

LEAGUE RULES 2023/24

Issued 28/08/23

A. GENERAL

1. Matches shall be played according to World Netball and England Netball rules and adhere to England Netball policies and rule directives, including the England Netball guidance on pregnancy.
2. The Management Group shall determine entry fees.
3. Any queries regarding these rules and fixtures must be sent in writing to the League Secretary.
4. The Management Group has the right to make a final decision.

B. ORGANISATION OF MATCHES

1. A match consists of four quarters, each of 15 minutes playing duration, with an interval of 3 minutes between the first-second and third-fourth quarters. The half-time interval is 5 minutes.
2. League fixtures shall commence at a date agreed by the Management Group.
3. For central venue matches:
 - a) Matches must be played at the time and date specified on the fixture card.
 - b) Matches will run from 9.30am to 5.00pm.
4. For non-central venue matches:
 - a) Matches must be played on the date specified on the fixture card, or on a prior date by mutual agreement.
 - b) Matches must be scheduled from 10.30am onwards, or at an earlier time by mutual agreement. The home team must inform the visiting team of the match arrangements at least 8 days before (Friday) the match. The away team must send acknowledgement.
 - c) All clubs shall ensure that there are accessible, open and working toilet facilities at their home venue for matches.
 - d) Both home and away fixtures against the same opposition must be played as separate games.
5. All matches shall start at the specified time. If at least 5 players are available to take the court from each team the game will commence immediately. Where a delay has occurred in starting the game the detail should be noted on the results sheet. Teams who are repeatedly late shall be penalised.
6. Matches may be postponed under the following exceptional circumstances:
 - a) Bad weather – games must not be postponed until a maximum of 24 hours before and the League Secretary informed.
 - b) Higher Netball commitments involving 2 or more players from a team – permission shall be obtained from the League Secretary and shall be requested at least 14 days prior to the arranged fixture.
 - c) Any team requesting a rearrangement will be liable for:
 - i. All initial venue costs are paid as usual.
 - ii. Costs for the new venue will be paid by the rearranging team.
 - iii. Umpires will be paid for by each team as usual.
 - d) The rearranged game shall be played at a time / date / venue to be specified by the opposition.

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- e) The League Secretary must be informed of any rearranged fixture.
7. If a match, once started, has to be abandoned, the time left to play and the score at the time of the abandonment must be noted by the umpires. If possible, matches must be restarted and finished in the time available. If the match is unable to continue, the score at the time of the abandonment shall stand as the final score except when less than 30 minutes playing time have been completed. In this case, the match must be rearranged and the League Secretary notified.
8. Conceded games:
- If a club is to concede a match this must be their lowest team.
 - If a team concedes more than 3 League matches they will be fined, the amount to be determined by the Adult Competition Group, for each match conceded thereafter.
 - A team who has conceded more than 4 League matches in a season may be refused re-entry to the League the following season. The Management Group reserves the right to make the final decision on such matters.
 - A minimum of 24 hours must be given in the event of a game being conceded, should this not happen the offending club/team is liable for any expenses the non-offending club/team may incur.
9. Results sheets:
- Each club team shall declare up to twelve players, (including a captain), up to 5 team officials, and an umpire, prior to the start of each League Match, by clearly printing their names and affiliation number on a result sheet. Club teams may only use those players whose names appear on the result sheet. If players named on the sheet it will be assumed that they have played this match. Only players and team officials named on the team sheet are allowed courtside at central venue.
 - The result sheet shall be completed as per the instructions supplied with the sheet.
 - The declared result sheet shall be handed to the Official Scorer, who may be the Umpire, prior to the start of the Match. Umpires should then check both cards for errors and amend as necessary.
 - After the game has finished Captains and Umpires must sign their names on result sheet.
 - The result sheet represents the official score of the match and once this has been signed by both Captains and Umpires no complaint can be lodged, Captains and Umpires must check the final score is correct.
 - Each team is responsible for entering the match result, both:
 - on the website by 18:00 on the day of the fixture, and
 - by submission of the completed result sheet to reach the League Secretary by 19:00 on the day of the fixture via email. Failure to comply will result in penalty action – see clause F.
10. Points system:
- For all matches:
 - 5 points awarded to the team winning the match.
 - 5 points to the team conceded to.
 - 5 points awarded to the team playing a team who commit an infringement in that match (goals remain as played).



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3 points awarded to each team for a draw.

2 points awarded to the team losing by less than 5 goals.

1 point awarded to the losing team if their score is more than 50% of the opponent's goals.

0 points awarded for a loss of 50% or less of the opponent's score.

-3 points for a team conceding a match.

0 to -5 points for an infringement of a League Rule. The Adult Working Group will apply a penalty which is proportionate to the rule break.

Where an infringement of a League Rule occurs which directly impacts the result of the game, the result of that particular game shall be null and void and any points awarded to either team, in respect of that particular game, will be taken away. Points as detailed above will then be awarded.

b) Treatment of points/goals for conceded games:

Points will be awarded as detailed above. At the end of the season goals will be awarded, based on the season, as follows:

Goals (for and against) will be calculated to establish the average for this team for the season. e.g. a team having 420 goals for and 189 goals against from all played matches will have:

a goal average for of 52.5 (*rounded up to 53*)

a goal average against of 23.6 (*rounded up to 24*)

These two averages will be added to the existing goals to give a total for the season of 473 goals for and 213 goals against.

The column (C2) in the divisional table shows how many matches have been conceded in that half of the season, i.e. goals yet to be calculated.

C. TEAMS

1. Clubs with multiple teams in the same division must list their teams in priority order and appoint named players accordingly. (e.g. Gloucester Flyers A = 1st Team, Gloucester Flyers B = 2nd Team).
2. Clubs may have no more than 2 teams in a division. Where a team should be promoted to a higher division already containing 2 teams from the same club, this team shall be held in its current division and the next team qualifying shall be promoted instead.
3. Club wishing to withdraw a team from the league at any time must withdraw from the lowest division.
4. All teams must carry a first aid kit to their matches.

D. PLAYERS

1. Player eligibility is defined as follows:
 - a) Only players that are members of England Netball and of a GCNA League club will be eligible for these matches. Players may be members of more than one club but must specify their primary club. A player must be a member of the club they are playing for prior to the match.
 - b) All players shall be 14 years of age or over (as at 1st September in the year of registration) to play in the League however, if there is an exceptionally talented young player permission may be sought from the Management Group for them to play.

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- c) No player can play more than one scheduled League game on one day. When a match fixture has had to be rearranged, it may not include any players who were involved in any games played on the original fixture date.
 - d) Any player that has played 16 or more quarters in a senior Regional League cannot play in any GCNA competition in that season. Before reaching 16 quarters, any regional player that plays down in the Glos League can only play one team down.
 - e) Any player who has played in the EN National Premier League (or higher) cannot play in any GCNA competition in that season.
2. Clubs entering more than one team in the League must submit the names of the players in each team, except their lowest team, to the League Secretary before the first fixture. This shall include the names of the 4 core (i.e “named”) players.
- a) These four named players must not play for other teams of a lower standard in any club.
 - b) All named players must play in more than 50% of matches for their team. An additional player must be named as soon as it is noticed that a named player is unable to fulfil their playing commitment e.g. due to injury, pregnancy, leaving a club.
 - c) Once submitted revisions to squad registration and named players are not permitted. However, in exceptional circumstances, a revision may be requested to the League Secretary (in writing) stating the reason for the revision (e.g. a player being out for the rest of the season, new player joining). The League Secretary will review the request and reply granting or denying permission to make such a change.
3. Any unnamed players that have played 16 or more quarters for a particular team may then only play one team below. (e.g. if an unnamed player in the 2nd team is selected to play for the 1st team for 16 or more quarters, they cannot subsequently play for the 3rd team that season). If this player is also a member of another Club (i.e. a secondary Club), they can only play ‘down’ as low as that for their primary Club.
4. No more than 2 unnamed players for a team can play for a lower team at any one time; e.g. a maximum of 2 unnamed players from the 1st team can play down for the 2nd team at a time.
5. All teams who have any U18 players in the squad must be always accompanied by a responsible adult (over 18 years old) on the team bench.
6. The league is a competition for biological females only. Only biological female participants can be included on the team sheet as a player. This is in line with England Netball's Premier League Regulations, and subject to review of their current Gender Policy (<https://www.englishnetball.co.uk/document/trans-inclusion-guidance/>)

E. MATCH OFFICIALS

1. Each club shall nominate to a pool of league umpires, a sufficient number of suitably qualified umpires (or umpires in training) to cover their umpiring commitments. The number of umpires required shall be:
 - Clubs with 1 or 2 teams – at least 1 umpire
 - Clubs with 3 or 4 teams – at least 2 umpires
 - Clubs with 5 or 6 teams – at least 3 umpires etc.

Umpires cannot be nominated by more than one club and are expected to be active during the season.
2. Provision of umpires:
 - a) The responsibility of providing suitable umpires is as follows:
 - i. Central venue – the teams listed as providing the umpires shall provide a neutral umpire.
 - ii. Non-central venue – the teams playing the match shall each provide an umpire.

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- b) If a suitable umpire does not arrive or an umpire becomes injured, then another umpire shall be found. The order of precedence for a replacement umpire shall be:
 - i. A suitably qualified neutral umpire, then
 - ii. A suitably qualified non-neutral umpire, then
 - iii. The next most qualified umpire.
 - c) Details of what has happened and the names of all umpires shall be noted on the result sheet.
 - d) The team responsible for providing an absent or unsuitable umpire shall be liable for all expenses incurred by the league, both teams and all officials. If the match has to be rearranged, that team shall also be responsible for all expenses and the provision of a venue and of all the officials. Teams whose umpires are repeatedly absent or unsuitable shall be penalised.
3. Umpire eligibility:
- a) Umpires shall be affiliated to England Netball and registered with the Officiating Group Lead/Umpiring Secretary. Proof of qualification is required.
 - b) Umpires shall meet the minimum qualification for the division:
 - i. Premier division – B Award
 - ii. Division 1,2, 3 – C Award
 - iii. Division 3,4 – Into Officiating Award
 - iv. Talent-identified umpires may be given permission by the Officiating Group Lead/Umpiring Secretary to umpire in a higher division whilst in training. This includes talent-identified non-qualified umpires if they have attended a relevant course.
 - v. Umpires shall conform to the requirements for competency and physical fitness set by the Officiating Group Lead/Umpiring Secretary, to ensure that they can keep pace with the speed, variability and standard of games. Umpires not conforming to these requirements shall be withdrawn from the register of umpires.
 - c) Umpires shall not umpire more than two matches in the same day, unless previously approved by the Officiating Group Lead/Umpiring Secretary.
 - d) An umpire shall not be a substitute player.
4. Umpires are entitled to claim expenses for travel and subsistence from the teams playing in the match. These shall be agreed prior to the start of the match.
5. The Officiating Group Lead/Umpiring Secretary reserves the right to use any league fixture for mentoring, pre-assessing or assessing of umpires
7. Technical Officials – Central venue games shall have two technical officials, one provided by each playing team. These technical officials shall be responsible for scoring and timing the match. They shall be suitably competent and follow the guidance published by the Officiating Working Group.

F – PENALTIES

- 1. Any team failing to comply with any of the League Rules will be liable to a penalty in accordance with the points system.
- 2. The Adult Competition Group shall take appropriate disciplinary action against any individual or team found to have brought the game of Netball into disrepute.