

Competition Rules 2026



Part 1

1 General

- 1.1. These rules govern entry in the Welsh Pétanque Association's (WPA) National and Qualifying competitions.
- 1.2. Entry into any WPA competition indicates acceptance of these rules by all individuals entering the competitions, whether by self-entry or by the team captain.

2 Governance

- 2.1. The Management Committee (MC) will determine the number of events, dates, rules, and venues published in advance.
- 2.2. The MC will be responsible for the organisation of the competitions and will appoint an organiser for each event.
- 2.3. When possible, the MC will appoint an Umpire for each event.
- 2.4. The organiser of each event will be the representative of the MC and may, in case of any dispute not covered by the rules, appoint a Jury of at least three WPA members after consultation with the Umpire, if present. The decision of such a Jury will be final.
- 2.5. Regulations for play shall be the "Official International Rules of the Game of Pétanque" and any variations set out in these "Competition Rules" or announced by the organiser on the day.
- 2.6. Any event may be cancelled at the discretion of the MC.
- 2.7. Competitions held at commercial venues, such as public houses and sports clubs, may only allow food and drink purchased at the venue to be consumed. All players must respect this and comply with venue regulations or be subject to immediate disqualification from the competition.

3 Eligibility

- 3.1. WPA members can compete in all competitions, subject to their membership level and the following additional eligibility conditions.
 - 3.1.1. Each player entering the Veterans Triples Championship must be aged 55 years or older in the year of the championship and must be a league or full member.
 - 3.1.2. Each player entering the Women's Singles, Doubles, Triples or Precision Shooting Championship must be a league or full member.
 - 3.1.3. Each player entering the Men's Singles, Doubles, Triples or Precision Shooting Championship must be a league or full member.
 - 3.1.4. Juniors may enter the National Competitions, provided there is no Junior equivalent competition held in that playing season.
 - 3.1.5. All membership categories can enter open competitions organised by the WPA.

4 Entries

- 4.1. All competitions shall be by pre-entry.
- 4.2. The MC reserves the right to refuse entry into any of its competitions.
- 4.3. The dates of all competitions will be notified to members via the WPA calendar published on the WPA website.
- 4.4. Pre-entry forms, online or paper copies, must be completed using the designated form:
 - 4.4.1. Domestic Representation Events (Celtic Challenge, Home Nations, Pétanque England's (PE) Inter-Regional Championship).
 - 4.4.2. Pre-entry Form - All other WPA National events.
- 4.5. The pre-entry form must be submitted to the WPA Executive before the closing dates for competitions stated on the form. All parties' attention is drawn to the submission rules.

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- 4.6. The team captain may act on an individual's behalf and enter the team for a competition. Captains must obtain the individual's permission before entering them into a competition and ensure that team members have the correct membership type (Rule 1.2).
- 4.7. Entry forms (paper copy) and cheques, payable to the Welsh Pétanque Association for the correct entry fee, must be sent to the address published on the entry form and arrive by the published closing date. No allowance will be made for delays in the postal service.
- 4.8. If a team or individual has pre-entered a competition and then finds out they cannot attend, they must withdraw by notifying the MC.
 - 4.8.1. If the withdrawal is before the closing date, fees may be refunded.
 - 4.8.2. If the withdrawal is after the closing date, no refund will be given unless extenuating circumstances for withdrawal can be shown.
- 4.9. Entry to non-qualifying competitions will be accepted on the day at the organisers' discretion and with the provisos that:
 - 4.9.1. There is room to accommodate the late arrivals in the competition.
 - 4.9.2. The organisation will not be unduly affected by the late entry.
 - 4.9.3. The team is required to pay the entry fee and an additional fee of £3.00 per player.
 - 4.9.4. The WPA or the organiser of the day has complete discretion to decline to use a team name without giving a reason and instead replace it with another name or number, usually the name of the team captain or first-named player.

5 Entry Fee

- 5.1. Entry for events is £7.00 per player and is free for Junior players playing in adult competitions when the WPA organises no specific junior competitions
- 5.2. The relevant entry fee can be sent by post, electronically or on the day of the event by debit or credit card or with a cheque. Cash payment will not be accepted.
- 5.3. For an entry to be valid, full payment must be received.

6 Registration and Draw

- 6.1. Registration will open by 09.00 and close promptly at 09.30. Any changes to these times will be published in advance.
- 6.2. All players will register as a valid team as defined in Article 1 of the "Official International Rules of the Game of Pétanque" at the control desk. The team captain is required to notify the organiser immediately and before the close of registration if a member of the pre-entered team will not be able to register for a valid reason.
- 6.3. By the close of registration, only those teams who have properly registered, as defined above, will be permitted to participate in the competition.
- 6.4. Where required, the competition draw will occur with the Umpire or two team captains selected randomly from the registered teams.
- 6.5. Play will commence as soon as possible after completing the draw and announcements.
- 6.6. In accordance with the Official Rules, a team may start to play with one or more players short if the player or players are unavoidably detained. The Official Rules explain how and when the missing player(s) can join the game. No individual player is permitted to throw more boules than would be permitted if the whole team were present.

7 Competition Format

- 7.1. After consultation with the Umpire (if present), the organiser of the day has the right, subject to the number of entries, to alter the format of play, which may include timed games.
- 7.2. A lunch break may be held at the discretion of the Organiser and Umpire (if present). In this case, the Organiser and/or Umpire will blow a whistle to start the break for approximately 30

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minutes. The play in progress must be completed, with no players allowed on the terrain during this break. The Organiser and/or Umpire will blow a whistle to indicate the restart of play.

- 7.3. The playing format for WPA National Singles, Doubles, Mixed Doubles, Triples, Veterans Triples Championships and other open competitions will be subject to the number of entries. The default preferred format will be a pool, then by elimination (knock-out).
- 7.4. The Domestic Representation Series will endeavour to consist of 3 separate two-day competitions. The preferred format for these events will be the Swiss System using the Fine-Buchholz Number (fBHN); the results shall be combined to decide the final ranking of the registered teams.
- 7.5. The Domestic Representation Series is used to qualify and place teams for the Domestic Representation events: Home Nations, Pétanque England's (PE) Inter-Regional Championship and Celtic Challenge, up to the required number of teams in each event. Teams may be mixed or gender and include junior players.
- 7.6. If the minimum required number of teams (8) is not reached during the Domestic Representation Series, the WPA will decide whether it is appropriate to call on players who did not participate in making up the minimum number required or withdraw from the event.
- 7.7. The Welsh Cup for Clubs Competition will be conducted under the published rules explicitly issued for that event.

8 4th Team Member (Substitute)

- 8.1. 4th team members (substitutes) are permitted only in triple competitions. No substitutes are permitted in any other format of play.
- 8.2. An individual can only be named as a 4th team member by one team.
- 8.3. The common practice of the FIPJP will be used for the use of the 4th team member (substitute) during play.
- 8.4. The 4th team member must be present at least one day during a 2-day qualifier and present during a single-day qualifier.
- 8.5. The 4th player must be registered with the team; see Article 6.2. Failure to register the 4th team player will result in that player being unable to participate in the day's play.

9 Standards

- 9.1. When playing in all WPA competitions, players within a team will:
 - 9.1.1. Those from the same club will wear matching club tops.
 - 9.1.2. Where a team is comprised of players from different clubs, then the wearing of their club tops is permitted.
 - 9.1.3. Where a team is comprised of unaffiliated members, players within a team will wear matching tops. A 'top' may be a shirt, polo shirt, T-shirt, fleece, jacket, blouson, jumper or similar garment. 'Matching' is defined as the same colour and design.

No official WPA-representative "tops" shall be worn.

At this time, the WPA does not require players to wear matching playing bottoms. When playing in a representative capacity for the WPA, players must wear the approved team kit for those events.

- 9.2. In inclement weather, waterproof tops and trousers may be worn; these do not need to match.
- 9.3. All players must wear enclosed footwear.
- 9.4. Any player failing to comply with the dress standard will be fined £10.00 and may be disqualified from the competition.

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- 9.5. At all WPA Competitions, the drinking of alcohol, smoking, vaping or the use of mobile hand-held devices by competitors is forbidden during play and within the designated playing area.
- 9.6. Although "banter" is an accepted part of the game, and the WPA wants players to enjoy themselves when playing, players must adhere to the standards of behaviour laid out in Articles 17 & 18 of the "Official International Rules of the Game of Pétanque". They cover where players stand and the noise they make when their opponents are playing and when players are practising once the game has started.

10 Qualification

- 10.1. The qualification process for Domestic Representation is as described above (Article 7.5) for the Celtic Challenge, Home Nations and the PE Inter-Regional Championship if the WPA is invited to attend.

11 Domestic Representation

- 11.1. Domestic Representation
 - 11.1.1. The top 8 placed teams from the Home Nation Qualifier will be invited to represent the WPA at the Home Nations Championship under Part 2, 1.9.
 - 11.1.2. The top 8 (or 4 if playing in the Challenge) placed teams from the Inter-Regional Qualifier will be invited to represent the WPA at the PE Inter-Regional Championship under Part 2, 1.9.
 - 11.1.3. The top 4 placed teams from the Celtic Challenge Qualifier will be invited to represent the WPA under Part 2, 1.9.
 - 11.1.4. When held in Wales, the top 8 placed teams from the Celtic Challenge Qualifier will be invited to represent the WPA under Part 2, 1.9.
- 11.2. Membership of the WPA demands that players who qualify to represent Wales in ANY qualifying competition will be expected to agree to abide by the conditions set out in the Contract of Representation (Part 3).
- 11.3. Entering the qualifying competition is taken as the player's acknowledgement that they have read and agreed to abide by the terms of the Contract of Representation. Players may be asked to sign a copy to confirm their agreement. The same expectation will extend to Heads of Delegation and Coaches/Team Managers.
- 11.4. Players' attention is drawn to the fact that they are likely to have to meet all costs associated with representing the WPA at ALL events for which they qualify, as defined in Part 3.

12 Authority

- 12.1. Where the competition is disrupted by teams or players being absent on the day or leaving before completing all their games, the organiser, in consultation with the Umpire (if present), may call the Jury and request a change of the competition format and these Rules as appropriate. In any case, the Umpire (if present) and/or organiser must make a full report to the MC within 24 hours.
- 12.2. Any infringement of these Competition Rules or the Official International Rules of the Game of Pétanque will be reported to the MC and may invalidate entry, resulting in disqualification, may lead to disciplinary action and/or necessitate the forfeiture of any position or prizes previously awarded.
- 12.3. During any event, the Umpire (if present), the Organiser or the Jury is responsible for interpreting these rules.

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Part 2

1. Post Qualification for Domestic Representation Series for the Home Nations, Celtic Challenge and Inter-Regional Championships

- 1.1. Qualification to represent the WPA will be attained by teams and not by individuals.
- 1.2. Players shall be required to represent the WPA at the events for which they qualify.
- 1.3. Players are to ensure that they are available to play at the qualifying event and, to the best of their knowledge, will be physically able to complete the qualifying event before entering.
- 1.4. The results attained at the qualifying event will be final for qualification purposes.
- 1.5. Teams that qualify will be those that have met the qualifying criteria at the end of the event.
- 1.6. Where a three-player team does not have a substitute, another player who has played in the qualifying competition but did not qualify can be called upon. A substitute from another team who played in the qualifying competition, and with the express permission of that team. Where a team qualifying includes a 4th team member, the entire team will qualify.
- 1.7. Between qualification and the event, if a team should lose players (e.g. a three-player team loses one player and a four-player team loses one or two players). The team may then choose to:
 - 1.7.1. A four-player team that loses up to two players may similarly elect one or two replacements who played in the qualifying competition but did not qualify themselves. A substitute from another team(s) who played in the qualifying competition may also be used with the permission of the affected team(s).
- 1.8. If a team of three loses two players, or a team of four loses three players, a reserve side may be called to represent the WPA. This will be the team that came immediately below 'the cut' in the qualifying event. Teams in the reserve pool will be drawn in the order in which they finished the qualifying event. Where possible, the reserve team may be encouraged by the WPA and should endeavour to include the remaining player(s) from the initially qualified team.
- 1.9. The positions at which the teams qualify may not be the final positions at which they will play. The MC and/or the Coach/Team Manager may decide the placement of qualified teams for some events if they consider it in the National Team's best interest.
- 1.10. The MC reserves the right to select teams in exceptional circumstances, e.g. insufficiently qualified teams are available for an event or withdraw from the event.
- 1.11. Once entered, teams are expected to attend. Entry to qualifiers indicates that individuals and teams are available to represent the WPA. The event details appear on the pre-entry form at the bottom of the event boxes. Qualifying teams or individual players must attend the events they indicated they would attend. Failure to participate in a competition for which a team or individual has qualified may result in disciplinary action and subsequent sanctions.

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Part 3

Contract of Representation.

The following Contract provides all players representing their country with the standards of behaviour required to ensure that Wales and the Welsh Pétanque Association (WPA) maintain its standing with the competing nations and the organisers of competitions and the associated activities.

This Code is to be taken seriously, but is not intended to prevent you from having an exciting and enjoyable competition. You are there to produce the best possible results for Wales and the WPA, which should in itself provide you with the interest and stimulation required.

As players and officials, you represent your country, which is a significant honour, and consequently, you are in the spotlight. Your performance and conduct provide a role model for inexperienced players. However, the potential to harm the game is considerable if you do not demonstrate the skill, sportsmanship and conduct that is expected, which helped you achieve your place in the team.

You are a recognised member of the Welsh team from the moment that the group meets until it disperses after the competition. Professional conduct is expected and will be maintained at all times.

1. TIMEKEEPING.

It is your responsibility to report on time when instructed. Any time notified should be considered as the latest time of reporting. Lateness is not acceptable as it affects the whole team. Should you not attend the event for any reason, then you may be liable to reimburse the WPA. This may include refunding travel, accommodation and team kit, and any other reasonable expenses deemed appropriate.

2. DISCIPLINE.

The Head of Delegation and Coach/Team Manager have delegated authority from the WPA to have the final say in all matters relating to the team's conduct. They consequently have the authority to exclude players from all or part of the competition if the Contract of Representation is not observed, or take other disciplinary action that may be appropriate at the time or at a later date if evidence of alleged misconduct is later discovered.

3. BEHAVIOUR.

You are expected at all times to show respect and consideration to your team members, WPA officials and supporters, the Competition Organisers, all other players, and all spectators. You are clearly expected to observe all the sport's rules and the competition or tournament, including proper attendance at the opening or closing ceremonies. By any action or comment, you are not to do anything that could bring the WPA into disrepute. Any inappropriate behaviour may result in your exclusion from representing the WPA in the future.

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4. ALCOHOL. [See Supplementary Note 1]

Alcohol does not assist long-term performance and should be restricted to moderate drinking when accompanied by food. In all representative competitions, the consumption of alcohol is forbidden.

Strict alcohol limits are set for the European and World Championships and enforced by random testing.

5. DRUGS.

The taking of any illegal drugs whatsoever is banned. For any player who has taken medication in the 3 months before the event, including non-prescription medicines, the details must be notified to the WPA Medical Advisor in advance. Written evidence from the prescribing doctor must be provided.

A full list of currently prohibited drugs can be downloaded from the following website. Your Coach/Team Manager will also have a copy.

[WADA's Prohibited List](#) – published 01/01/2026

6. SLEEP.

It is essential to maintain the concentration and mental awareness required by our sport over a long duration; therefore, a good night's sleep is needed before each day's play.

7. TEAM STRIP.

Where required, you will be provided with a team strip to be worn at all stages of the competition and at prescribed events.

Reference

Prohibited List (2026) World Anti-Doping Agency. Available at: <https://www.wada-ama.org/en/resources/world-anti-doping-code-and-international-standards/prohibited-list> (Accessed: 22 April 2026).

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Supplementary Note 1

Alcohol in designated WPA competitions and all International competitions.

This note provides further information for players on the WPA Code of Conduct for Players competing to represent Wales or playing for Wales in international competitions and any designated National Competitions to which the Code applies.

1. The drinking of alcohol is a breach of the Code when playing or in designated alcohol-free areas.
2. The WPA may undertake random alcohol tests using a hand-held breathalyser during the competition. Where the organiser or Umpire (if present) has reasonable grounds for believing a player has consumed alcohol in breach of 1 above or has or may have consumed alcohol that does or may exceed the WPA's safe alcohol limit (80mg/100ml*)

*The WPA's safe alcohol limit is recognised by law for "drink driving" safety in England and Wales.

3. Refusal to take a breath alcohol test except for a good and acceptable reason, such as a relevant declared medical condition, may also be a breach of the Code.
4. The consequences of a breach of the Code are:

Penalties for code violations can consist of one or more of the following, depending on the circumstances:

A warning from the Umpire.

A second warning during the competition/ and/ or

- **Removal from the competition**, with a subsequent investigation, which may impose a period of ineligibility to play.

Other possible consequences include:

- **Disqualification**: the player's results in the competition are invalidated.
- **Ineligibility**: a player is barred from events for a specified period.
- **Provisional Suspension**: temporary bar pending a final decision at a hearing.
- **Financial Consequences**: the imposition of a financial sanction to recover the cost of the anti-doping investigation.
- **Public Disclosure or Public Reporting**: putting the final decision in the public domain – but **only after** any appeal has been dealt with, which upholds the finding of a violation."