

MESSER TROPHY

1. The competition will be played annually in two sections.
2. Every team currently engaged in the League will be entered and expected to play.
3. The sections will be:
 - "A" for Premier, First and top $\frac{1}{2}$ of Second Division ONLY
 - "B" for remaining Divisions

At the discretion of the Executive Committee any team in the lower divisions considered to be stronger than its allocated Division will be placed in the "A" section with an appropriate handicap.

The winners of the two sections will play off to determine the overall winner of the Messer Trophy.

4. The draw will be made at the beginning of the competition which will be played to the tournament knock-out system. In the 1st round the team named first will be the home team. In subsequent rounds the team which has had the least home draws in previous rounds will become the home team. Should both teams have had an equal number of home draws then the first-named team becomes the home team. Section finals and play-off will be played on neutral courts.
5. The home team will be responsible for arranging dates of matches. If there are any difficulties over the venue, the match may be played on a neutral court or on the opponent's court, subject to an agreement by the two captains involved. Matches in all rounds are to be played by the stipulated dates. The home team shall offer two dates which must be at least one week apart and be within the completion date.

6. Teams will be allocated a handicap determined by their Division. The Executive Committee have the right to alter the handicap of any team at any time during the competition. Handicaps will be notified in the League Handbook and on the official match card.

7. Teams will comprise 3 Ladies and 3 Men.

Matches will consist of 9 events; Men's Doubles, Ladies Doubles and Mixed Doubles. Level Doubles will be 2 games of 21 points. Mixed Doubles will be 1 game of 21 points, making 15 games in total. For Mixed Doubles events No. 1 man must play with No. 1 Lady, No. 2 man with No. 2 Lady, etc. as shown on the match card.

Under rally scoring, where the handicap is only points handicap (either + or -) for a team, that team will score a point every time they win a point whether they are serving or not. Where a team has a Handicap, this will mean that they can only score a point when they are serving. To ensure that each team member serves in turn they will need to swap over every time when they receive the serve back. For example, if player A serves from the right hand side of the court at a score of 4 but they lose the point, players stay in their position. However when they get the serve back, say by winning the next point, their score would still be 4, then the players would swap so that player B will serve from the right hand side of the court.

Events will be played in order of the match card, unless otherwise agreed by the two captains. Extended play is not allowed.

8. The general rules governing normal League play will apply.

9. As from 1st January of any year players competing in the Messer Trophy must have played at least 3 league matches.

10. Team Captains must declare members of their team on the official score card before play commences.

11. In the event of a team not being able to field a full team the absent player(s) must be declared and nominated for events. Absent player(s) must be nominated for 3rd mixed (even if they would normally play in a higher pairing). In the event of absent players from both teams being nominated for the same event, that event will be void.
12. If, because of conceded or void events, the match finishes level, games won will decide the result. In the event of the game scores being equal the match will be decided on total aces. Negative game scores will count as a minus when calculating the total.
13. No player will be allowed to play for a team of lower status than that for which he/she is currently registered for League play. If an ineligible player takes part the whole match will be forfeited.
14. After each match the Captain of the winning team will be responsible for e-mailing and scanning the official match card to the competition organiser. The match card must be received by the organiser within seven days of the match having been played. If the match is played in the last week of the round completion date, then the result must be notified to the competition organiser by the round completion date. Failure to comply with this rule may result in both teams being scratched from the competition.
15. The visiting team will provide the shuttles in all rounds up to the finals.
16. The organiser for the Messer Trophy will be appointed at the League AGM.
17. The decision of the Executive Committee in any dispute will be final. All disputes should initially be addressed to the competition organiser.