

4NCL Online Format Regulations

1. Format of the League

Division 1	32 teams
Division 2	32 teams
Division 3	32 teams
Division 4	32 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.

3. Allocation to Divisions

Using the initial seeding system, seeds 1-32 will be assigned to Division 1, seeds 33-64 will be assigned to Division 2, seeds 65-96 will be assigned to Division 3, seeds 97-128 will be assigned to Division 4, and the remaining seeds will be assigned to Division 5.

4. Organisation of the Divisions

1. Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4 will each comprise 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 32 teams in each group will be assigned in the following way based on their initial seeding:

	A	B	C	D
1	1	2	3	4
2	8	7	6	5
3	9	10	11	12
4	16	15	14	13
5	17	18	19	20
6	24	23	22	21
7	25	26	27	28
8	32	31	30	29

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 matchpoint and 2 gamepoints.

5. End of Season Team Placings

1. End of season team placings in each group in Division 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be decided using:

- a. Match point totals
- b. (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.
- c. The match point totals against teams in the same group;
- d. Sonneborn-Berger (Matchpoints);
- e. Sum of Opponents Matchpoints;

- f. Toss of a coin.

If at any stage the number of tied teams is reduced by applying these tie-breaks, then the tie-break process reverts to b.

Tie breaks are applied in this order until there is a clear ranking of teams in each group from 1-8.

- 2. End of season team placings in all divisions will be decided using:
 - a. End of season team placing within the group (applicable to Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4 only)
 - b. The process outlined in 5.1, except c.

Tie breaks are applied in this order until there is a clear ranking of teams in each division.

6. Promotion and Relegation

1. Teams with an end of season placing of 25-32 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 1-8 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 playoffs based on the end of season team placings for the teams that win their group:

Semi Finals

Match 1 1 v 4
Match 2 2 v 3

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 5.2 is applied.

Final

Match 3 Highest-remaining seed v lowest-remaining seed

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. A player is only eligible to play for a team in the play-off matches if at least half of the total number of games he/she played in the group stage were played for the team in question.

3. 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.
4. 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.
5. If the event of a drawn match, the tie will be broken using:
 - a. The lower board count in the results between the teams which remain tied;
 - b. The game points remaining after elimination of the bottom board or boards as necessary;
 - c. 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.

Appendix: Schedule

All matches are played on Tuesday night at 7:30pm.

Regular Season

Round 1	25 th August
Round 2	8 th September
Round 3	22 nd September
Round 4	6 th October
Round 5	20 th October
Round 6	3 rd November
Round 7	17 th November

Division Playoffs

Semi Finals	1 st December
Final	15 th December