



26 August 2025

To: All Club Presidents and Secretaries

RE: Circular 2025 – 65: EKB Saturday League Season 2025 / 2026

Background:

The Saturday League has been the source of an immense amount of discussion, disagreement, council motions and stress for numerous years.

To overcome this Ekurhuleni Bowls (EKB) decided to have a League Workshop earlier this year, which was held at Brackenhurst. EKB sent an open invitation to all clubs, presidents, secretaries and competition secretaries to attend.

The workshop was held in an informal environment with the goal being to establish all the problem areas and then to brainstorm potential solutions.

The Problem Statement:

Based on the workshop, the following items were identified as problem areas.

1. No byes should be allowed in a division – it disrupts scoring and game planning.
2. Premier division is closely related to Inter-Districts and serves as a practice for this.
3. Players are no longer fit enough to play 21 ends.
4. Weather conditions are resulting in more players not able to play in high temperatures.
5. Less fortunate players are unable to carry the cost of teas, green fees and fuel for 10 weeks.
6. Bad light after game completion results in many players feeling unsafe to travel home.
7. The league season is too long with 11 weekends.
8. The period from October to February is too long.
9. Tea versus no tea is a major issue.
10. Scoring with sets or no sets is a major issue resulting in raised tempers.
11. Set based scoring is too complex.
12. Sets should not be forced on players who do not play Inter-Districts.

13. Not everyone in Premier even participates in Inter-Districts.
14. Larger clubs have too many members wanting to play but no teams to play in.
15. The calendar has become too full to accommodate all club tournaments.
16. Rain in January and February washes too many games out.
17. Some players work on Saturday causing play to start late.
18. Distances travelled between clubs is too large and players travel in the dark.
19. The social aspect is lost, and few players support the club's bar
20. The social aspect is lost, and few players support the club's tea offerings.
21. Changing to a Sunday will affect the sponsorship negatively.
22. Many players take extended December / January holidays resulting in clubs being unable to field sides effectively.

The Potential Solutions:

Based on the workshop, the following items were identified as potential solutions.

1. Premier to play 21 ends and all other divisions 18 ends.
2. No teas in Premier – the same as it is in Inter-Districts.
3. Set based scoring in Premier – the same as in Inter-Districts.
4. Home versus Away games. One game Saturday and one on Sunday. Reduces league to five weeks and reduces all travelling costs.
5. Home versus Away games. Two games on Saturday. Reduces league to five weeks and reduces all travelling costs.
6. Removing all A & B sections to create a single division of 10 teams. One game against each team and the winner is the pennant holder. Thus 9 weeks in duration.
7. Removing all A & B sections to create a single division of 8 teams. One game against each team and the winner is the pennant holder. Thus 7 weeks in duration. This also reduces the chances of byes.
8. Play one game Saturday and one game Sunday to reduce league to 5 weeks.
9. Play two games on Sunday – reduces the effect of those working Saturday and reduces league time and travelling cost.
10. Run league on a ladder system.



11. Create a super league for the top 4 finishers in Premier League from last season. This allows all other divisions, including the remaining Premier League teams to play normal scoring and 18 ends. Super league plays sets and 21 ends and no breaks.

Recommendations:

After much thought and deliberation, EKB has decided to implement a rejuvenated form of League for the 2025 / 2026 season.

By combining most viable potential solutions and removing the most awkward of the problems, the following solution will be implemented.

Saturday League 2025 / 2026 (League)

1. League will be played only on a Saturday.
2. League will be played in the Fours format with 2 bowls.
3. League will be played in Divisions, comprising of:
 - a. Premier Division
 - b. First Division
 - c. Second Division
 - d. Third Division
4. Each division will contain two sections of six (6) sides.
5. Each side will consist of two (2) teams from the same club.
6. Each team will consist of four (4) players in the higher divisions and three (3) players in the lower divisions. The split will be based on the number of entries.
7. The final standings of the clubs at the end of the 2024 / 2025 season will remain but with the following exceptions:
 - a. Divisions where byes occurred will have no relegation.
 - b. The next best sides will be promoted to fill these byes.
 - c. Further promotions may occur to prevent all other byes.
8. Each side will play each of the other sides in their section twice (Home & Away).
9. League will comprise of a total of ten games in the round robin.



10. The winners of each section in a division will play each other for the pennant in a League Final.
11. League will be played over a period of five weeks with two games per Saturday.
 - a. Round 1 & 2 - 18 October 2025
 - b. Round 3 & 4 - 25 October 2025
 - c. Round 5 & 6 - 01 November 2025
 - d. Round 7 & 8 - 08 November 2025
 - e. Round 9 & 10 - 15 November 2025
 - f. Pennant Final - 22 November 2025
12. The Home & Away games will take place at the same venue on the same day.
13. The first game will be played at 09:30 and will be played over 18 ends with no breaks.
14. A lunch break will be required. Hosting clubs may sell refreshments for their profit.
15. The second game will be played at 13:30 and will be played over 18 ends with no breaks.
16. There may be a maximum of two trial ends per game as per agreement between the managers / skips of the sides, but these must be completed before the official start of play (09:30 or 13:30).
17. Each game will be awarded 2 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss per team. The maximum points per side will be 4 points per game. The winning side will get another 2 points for winning overall or 1 point for an overall draw. The maximum points for the game for the side will be 6 points.
18. Maximum points available per side per Saturday will be 12 points.

Benefits:

By implementing the above changes, the following benefits are evident:

1. League will be reduced from 10 weeks to 5 weeks (excluding the pennant game).
2. Travelling costs will be reduced by 50%.
3. Facility fees are reduced by 50%.
4. Shorter games allow for League to be completed by 16:30.





5. No more travelling in the dark.
6. More safety for the ladies who participate.
7. More players can be entered into League and players can play morning or afternoon games as needed (rotation).
8. Scoring is simple and competitive.
9. Socialisation is increased by having a lunch break for refreshments and catching up.
10. Clubs can generate more revenue due to the required lunch break.
11. Having trial ends before the start of play will result in earlier completion of games.
12. League can now complete before the end of November. Only the pennant final will be in December.
13. League will now be subject to less washouts.
14. No more issues regarding players being on leave for long December holidays.
15. Players who work in the morning can play the afternoon game giving players who are less fit, a breather.
16. The calendar gains 5 weeks to use for club competitions.

Yours in bowls

Marianne Hunt

EKB Secretary