams with an end of season placing of 13-16 inclusive will be relegated from Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4. This means that the teams finishing in 7th or 8th place in their group will be relegated.

2. Teams with an end of season placing of 1-3 inclusive will be promoted from Divisions 2, 3, 4 and 5. In Divisions 2, 3 and 4, this means that the teams finishing 1st or 2nd in their group will be promoted.

3. In the event that existing teams decide not to renew their entries, teams in the relevant division that would otherwise have been relegated at the end of the season will not be relegated (starting with the relegated team finishing in the highest position, and so on down the relegated teams). In the event that the number of teams not renewing their entries exceeds the number of relegated teams, extra teams will be promoted from the lower division after applying the provisions in the first section of this rule, and so on down the divisions as necessary.

4. For subsequent seasons, the initial seeding will be based on the End of Season Team Placings (Section 5 above), as amended by the results of any playoffs (Section 7 below).

7. Playoff Matches (Divisions 1-4 only)

1. There will be play-offs based on the end of season team placings for the teams that win their group:

Semi Finals

Match 1 Winner Pool A v Runner Up Pool B

Match 2 Winner Pool B v Runner Up Pool A

The losers of the Semi Finals will have an end of season placing of 3 or 4 in their division after the tie-break in 5.1 is applied.

Final

Match 3 Winner Match 1 v Winner Match 2

The loser of the Final will have an end of season placing of 2.

The winner of the Final will have an end of season placing of 1, and be the division champion.

2. No changes to the registration list may be made after the publication of team lists for the final division game, except with the permission of the 4NCL Management Board.

3. The team with the higher end of season placing (i.e. closer to 1) prior to any playoffs will be white on odd boards in all playoff games.

4. If the event of a drawn match, the tie will be broken using:

- a. The lower defaulted game total;
- b. The lower board count in the results between the teams which remain tied;
- c. The game points remaining after elimination of the bottom board or boards as necessary;
- d. The team with the higher end of season placing (i.e. closer to 1).

8. Withdrawals and Defaults

1. For a team that withdraws from the tournament, or defaults more than two matches, in Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4:
 - If more than half of their scheduled matches have been played, then the results of the played matches will stand, and the results of the unplayed matches will be deemed to be 4-0 defaults.
 - If half of their scheduled matches have been played or fewer, then the results of all matches will be deemed to be 4-0 defaults.
2. For a team that withdraws from the tournament in Division 5, or defaults more than two matches, the team will not be paired in the pairings of the remaining rounds.
3. Unless the 4NCL Management Board decides otherwise, teams that withdraw or default more than two matches will be permitted to re-enter 4NCL Online in future seasons, but must start from the lowest division.
4. The 4NCL Management Board reserves the right to amend during the season 8.1, 8.2 or 8.3 in exceptional circumstances.