



Winter League Match Rules

1. The Matches will be "pegged down" competitions, pegs to be preferably 20 yards (18 metres) apart, or more where practicable.
2. No person can fish for different teams during the current series. This rule may be waived in exceptional circumstances ONLY with express permission, in writing from AT,
3. An angler may have assistance to help carry their tackle to their peg. Once at their peg no further assistance will be allowed.
4. No competitor will have live or dead fish in their possession before the match commences.
5. The signal to commence and cease fishing will be given by the nominated stewards in each section.
6. The duration of each match will be five (5) hours.
7. Before the starting signal no competitor must on any account ground bait or loose feed the swim, but will be allowed to:
 - Wet a line
 - Plumb the depth
 - Test the float
 - Mix, or wet ground bait
 - Clear their peg of weed or obstructions
 - Position their equipment.

You cannot:

 - Cast a feeder, a bomb must be used
 - Ship out any form of pot (pole mounted or cupping kit) over the water

To assist in good biosecurity practice, keepnets must be laid out on the bank and not placed in the water any earlier than 15 minutes before the start of the match

8. A competitor may wade provided that the water does not extend above the knees, unless they can touch the bank, in which case the water can extend above the knees. The same principles apply to platforms and knee depth is to be taken at the front of the platform. No box legs may extend beyond the front of the platform.

Further local rule only for Benwick – No platforms or legs beyond the permanent pegs

9. Every competitor must fish from within one metre either side of their designated peg on the drains and can fish as far as half the distance between their peg and the pegs on either side. Where competitors are drawn on opposite banks the limit of the swim will be the middle line between either bank. The competitor will restrict their activities completely to these boundaries, neither their person, tackle, bait, ground bait or hooked fish may intrude into their neighbour's swim. Local rules will apply for halfways at all the commercials, check the fisheries website for rules.
10. In an extreme situation e.g., snagged tackle or a snagged fish, an angler must seek permission from his neighbour/neighbours before moving from their designated peg to try and remedy the situation. An angler should make every possible attempt to stop a fish from crossing into another angler's water, however if landed the fishes weight will count.
11. Notwithstanding Rule 10, any fish about which the stewards or other competitors have any doubt must be brought before the match organiser and the competitor's weight will not be confirmed until a ruling has been obtained. Even if a steward recommends the disqualification of a competitor, they MUST weigh the fish in case the stewards ruling is not upheld.
12. No competitor may leave their peg during the match other than to visit the toilet or to assist a snagged fish. However, in the event of an emergency and/or severe weather conditions anglers may leave their pegs. Local leagues or, the Angling Trust in the final, will decide what circumstances constitutes severe weather conditions with due consideration given to anglers' safety.
13. To uphold the reputation of our sport, competitors should always be mindful of how they conduct themselves towards other anglers and the general public on the day of a match. At no point should an angler provoke annoyance to or seek to interfere with another competitor.
14. A competitor shall have in use one rod or pole, one line and single hook at one time, but may have other poles or rods and tackle assembled behind them where possible, providing that tackle is not baited.

15. Any bait, subject to the local rules for the Winter League venue(s), except live or dead fish, spinning baits and artificial lures.
16. Maximum length of poles permitted is 16 metres, floating poles are not allowed.
17. Floating baits either hook or feed are not permitted.
18. Spods, spomb, bopper or spopper style devices are not allowed. (This does not affect the use of traditional style baitdroppers, which are permitted)
19. The use of electronic fish finders is forbidden.
20. No competitor shall present their baited hooks into their swim by any means other than the pole or rod to which the line is attached.
21. All feed may be thrown in by hand, or by the use of one- or two-handed catapults, throwing sticks, swim feeders, bait droppers, bait cups, cad pots and bait shuttles, but no other mechanical means of projecting feed is allowed. No bait shall be introduced with a pole or bait dropper attached to an extra pole or rod whilst continuing to fish.
22. Competitors must strike, play and land their own fish from the confines of their own peg, the only exception being as in relation to rule 10, when any fish landed shall not count.
23. Competitors must retain all fish in a keepnet that complies with the relevant Environment Agency bylaws.
24. All fish caught are eligible for weighing except Game Fish (salmonids, including grayling), Pike and Zander. Crustaceans (e.g crayfish) are not fish and do not count.
25. Competitors must, if practicable, keep all fish caught alive. If for any reason competitors cannot keep fish alive the angler shall have the fish weighed in during the match and return the fish alive to the water.
26. Competitors must cease fishing at the signal. Should a competitor still be playing a fish hooked before the signal is given, they will be permitted no more than 15 minutes after time has been called to land the fish.
27. All competitors will remain at their pegs until details of their catch have been recorded, even if they have caught no fish, except for weighing purposes.
28. Competitors are responsible for ensuring their pegs are clear of litter and no competitor shall have their catch weighed in who has litter on the banks of their swim.
29. Both the competitor and Scales Steward MUST ensure safe transferal between keepnet and weight net. This should not involve rolling of fish down the net and MUST utilise a gather and pour technique. It will be the duty of the competitor to return all the fish safely to the water.
30. Where stated at fisheries "Local Rules" will always apply for keepnet use in terms of limits and any penalties for going over.
31. Specimen fish warrant extra care and attention. They shall be weighed separately before all other fish, handled with care while being weighed and returned to the water carefully by hand, being held to recover before release if required. For exceptional fish consideration should be given to weighing the fish immediately and then returning it to the water, rather than retaining in a keepnet; in which case a steward should be called to enable immediate weighing to take place.
32. The individual weight of each competitor will be recorded to the lowest possible denomination on the scales provided, in kilogrammes. If the total catch does not register on the scales, it will count as the lowest denomination.
33. All separate weighs MUST be recorded, and the Angling Trust reserve the right to alter total weights where there is a clear error in maths.
34. Each competitor will be responsible for ensuring that the weight of their catch is correctly recorded by the weigh team and that he signs for his weight on the weigh sheet.
33. Anglers are reminded that they must hold a valid Environment Agency Fishing Licence and that all nets and tackle must comply with the relevant byelaws (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-rod-fishing-byelaws-for-england-freshwater-fishing-with-a-rod-and-line>). Any competitor reported by the Environment Agency for being unable to produce a valid licence shall be deemed in contravention of the Rules and will be disqualified from that match. All pools, entry fees etc in respect of the said competitor shall be forfeited.
34. Lead shot is banned above a size 8 (0.06g)
35. Anglers are requested to respect their fish at all times. If catch photos are to be taken anglers must handle the fish with the care they deserve and place the welfare of the fish ahead of a trophy shot. Fish shall not be placed directly on the ground within a net for any catch shot; instead, the net containing fish should be placed on top of either a fish mat or other suitable protective layer (for example another rolled up keepnet).
36. Any team or competitor proved to be in contravention of these and League rules will be disqualified.

37. Any objections must be made in writing and lodged with the match organiser or weigh steward, no later than one hour after the end of the competition on the official forms issued to the weigh stewards. Irregularities which are brought to notice at a later date may be dealt with only by and at the discretion of the AT Competitions team.
38. Points in the final are awarded 1 for highest weight in section, increasing as the position gets worse. A DNW will incur an additional penalty point. The winning team will have the least accrued points between both venues and in the event of ties, it will firstly be section wins that are taken into consideration, and then total weight.
39. Anglers must be over 16 years of age to fish our events - excluding the Junior and Youth Nationals. Anglers between 16 and 18 years old can only fish under the supervision of a parent or guardian. We will make exceptions on an individual basis for anglers below 16 years of age. This will include anglers who are supported by our talent pathway scheme or who our coaches and member clubs believe that fishing the event will be beneficial to their development. Again, they must be supervised by a parent or guardian at all times. Applications for exemption must be made prior to the event or series the angler wishes to fish and the Young Angler Exemption application form can be found [here](#). Junior and Youth anglers under 16 may enter the pools, but any winnings will be paid to their parent or guardian.