

COMPARISON BETWEEN NEW RULE PROPOSALS AND EXISTING RULES

I asked Chat GPT to “Summarise the differences in rules 27 compared against rules 26. Refer to the rule numbering in version 27, and cross-refer to 26 where appropriate. Some rules will actually have different requirements, others will simply be reorganised but the gist remains the same”

ChatGPT response given below. My comments on its response are identified in *red italic* font.

I compared Issue 27 (draft, June 2026) against Issue 26 (Sept 2022). Most of the document is unchanged or has been tidied up editorially, but there are several substantive changes, especially around board order, nominations and defaults. References below use the **Issue 27 numbering**, with cross-references to Issue 26.

Major substantive changes

Rule 2.1.1 – Team board order

Version 27

No player may have a current rating more than 100 points higher than any player on a higher board. Provisional or estimated ratings may be used.

Version 26 equivalent

Rules 2.1.1–2.1.3 required teams to play in order of current playing strength, with a 100-point difference deemed acceptable, and any larger deviation requiring justification to the League Secretary.

Effect

This is a genuine rule change.

Issue 26 used a subjective "current playing strength" test plus a 100-point tolerance and discretionary justification.

Issue 27 replaces this with a much clearer objective rule:

- 100-point maximum gap between a player and any higher board.
- No requirement to justify deviations.
- Explicit provision for provisional/unrated players.

This is substantially simpler and more enforceable.

Rule 3.1.2 – League restructuring powers

Version 27

The League Secretary may:

- move teams between divisions;

- alter the number of promotion/relegation places; *JFM comment – this is not new, but is now explicit in the rules*
- change the number of divisions.

Version 26 equivalent

Only:

- move teams between divisions; and
- change the number of divisions.

Effect

New power added to vary promotion/relegation places. *(Not new, but now explicit)*

Rule 3.1.5 – Tiebreak applicability expanded

Version 27

The tiebreak procedure applies whenever teams are tied on match points in a division.

Version 26 equivalent

The procedure only applied where the tie affected promotion or relegation.

Effect

Substantive change. Every league tie is now resolved using the tiebreak hierarchy rather than only those affecting promotion/relegation. *JFM comment – but only relevant for promotion / relegation, so no change in effect*

Rule 3.1.6(a) – Withdrawal treatment

Version 27

If a withdrawing team has played everyone once, the first fixture against each team counts.

Version 26 equivalent

Same principle, but explicitly stated that defaulted games would not count.

Effect

Potential change.

The explicit exclusion of defaulted games has disappeared. This may be intentional or may simply have been overlooked during redrafting. *JFM comment – intentional, also in v26 I assume “games” should in fact mean “matches”. Note that games played in a “defaulted match” do count in v27.*

Major rewrite of player nomination rules (Section 3.3)

This is the largest change in the document.

Rule 3.3.1

Version 27

Clubs with multiple teams must number them consecutively.

Version 26 equivalent

This requirement existed at Rule 3.1.4.

Effect

Pure reorganisation; no substantive change.

Rule 3.3.2

Version 27

Requires nomination of at least five players per team before the season and nomination of new players before their first match. Nominations must comply with Rule 3.3.3.

Version 26 equivalent

Rule 3.3.1.

Effect

Mostly reorganisation, but now tied directly to the new rating-based nomination rule.

Rule 3.3.3

Version 27

No player may be rated more than 100 points above any player in a higher team. Estimated ratings may be used.

Version 26 equivalent

The equivalent concept was spread across Rules 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 using "current playing strength" wording and discretionary dispensations.

Effect

Substantive simplification.

The subjective strength assessment has been replaced by a straightforward rating test.

Rule 3.3.4 – New "exception" system

Version 27

Allows designated exceptions to Rule 3.3.3, for example:

- captains,
- drivers,
- family members.

Limit:

- one exception for 2–3 teams,
- two exceptions for 4–5 teams,
- etc.

Reasoning must be provided.

Version 26 equivalent

Dispensations could be requested from the League Secretary on a case-by-case basis.

Effect

Major policy change.

Instead of seeking approval, clubs receive a predefined allowance of exceptions. *JFM comment – actually the list is for examples, and is not intended to be restrictive. We can discuss what the appropriate level of numbers of exceptions should be, but the point is that they are supposed to be exceptional cases!*

Rules 3.3.5–3.3.6 – New automatic renomination framework

Version 27

Introduces a detailed PUT ("play-up total") system governing automatic promotions and subsequent renominations.

Version 26 equivalent

Rule 3.3.3 simply stated:

- play up five times;
- automatic renomination to next stronger team.

Effect

Major change. *JFM comment – actually it is just making the current procedure more explicit*

The principle remains the same, but Version 27 introduces a much more sophisticated mechanism for handling:

- repeated play-ups,
- multiple automatic promotions,
- maintaining minimum squad sizes,
- administrative treatment of previous appearances.

Rule 3.3.6

Version 27

Requires teams to maintain at least five nominated players and sets rules for consequential renominations.

Version 26 equivalent

No direct equivalent.

Effect

Entirely new rule. *JFM comment – this was always the intent of the previous versions of the rules, but we were very lax in enforcing it*

Rule 3.3.7

Version 27

Penalty applies to breaches of Rules 3.3.2–3.3.6.

Version 26 equivalent

Penalty applied to breaches of Rules 3.3.1–3.3.3.

Effect

Re-numbering plus extension to cover the new nomination regime.

Rule 3.3.8 – Voluntary renomination

Version 27

Players may voluntarily move to a lower team, subject to:

- rating compliance,
- PUT restrictions,
- one voluntary renomination per season.

Version 26 equivalent

Rule 3.3.5 allowed voluntary renomination to a higher-numbered team. *i.e. a lower team*

Effect

Concept retained but substantially rewritten around the new nomination framework.

Defaults (Section 3.4)

Rule 3.4.2 – Definition of defaulted match

Version 27

A match is defaulted when a team defaults three or more boards. *i.e. when a draw is now impossible to achieve*

Version 26 equivalent

No definition existed.

Effect

New rule.

Rule 3.4.3 – Default penalties

Version 27

- Played games still count.
- Default boards scored normally.
- Team incurs penalties of:
 - 2 match points;
 - 5 game points.

Version 26 equivalent

Defaulting team:

- received no match points;
- received no game points;
- suffered a next-season deduction equal to a win plus 5 game points.

Effect

Major policy change.

The old system imposed future-season sanctions.

The new system imposes immediate in-season penalties.

Rule 3.4.4 – Repeated defaults

Version 27

Three match defaults in a season leads to removal from the league.

Version 26 equivalent

No equivalent.

Effect

New rule. *JFM comment – hopefully this will concentrate minds and reduce the number of defaulted matches!*

Other competitions

Rule 4.1.1

Version 27

Adds:

team board order is still governed by Rule 2.1.1.

Version 26 equivalent

Not stated explicitly.

Effect

Clarification rather than change.

Rule 4.2.2

Version 27

Requires U1600 league teams to be numbered consecutively.

Version 26 equivalent

No explicit rule.

Effect

New administrative requirement. *JFM comment – also affects “play ups” within U1600 league (where players aren’t formally nominated)*

Rule 4.2 – Rate-of-play provisions removed

Version 26 contained explicit references to the standard rate-of-play rules for the U1600 League.

These are omitted in Version 27.

Effect

Likely reorganisation rather than policy change, because Section 2 already applies to all competitions. *JFM comment – correct, reorganisation*

Individual Championships

Rule 4.4.2

Version 27

The County Champion's entry fee is paid if they choose to play in the SCCU or EACU championship. *JFM comment – previous version of rule predates the time we joined EACU*

Version 26 equivalent

Contained a nomination procedure:

- winner nominated first;
- runner-up if winner declined;
- Executive Committee discretion if neither wished to play;
- fee paid if the nominee was the County Champion.

Effect

Substantive simplification.

The nomination hierarchy has been removed (*no longer applicable to SCCU championship*). The rule now only deals with funding.

Rapidplay Tournament

Rule 4.5.1

Version 27

Format entirely at organiser discretion.

Version 26 equivalent

Ended with:

The rate of play shall be all moves in 30 minutes (ECF Rapidplay Rules apply).

Effect

Potential substantive change.

The fixed 30-minute rate has been removed, apparently giving the organiser freedom to choose the rapidplay time control. *E.g. to use increments on digital clocks*

Editorial / drafting corrections

The following are largely non-substantive:

- Numerous pronouns modernised ("his/her" → "their").
- Broken rule references corrected throughout Section 2.
- Duplicate and corrupted text in Section 4.3 removed. Compare Issue 26's duplicated knockout competition rules with the cleaned-up Version 27 structure.

- Spurious website text removed from Rule 2.7.3.
- Various numbering and formatting errors corrected.

Overall assessment

The key policy changes in Issue 27 are:

1. **Replacement of subjective "playing strength" rules with objective 100-point rating rules** (2.1.1, 3.3.3).
2. **Introduction of a formal exception system** (3.3.4).
3. **Comprehensive redesign of player nomination and automatic renomination procedures** (3.3.5–3.3.8). *JFM comment - more a clarification, though linked to point 1*
4. **Complete overhaul of match-default penalties** (3.4.2–3.4.4).
5. **League Secretary gains power to alter promotion/relegation slots** (3.1.2). *JFM comment – actually not new, just explicit*
6. **Tiebreak rules now apply to all ties, not only promotion/relegation ties** (3.1.5). *JFM comment – in practice there is no change from before*
7. **County Championship nomination procedure removed** (4.4.2). *because it was no longer relevant*
8. **Rapidplay fixed 30-minute time control removed** (4.5.1). *to allow increments*

Everything else is either editorial cleanup, clarification, or relocation of existing provisions.