

REGIONAL LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS 2017/2018

1. ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The Regional League shall be governed and managed by the Regional Management Board (RMB), which may delegate its powers and authority in this respect to any sub-committee or individual(s).

1.2 The decisions of the RMB, or its nominee(s), in respect of these rules and regulations and on any other matter related to the Regional League which is not provided for below, shall be considered final and binding on all parties (subject to the right of appeal which is specifically provided for under England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations).

1.3 These rules and regulations shall be subject and secondary to the application of England Netball's rules and regulations, especially Playing Regulations 5.1 and 6.2.

1.4 It is the responsibility of all Team Managers, Coaches and Captains to ensure that all **Participants** are conversant with the rules and regulations **and the England Netball Codes of Conduct**.

2. PLAYING QUALIFICATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Application for entry to the Regional League shall be open to any club or team which is affiliated to England Netball through a County Association, which has paid its subscription in this respect, and which is situated within the boundaries of a County Association which is a member of the Regional Association – unless otherwise agreed by the RMB.

2.2 Entry to the Regional League will be determined by the RMB at its absolute discretion, subject to its reasonable application of the rules and regulations laid out herein, and having due regard to the playing standard of teams which wish to participate. In the same way, such casual vacancies as may appear from time to time will be addressed by the RMB in whatever way it sees fit.

2.3 The RMB may be entitled to charge an entry fee to the Regional League.

2.4 No club may enter more than one team in the Regional League.

2.5 By entering a team in the Regional League, clubs/teams agree that:

- They are conversant with and will abide by these rules and regulations, the England Netball Codes of Conduct and the England Netball Disciplinary Regulations.
- They are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation in the Regional League

2.6 In order to qualify to participate in the Regional League, a player **shall be female** and in membership of England Netball through Affiliation as a Registered Participant for the club in question (1st or 2nd claim). via one of the following qualifications:

- Through affiliation to a club or a County Association
- Through a Young Persons Group

2.7 A player may not play in 2 Geographically different Regional leagues (e.g. a L&SE Regional League and a South Regional League) during the same season.

2.8 All players must have their membership lodged with the England Netball Head Office, their subscription paid and their payment cleared and marked 'active' on the EN Membership System, prior to their participation in the Regional League.

2.9 All players in the Regional Open League must be over 16 on 31 August / 1 September prior to the commencement of the League (subject to the provision below):

- An U16 player on the date above, may play in the Regional Open League with specific permission as defined by the RMB. Fully completed and **signed** Age Banding Form to be submitted when the player is registered.
- An U16 player registered with a team in the Regional U16 League may **not** play in the Regional Senior League on the same fixture date.
- All players under the age of 18 must carry with them some proof of age as random checks may be carried out.

2.10 No U14 player at the date defined in clause 2.9 may play in the Regional Open League.

2.11 Pregnant league players may not take part in Regional League matches beyond the twelfth week of pregnancy.

England Netball recommends that individuals (player, coach, umpire) if pregnant should only participate with approval from their doctor.

3. REGISTRATION OF SQUAD MEMBERS

Any team who knowingly and deliberately provides false information regarding identity of players when registering players or naming of players on team sheets may be subject to disciplinary action and may be expelled from the competition. Disciplinary action may be taken against the club.

3.1 Squad registration sheets must contain at least 12 players for each participating team and must be completed fully. Each team must then lodge the sheets with the Regional Registration Secretary and the Regional Office at least fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the Regional League.

3.1.1 Clubs must also submit their Club Roster Report (from the England Netball Affiliation system) showing players flagged as 'active' for the current Affiliation year (2016-2017) at least 14 days prior to the commencement of the Regional League, the latest date as specified on the Entry Form.

3.2 Teams may only use those players whose names appear on their squad registration list held by the Regional Office and League Registration Secretary.

3.3 Any additions to the squad sheets must be lodged with the League Registration Secretary and the Regional Office by midnight on Tuesday prior to playing the match.

3.3.1 If the additions are also new **Affiliations** to the Club, a copy of the relevant England Netball Affiliation Receipt must accompany the Registration document.

3.4 Once a player is registered or has played she cannot transfer to another club within the Regional League during the course of the current playing season, unless agreed by the RMB.

3.5 Each team must declare up to twelve (12) players prior to the start of each match by completing a team sheet/result card. Players' names must be completed in full. Umpires will ensure that completed team sheets are lodged with scorers prior to the game. Players not on the card prior to the start of the match may not take part.

3.6 Premier League Teams within the London & South East Region will be requested by the RMB to nominate their top 7 players before the start of the season. Any player submitted as a top 7 Premier League player cannot participate in or be a registered player of a Regional League team.

3.7 Players registered for a Regional Team may play up to and including 16 quarters for a Premier League Team. On the 17th occasion those players will become ineligible to play again in the Regional Team in the Regional League or the Regional League Playoffs.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE LEAGUE

4.1 The Regional League will be contested between as many teams as shall be determined by the RMB from time to time. The number of teams will not normally be less than eight.

4.2 Each team in the Regional League will play the others twice.

4.3 Teams will be awarded league points as follows:

- 5 points for a win
- 3 points for a draw
- 2 points for a loss within 5 goals (e.g. 40 – 36)
- 1 point for a loss over 50% goals scored (eg 40-21)
- 0 for a loss

4.4 A Regional League table will be compiled on the basis of the points awarded to each team. Where two teams are level on points:

- **Goal average shall be used to determine their relative positions. Goal average will be determined by dividing goals scored by goals against.**
- In the event that Goal Average does not differentiate between the teams then Goal Difference shall be applied, i.e., the team with the higher difference score over the course of the season shall take precedence.
- In the event that Goal Difference does not differentiate between the teams, then the team with the greatest number of goals scored shall take precedence
- Where one of the teams has its Goal Average, Goal Difference or total number of goals scored affected by cancellations, then the goals scored by and against defaulting team(s) shall be omitted from the calculations of both teams level on points. For example, in the event that one team received 5 points for a cancelled match, then the goals scored by and against both teams level on points, in all games against the offending team will not be included when its Goal Average or Goal Difference or total number of goals is calculated
- In the event that neither Goal Average nor Goal Difference nor goals scored can differentiate between the teams, the aggregate score in the match or matches played between them over the course of the season shall be calculated and precedence given to the winning team

- In the event that none of the above differentiates between the teams, the RMB, or its nominee(s), shall determine the means of differentiation

4.5 The team which finishes top of the Regional League at the end of the season will be the winners of the competition. They will be eligible for promotion, via play-offs, to the Premier League, and will contest a play-off involving other Regional League teams in accordance with Premier League rules. If the League winner is not eligible for promotion to the Premier League, the RMB, or its nominee(s), will determine the Regional representative (Club) to go forward (see Rule 5.1).

4.6 At the end of each season, any team or teams which are based in the region in which the Regional League is played, and which are relegated from the Premier League, will be automatically included within the Regional League Division 1 for the following season. The RMB, or its nominee(s), will determine the structure of the League (see Rule 5.5)

4.7 At the end of each season, relegation will take place from the Regional League in accordance with procedures agreed between the RMB and the organising committees of the County League operated by the constituent County Associations. Any team relegated from the Regional League will participate in the following season in the County League operated by the County Association **to which they are affiliated.**

5 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

5.1 Winners and any other eligible 1st division team within the Regional League may be eligible to contest at a play-off for entry into the Premier League. In the event of either team not being able to accept the nomination of the region for the play-offs, the next highest placed team able to accept the nomination will represent the region at a play-off for the Premier League.

5.2 Team 8 in Division 1 will normally be relegated to Division 2. Team 7 may be relegated subject to rule 5.5.

5.3 The winners of Division 2 will normally be promoted to Division 1. The second placed team may be promoted subject to rule 5.5.

5.4 Team 8 in Division 2 will be automatically relegated to the appropriate County League. Team 7 in Division 2 will be eligible for a play-off with other County Champion teams for entry to the Regional League Division 2.

5.5 In the event that the promotion and relegation of clubs under rules 5.1 to 5.4 would materially alter the structure of the Regional League, the RMB will make arrangements for the structure of the league as it deems appropriate.

5.6 Trophies will be awarded to the winning teams of each division.

5.7 In respect of the play-off competition to determine entry to the Regional League, competing teams are required to register a squad of up to 12 players one week prior to the competition.

5.8 The eligibility of players to compete for teams in the play-off competition shall be governed by rules 2.6 to 2.10 and the following criteria:

- 5.8.1 In respect of a team which has competed in the Regional League during the season, only players who have played for that team, and remain eligible to play, may be registered.
- 5.8.2 A player who has already played for a different club in the Regional League may not be registered.
- 5.8.3 A player who has played in the Premier League to the level outlined in Rule 3.7 above may not be registered.
- 5.8.4 In circumstances where a second team of a club entered in the Premier League is competing, a player may not be registered if that player has played in the Regional League to the level outlined in Rule 3.7.
- 5.8.5 Players registered must have played for that team in their qualifying competition (e.g. County League) during the season.

6. MATCH ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Matches will be played at venues within the Region with adequate surrounds and ancillary facilities for approximately 30 participants, including changing and showering facilities for both sexes, **in accordance with the documented Minimum Criteria, unless otherwise agreed by the RMB.** Clubs are responsible for the full cost of hire of their facilities. The RMB will conduct a risk assessment of venues to ensure they are suitable. Umpires will conduct a risk assessment prior to each match to ensure that the venue is suitable for the match to be played.

6.2 The costs of venues for the League will be borne by the clubs, either directly or through the entry fee to the League. Where central venues are used, the RMB may be responsible for arranging the venue and setting the costs to be paid by the clubs. Clubs will be responsible for the costs and booking of their home venues.

6.3 All matches must be played on the date specified by the fixture schedule, or except as otherwise agreed by the RMB, and take place on the dates agreed by the RMB. Where the Regional League sets a reserve date, this must be used for the first postponed match.

6.4 Matches are to start between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm. Any dispute over start times will be determined by the RMB at its absolute discretion. The home team must provide their opponents with confirmation in writing of the match, its start time, and travel directions (including a map) at least 21 days prior to the date of the match.

6.5 All teams will be responsible for the costs and arrangement of their travel, and should allow sufficient time to cover any unexpected delays. Matches should start at the agreed start time, or as soon thereafter as both teams have the minimum number of players, required by the rules, to start the match. The umpires will be the sole judges of this.

If a team, or teams, are not able or willing to start the game 15 minutes after the agreed start time, the match may be forfeited and the non-offending team may be awarded the points for the match. The offending team may be deducted points in respect of a match not played.

The umpires and teams may be asked to submit reports on the circumstances to the RMB which will decide upon the result and the allocation of points.

6.6 No team may postpone or cancel a match without the agreement of the RMB. Matches which are postponed due to extreme and unforeseen circumstances or for any other reason; e.g., flash flood, heavy snowfall, must be played as agreed by the RMB.

6.7 If a team cancels a match or fails to fulfil a match, except as allowed for in rule 6.6

- The non-offending team will be awarded five (5) league points for the match, and the team which cancels will have five (5) league points deducted from their total
- The team which cancels may be liable to pay any costs which the non-offending team and match officials have incurred, subject to the deliberations of the RMB
- The playing of a friendly match will not constitute fulfilling a match, and the offending team will be deducted 5 league points.

6.8 If a match is cancelled, it is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that the Venue Co-ordinator, RMB, the opposition and both umpires are informed immediately the cancellation is known. Cancelled games will be played on a set date unless otherwise agreed by the RMB.

6.9 In the event that a match which is abandoned for any reason or not played as per rule 6.6; e.g., because of serious injury, the result or re-playing of that match will be determined by the RMB in whatever means it deems appropriate.

7. MATCH REGULATIONS

7.1 All games shall be played to the INF rules of the Game currently in force in England at the time, except where specific regulations may apply.

7.2 All open matches shall be of one hour's duration (i.e., four quarters of 15 minutes each). Each Quarter-time interval will be 3 minutes: Half-time will be 5 minutes.

8. MATCH OFFICIALS

8.1 Suitable Umpires identified by the RMB will be placed into a pool. Neutral umpires shall be allocated to each match by the Regional League Umpiring Co-ordinator and their appointment will be notified to the teams in advance of each match.

8.2 Clubs shall be responsible for providing the Regional League Umpiring Co-ordinator with confirmation in writing of all matches, their start time, and travel directions at least 21 days prior to the first fixture date in the Regional League match schedule.

8.3 The umpires' travel expenses will be a payment which shall be determined by the RMB in line with England Netball guidelines.

8.4 In the event that an umpire fails to arrive, or is injured or taken ill during a match, the following procedure will be applied, subject to the agreement of both teams:

- If another umpire of the appropriate standard is available then she/he will umpire the match
- Failing that, the next best-qualified umpire should be used
- The RMB must be informed immediately after the match.

8.5 In conjunction with England Netball, the RMB will have responsibility for procedures, which ensure that umpires conform to a standard of physical fitness, as agreed by the RMB and England Netball guidelines, which allows them to keep pace with the speed and variability of the game(s).

8.6 Scorers will be required for all matches. Each team must provide a competent scorer who is preferably a qualified umpire and who must remain a scorer for the entire match. Scorers must not coach. A timekeeper must always be provided. The scorer and timekeeper may be the same person.

8.7 The Regional League Protocols for both Umpires and Scorers which are to be applied to all matches will be circulated with the in the Handbook.

9. SUBMISSION OF RESULTS

9.1 The first named team on each match will be deemed to be the home team and will provide the result sheet (including the Game Management Form).

9.2 The official result card must be checked and signed by both captains and umpires and sent to the RMB to be received within 5 working days of the match. The score for the match will not be registered until the result card has been provided.

9.3 Results must also be sent by text or e-mail within 24 hours by the home team as directed in the Regional League Handbook.

10 COMPETITION REFEREE

10.1 The Competition Referee is the Chair of the Competition Technical Support Group (CTSG)

10.2 The Competition Referee will have the authority and jurisdiction to make decisions on any matters arising throughout the Regional League including, but not limited to:

10.2.1 Altering or amending the playing schedule as necessary;

10.2.2 Determining if there has been a breach of the Regulations and imposing an appropriate sanction (including disqualification of any individual, Player or Team). Such penalties will include but not be limited to reprimands, the deduction of league points, fines, suspensions, and expulsion from the Regional League, except as specified below:

- a. The use of an unaffiliated player will result in a deduction of 3 league points on each occasion. The result of the match will still stand.
- b. The use of an unregistered or ineligible player or a player, who is under age, without seeking Age Banding permission, will result in a deduction of 2 league points. The result of the match will still stand.
- c. In the event that a team fails to play, the non-offending team will be awarded 5 points for the match and the offending team will have 5 points deducted from their total (Failure to play is defined as not playing in a game, without prior consent from the RMB and with the opposition and officials expecting that the game would be played). The offending team will be liable for any extra costs incurred. (This rule to be applied with reference to rules 6.7, 6.8 & 6.9)

10.2.3 Instances of unsportsmanlike behaviour or behaviour that brings the sport into disrepute, including instances of Teams predetermining, or attempting to predetermine, the outcome of a Match and/or the Competition;

10.2.4 Determine the score should any Match not be concluded due to any unforeseen circumstance;

10.2.5 Any matter not covered specifically within the Regulations.

10.3 The Competition Referee may call upon, or delegate to, additional persons to assist with the Regional League or consult with other persons prior to making any decision. However the final decision and accountability for the decision will rest with the Competition Referee.

11 COMPETITION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

11.1 All queries and complaints (Complaint) should be directed to the Competition Referee in the first instance to be dealt with as follows:

11.1.1 Where the Complaint relates to the playing of a match, the scoring, and/or its result, the relevant team or match official, must do the following:

- a) inform their opponents and the umpires of their complaint on the day of the match;
- b) mark the score card with the words "Under Protest";
- c) send the marked score card to the Competition Referee within 72 hours of the match;
- d) attach a letter or email to the scorecard to explain the issue in full to the Competition Referee;
- e) and the Competition Referee will decide what action should be taken.

- 11.1.2 The Competition Referee will acknowledge receipt of the query or complaint and make a decision on the matter within 72 hours of receipt of the query or complaint. The Competition Referee's decision in relation to decisions taken under clause 11.1.1 is binding. Parties to the Complaint shall have the right to appeal the decision under rule 12 below.

11.2 Where the Complaint relates to the governance or administration of the Regional League by the Competition TSG, such Complaints will be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure of the London & South East Region Netball Association.

11.3 Where the Complaint relates to the behaviour of an individual or team participating, volunteering or attending a match or using social media technology to bring the game into disrepute or make an inappropriate comment about a fellow player, coach, official, volunteer or the governing body which could be considered as a Disciplinary Offence under England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations, such Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the processes set out in England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations.

12 APPEAL OF COMPETITION REFEREE DECISION

12.1 The decision of the Competition Referee in relation to a complaint submitted in accordance with section 11.1.1 shall be final and binding on all parties save that a party has a right to appeal in the following circumstances:

- a) If the decision has a potential impact on a match result, a league table, or the outcome of the Competition; **AND**
- b) If there has been a failure by the Competition Referee to follow or act in accordance with these Rules and Regulations or the Competition Referee reached a decision on the basis of an error of fact.

These are the only grounds of appeal and any appeal must be submitted in accordance with the appeals process.

12.2 An appeal should be forwarded in writing from the Secretary of the appealing Team to the Competition Referee, within 72 hours of receiving the decision, who will refer it to Regional Management Board.

12.3 The appeal shall be accompanied by a cheque for £100 which shall be returned if the appeal is upheld or if there are any other extenuating circumstances. The Competition Appeals Committee (CAC) will decide whether the extenuating circumstance warrant the cheque being returned.

12.4 The Regional Management Board will establish a CAC which will consist of individuals that are independent of and not connected to the Regional League. One of those individuals will be appointed as the Chair.

12.5 The Chair of the CAC will send the appeal to the opposing Team and any other Team the CAC believe could be affected by the outcome of the appeal. These Teams will be permitted seventy two (72) hours, from the date the appeal notice is sent from the CAC to submit any evidence or submission that they wish the CAC to consider.

12.6 All submissions and evidence must be submitted in writing. The Chair of CAC will have the discretion to determine the process, procedure and direction of the appeal.

12.7 The CAC shall meet and reach a determination within seventy two (72) hours of receiving all the evidence and submissions.

12.8 The CAC will notify all the parties that made submissions and presented evidence of its decision and any penalties and sanctions imposed within twenty four (24) hours of it reaching its determination. The CAC shall have the discretion to publish the decision through whatever means it considers appropriate.

12.9 The CAC shall have the delegated power of Regional Management Board to make all decisions and impose and enforce any penalties and sanctions (including but not limited to, reprimands, the deduction of points, fines, suspensions and expulsions from the Competition) relating to the appeal. There is no further right of appeal on this decision.

12.10 The procedures set out in this section shall be governed by the Arbitration Act 1996 (the Act) and amount to a binding arbitration agreement for the purposes of Section 6 of the Act.

12.11 The parties also waive irrevocably their right to any form of appeal, review or recourse to any court or other judicial authority, or under England Netball's Disciplinary Procedures Manual or otherwise, insofar as such waiver may be validly made.

12.12 The seat of arbitration shall be England, the language used shall be English and the governing law of the regulations and these proceedings under Section 3 shall be English Law.

12.13 If the circumstances require a decision to be taken sooner than provided for by this section, and all parties to the appeal consent, the timetable within which an appeal is raised, submissions made and the decision taken can be shorter than seventy two (72) hours stated in this Section. In such cases the CAC shall issue a revised directions timetable which shall be binding on all parties

13. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

13.1 All clubs will be held responsible for their players, officials and spectators.

13.2 It is the responsibility of each team to provide adequate first aid cover for its players which shall also be made available to the match officials on request.

13.3 Jewellery/Medic Alert Bracelets

- All jewellery must be removed when playing netball, and players wearing jewellery (including body piercing) will not be allowed on court. The following exceptions will apply:
- Wedding rings may be worn, but must be taped
- Medic alert bracelets may be worn, but must be secured in such a manner that they will not constitute a danger to an opponent, i.e., with clear tape, and in such a way that it cannot be removed/lifted off by any accidental contact

13.4 Head Covering.

The priority must be to encourage increased participation in sport, with sensitivity to the religious practices and cultural differences, together with the safety of all participants. With this in mind the player, together with the coach/teacher/parent etc. should ensure that the material used for the head covering is soft, without embellishments which might constitute a danger and with potential flowing/flapping edges held securely around the neck or tucked into shirt collar. It should be as neat and secure as possible.

Baseball caps etc are not permitted.

13.5 Gloves.

No form of glove may be worn when playing netball. If for medical reasons gloves are required, then on production of an appropriate medical certificate, the RMB may allow gloves to be worn. Umpires are advised that if a medical certificate is produced and gloves are worn they should be plain, soft, leather type gloves, seamless or with internal seams. These players are then to be advised to have Personal Liability Insurance. Umpires are reminded that they still have to be satisfied that any gloves worn do not present an obvious hazard to other players.

Please note that if gloves are worn this does not supersede the international ruling on nails.

13.6 Hair.

In the interest of safety, players who have long hair tied in a pony tail must ensure that it does not present a hazard by allowing it to swing in the faces of other players.