

REGIONAL LEAGUE

RULES & REGULATIONS 23/24



1. ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 The Netball South West Regional League shall be governed and managed by the Regional Management Board, through its Competition and Events Working Group (CEWG).
- 1.2 The decisions of the CEWG, 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.
- 1.4 Conduct of all players, coaches and team officials playing in the Regional League shall be governed by the Regional League Code of Conduct which is contained in the online registration, and which is a condition of participation in the regional league.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of all Team Managers, Coaches and Captains to ensure that all participants are conversant with the league rules and regulations and that all participants (including spectators) are made aware of the codes of conduct.

2. PLAYING QUALIFICATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Eligibility to enter the Regional League is open to any club or team which is a member of England Netball, Netball South West 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 CEWG.
- 2.2 Entry to the Regional League will be determined by the CEWG 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 CEWG in whatever way it sees fit.
- 2.3 Each team shall pay an entry fee, which shall be determined at the start of each season. A deposit of £100 shall be paid by each team; this is retained as indemnity against a team cancelling any of their fixtures, (see clause 5.7) withdrawing from the league during the season or serious rule infringements. The deposit shall be refunded when a team leaves the NSW Regional League structure under the normal processes of promotion or relegation. In addition, clubs will be liable for court and umpiring costs as set out in the entry particulars.
- 2.4 No club may have more than three teams participating in the Regional League structure.
- 2.5 By entering a team in the Regional League, clubs/teams agree that:
 - They will abide by these rules and regulations.
 - They are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation.
- 2.6 In order to qualify to participate in the Regional League, a player shall be a member of England Netball and a member of the club.
- 2.7 A team may register up to three (3) players who are not Primary Club members in their squad; all others must be a Primary Club members. No player playing in another NSW regional league team or in any other region's Regional League may participate in the

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NSW Regional Leagues. Players playing in the National Premier League may not participate in the Regional League once they have played 18 quarters at the higher level, whether for a team in their own club, a team in another club or another team playing in a different region, unless in exceptional circumstance and if permission has been granted by the CEWG. Clubs also with teams in the National Premier League shall lodge their Premier squad registration sheets with the CEWG at the start of the season and update them when player registrations are amended.

2.8 All players must have their full membership recorded on the England Netball online ENgage system, and their subscription paid, prior to their participation in the Regional League, as detailed below. Each player shall declare which is their Primary Club on their ENgage account.

2.9 All players must be over 14 years of age at midnight on 31st August prior to the commencement of the Regional League unless they have completed the Age Banding Consent Form and submitted it with the team registration form. The Consent form and guidance is here:

www.Englandnetball.co.uk/support/support-for-organisations/leagues/competition-governance/

2.10 All players must be able to provide proof of membership to England Netball and their club as random checks may be carried out.

2.11 During all Regional league matches, Team Managers must always carry proof of age for all players under the age of 18 and a copy of Age Banding Consent Forms applicable to Players listed on the Squad Registration Sheet. Proof of age comprises of one or more of the following:

- a) Copy of birth certificate.
- b) Copy of passport.
- c) Copy of medical card.

2.12 The Regional League is a competition for biological females only. Only biological female participants can be included on the team registration sheet as a player. This is in line with England Netball's Premier League Regulations, and subject to review of their current Gender Policy:

[\(https://www.Englandnetball.co.uk/document/trans-inclusion-guidance/\)](https://www.Englandnetball.co.uk/document/trans-inclusion-guidance/)

2.13 In line with the England Netball guidance for the National Premier Competition, it is recommended that individuals (player, coach, umpire) if pregnant should only participate with approval from their doctor and in accordance with any guidelines issued by EN.

The England Netball Personal Accident insurance cover excludes any loss or expense due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage or any consequence thereof. If, for example, a member who is pregnant is involved in an accident not related to the pregnancy, subject to the conditions of the policy, the relevant benefits would be payable. However, if any situation (such as hospitalisation) was prolonged as a direct result of pregnancy, pregnancy complications or even early childbirth, then this portion of any claim is not covered.

3. REGISTRATION OF SQUAD MEMBERS

3.1 Initial squad sheets for each participating team must be completed fully for each player and lodged with the CEWG at least 5 days before the first match of the season via the Regional Office southwest@Englandnetball.co.uk. Teams may only use those players whose names appear on their squad registration list held by the Regional Office.

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3.2 Any additions to the squad sheets must be lodged with the CEWG prior to playing the fixture via the Regional Office southwest@englandnetball.co.uk. N.B. It is advised that additional players are registered before 12 noon on the Thursday before a fixture in order that membership checks can be carried out.

3.3 Once a player has been named on a squad sheet and has played, she cannot transfer to another club during the current playing season. Consent to a transfer may be given by the CEWG in unusual or exceptional circumstances where written request is made by the player and clubs involved, with all correspondence on player transfer having been copied to all concerned.

3.4 Prior to the start of each match, each team shall declare who are the Team Officials. A team may have up to 5 officials which shall include a coach holding a UKCC Level 2 qualification as a minimum, and at least one primary care person, who shall hold a first aid qualification. The primary care person shall have some form of identification (e.g. arm band).

The team sheet shall also list the names of up to twelve (12) players. The team sheet shall be supplied by the home team and shall be lodged with the Technical Officials' table prior to the match commencement. The Team Officials together with up to five (5) players not on court will constitute the Team Bench and must not include spectators.

3.5 Clubs which have a team also participating in a connected league i.e. England Netball's National Premier League, or NSW RL1, RL2 or RL3, must abide by the principle of having separate squads. The following provisions will control the movement of players:

3.5.1 The top RL squad must identify a minimum of six (6) tied players. None of these players will be permitted to play in a lower team from that club in the regional league structure. Non-tied players will be allowed to play in a lower team from that club. Clubs also with Premier League teams who lodge their squad details with England Netball must identify their six tied players to NSW from this list.

3.5.2 Any player will be able to play in a higher squad up to a maximum of 18 quarters. Thereafter they will be tied to the higher level and identified as a permanent member of that squad and will not be able to play down again.

3.5.3 If a tied player is released from the higher squad for reasons of injury the club must seek permission of the CEWG for them to play in the lower squad.

3.5.4 No player registered with a VNSL franchise (excluding NPL squads) may play in the Regional League except in exceptional circumstances, and then they must have prior consent of the CEWG.

3.6 In the event of end of season play-offs being required to resolve promotion or relegation issues, the eligibility of players in each team shall be covered by the rules in Section 3.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE LEAGUE

4.1 The Regional League has three divisions, RL1, RL2 and RL3 (the latter being subdivided into North and South parallel sub-divisions). Each division will be contested between as many teams as determined by the CEWG from time to time. The number of teams will not normally be less than eight (8), or more than twelve (12).

4.2 In each division each team shall play each other twice.

4.3 Teams will be awarded league points as follows:

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- 5 points for a win.
- 3 points for a draw.
- 2 points for a losing team scoring within 5 goals of the winner's score.
- 1 point for a losing team scoring more than half the winner's score.

4.4 A results table will be compiled based on the points awarded to each team. Where two (2) teams are level on points:

- Goal average shall be used to determine their relative positions, i.e., the team with the higher average score over the course of the season shall take precedence.
- If goal average does not differentiate between the teams, then goal difference shall be applied, i.e., precedence shall be given to the team with the greater difference between goals scored and goals conceded.
- If goal difference does not differentiate between the teams, then the team with the greatest number of goals scored for shall take precedence.
- Where one of the teams has its goal average, goal difference or total number of goals scored for affected by cancellations, then the goals scored by and against defaulting team(s) shall be omitted from the calculations. For example, if one team received 5 points for a cancelled fixture, then the goals scored by the other team against the offending team will not be included when its goal average or goal difference is calculated.
- If neither goal average nor goal difference nor goals scored for 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.
- If none of the above differentiates between the teams, the CEWG, shall determine the means of differentiation.

4.5 The team which finishes top of RL1 at the end of the season will be the Champions of the competition. They may then be eligible for promotion to the England Netball Premier league structure in accordance with the rules of the England Netball Premier League competition prevailing at the time. If the top finishing team is not eligible, the second placed team will be eligible.

4.6 At the end of each season, any team or teams which are based in the NSW region, and which is relegated from England Netball Premier League structure, will be automatically included within RL1 for the following season.

4.7 At the end of each season, promotion and relegation will take place between all three divisions in accordance with procedures agreed by the CEWG. Under normal circumstances, the intention is that:

- the 2 bottom placed teams in RL1 are relegated to RL2
- the top 2 teams in RL2 to be promoted to RL1
- promotion and relegation between RL2 and RL3 North/South sub-divisions will depend on the geographical location of the relegated RL2 teams and may need be determined by a play-off competition at the end of the season.

The CEWG reserve the right to change the number of teams in promotion and relegation places in the event of circumstance outwith their control but will make every endeavour to notify teams with adequate advance notice.

4.8 At the end of each season, relegation/promotion will take place between the RL3 divisions, and the constituent county leagues in accordance with procedures agreed by the CEWG and the County associations. It is usual that the bottom placed team in both RL3N and RL3S shall be relegated to the relevant county leagues. The second from bottom team of each and one nominated team from each of the county leagues (usually the winner of the highest league) shall compete in a play-off tournament, with the winners and runners-up gaining promotion into either RL3N or RL3S. The

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relegation/promotion and format of the play-offs may need to be varied depending on, inter alia, how many teams are nominated by the county associations. The play-off rules and player eligibility shall be determined by the CEWG (the latter in line with the requirements of Section 3 above).

5. FIXTURE ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Matches shall be played on a home and away basis (except for those fixtures that have been identified as “neutral” or “group” venues, when the CEWG shall make arrangements for fixtures) at a venue approved by the CEWG. The facility must provide adequate run-off space and location for a Technical Officials table. There shall also be provision for the score to be displayed and an audible signal (e.g., hooter) to the umpires for the end of each quarter.

5.2 Matches shall be played on an indoor court suitable for regional league netball, with adequate run-off, sunken posts if possible, and with changing and showering facilities for all genders, unless otherwise agreed by the CEWG. All teams shall provide the CEWG with photographs (to include goal line and side line run-off) of their home court prior to their first home fixture.

5.3 The home team shall be responsible for booking the designated venue and shall bear the cost. For neutral venues organised by the CEWG, venue costs may be passed on in full to the participating teams.

Match start times shall be between 11.00 and 15.30 unless permission has been granted by the CEWG. The venue’s changing facilities shall be available to the visiting team 60 minutes prior to the match start time and the court must be available to players at least 30 minutes prior to the match start time.

5.4 All matches must be played on the dates specified in the fixtures schedule, commencing between the times specified, unless agreed otherwise by the CEWG.

RL1 matches - Sundays, except when specified otherwise to accommodate Teams Jets (Jersey) matches.

RL2 matches – Saturdays.

RL3 matches – Saturdays or Sundays. The home team shall decide on which day they plan to play their fixtures (which do not have to be same day throughout the season) and these shall be published to all teams before the start of the season.

It shall be the responsibility of the teams to provide to the CEWG full details of their fixture venue and timings prior to the start of the season. Any changes for specific matches must be notified in good time to the away team and to the umpires.

5.5 All teams shall be responsible for arranging its own travel, and the costs of this, and shall allow sufficient travelling time to cover any unexpected delays. Any team which fails to arrive on time must take the court within 10 minutes of 5 members of the squad arriving, and in any event within 15 minutes of the agreed start time. If court bookings prevent the match being completed, the result and a report on the amount of time played should be submitted to the CEWG. The CEWG shall decide if the result as far as played should stand, or if the late team should forfeit the match. Any team arriving more than 15 minutes after the agreed start time shall forfeit the match, and the non-offending team shall be awarded the points as winners by default. Teams who are delayed for any reason must contact the home team to explain their late arrival.

5.6 No team may postpone or cancel a fixture. Matches which are postponed due to extreme and unforeseen circumstances, e.g., flash flood, heavy snowfall, will be rescheduled by the CEWG to a reserve date.

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- 5.7 If a team fails to play a match:
- The non-offending team shall be awarded five (5) league points for the match, and the team which cancels shall have five (5) league points deducted from their total.
 - The team which cancels may forfeit their £100 deposit and may be liable to pay any costs which the non-offending team and match officials have incurred, subject to the determination of the CEWG.
- 5.8 In the event that a match which is abandoned for any reason, e.g., because of serious injury, the result of that match will be determined by the CEWG, having regard to the score at the time at which play was suspended.
- 5.9 In the event of a kit colour clash the away team shall change their bib colour which must achieve significant difference (not a reversal of the same colours). Both teams are reminded to check their opposition's playing colours prior to the fixture.
- 5.10 The home team shall provide a hard copy of the Discipline Form on the Technical Officials' table for completion in conjunction with the umpires. Any completed form shall be submitted to the CEWG as directed on the form.

6. MATCH REGULATIONS

- 6.1 All games shall be played to the World Netball Rules of the Game currently in force in England at the time, except where specific regional league regulations may apply.
- 6.2 All matches shall be of one hour's duration (i.e., four (4) quarters of fifteen (15) minutes each, 4 minutes between quarters and 8 minutes at half time).

7. MATCH OFFICIALS

- 7.1 For all RL1 and RL2 matches, the CEWG shall appoint both umpires. For RL3 matches the home team shall provide both umpires for the fixture, from the pool of NSW approved umpires.
- 7.2 Ideally, RL3 umpires should be independent of either club (not a member of or deemed to have a relationship with) and should officiate at no more than 3 matches for any team per half season (6 matches per year). If independent umpires are not available, then the team shall notify lesley.thomas@glos-netball.org.uk and their opponents at the earliest opportunity. Both need to agree to the appointment of a non-independent umpire.
- 7.3 Umpires shall be selected from the pool of approved Umpires (database maintained by the NSW Officiating Group). Minimum umpire qualification requirements are:
- RL1 - Netball Europe B award and approved by the CEWG/Regional Officiating Lead (ROL).
- RL2 and 3 – Netball Europe C award who is actively working towards the B award and is approved by the ROL and County Officiating Lead (COL). This approval includes attendance on a B award course within 2 years prior to the match date.
- NSW reserve the right to appoint umpires who are actively working towards a higher level and are being mentored.
- 7.3 All umpires officiating in the regional league shall have taken a Multi-Stage Fitness Test (MSFT) and reached level 6.1 as a minimum prior to the first match umpired. Written evidence of the MSFT shall be sent to the NSW Regional Umpire Coordinator gina.pearce@btinternet.com

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The MSFT must be witnessed by a Registered Fitness Instructor, a Qualified PE Teacher or a Qualified Netball Coach (Minimum Level 2). The MSFT form can be supplied on request to the NSW Regional Umpire Co-Ordinator.

- 7.4** All RL1 and RL2 teams shall pay an equal sum into the Umpire Expenses fund. The amount and frequency shall be determined by the CEWG prior to the start of the season, to cover all potential costs of umpire travel during the season.
- 7.6** For other divisions, both teams **shall equally share** umpire travel expense costs for each match and pay the umpires on the day. The current NSW Expenses Payment policy is available on request.
- 7.7** All RL3 teams shall provide the NSW Regional Umpire Co-Ordinator gina.pearce@btinternet.com with details of the Umpires for their games a minimum of 7 days prior to the game date.
- 7.8** Where possible an umpire should only umpire one Regional Game (of any type) per day. If there is a need for them to umpire two games in one day, there should be a minimum of a one-hour break between the finish of the first game and the start of the second game.
- 7.9** In the event that an umpire fails to arrive, or is injured or taken ill during a match, the following procedure will be applied:
- 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 CEWG must be informed immediately after the match and will determine the validity of the result of the game.
- 7.10** The CEWG has responsibility for procedures which ensure that umpires conform to a standard of physical fitness and competency which allows them to keep pace with the speed, variability and standard of the game(s). The CEWG reserves the right to refuse/withdraw permission for an umpire to officiate in the Regional League.
- 7.11** Scorers and timekeepers (Technical Officials) shall be required for all fixtures. Each team shall provide a non-participating (i.e. not a listed playing squad member) competent scorer and a timekeeper for the whole match; all officials shall sit together in a location directed by the umpires. This will constitute the Technical Officials Bench. They are responsible for keeping the correct score, and correct match time and injury times, not the umpires, and completing the Player Discipline Sheet. The home team shall be responsible for providing the Player Discipline Sheet and sending in the completed sheet immediately after the match.
- 7.12** 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.
- 7.13** The CEWG reserves the right to use any Regional Fixture for mentoring, pre-assessing or assessing of Umpires. The originally allocated umpires shall stand down, and each team shall be required to pay a maximum of £25 for umpire expenses.

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8. REGISTRATION OF RESULTS

- 8.1 On completion of the game the team/score sheet deposited at the Technical Officials Bench at the start of the game is to be fully completed with the result, this is then the official result sheet.
- 8.2 The official result sheet must be checked and signed by the scorer(s), both captains and umpires and emailed to the CEWG immediately following the match. The home team shall be responsible for emailing the completed result sheet in accordance with the instructions on the sheet.
- 8.3 The result of each match must be submitted by **both** teams immediately after the match using the current online system (instructions issued separately).

9. QUERIES, COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

- 9.1 If a team has a concern over any aspect of a Regional fixture, they should in the first instance express these by email to the CEWG.
- 9.2 If any Team, Match or Technical Official wishes to raise an official complaint regarding the playing of a match and/or its result they must inform both teams and the umpires on the day of the match.
- 9.3 The Discipline Form shall be used to record disciplinary actions during the match. If an umpire has cause to suspend or send off a player, or a member of the team bench or discipline anyone associated with the team, this shall be recorded by the umpire who shall submit a written report of the incident to the CEWG. The report shall be kept on record by the CEWG, and it may be referred to if future incidents are reported.
- 9.4 Any queries or complaints regarding the playing of a match and/or its result must be submitted in writing to the CEWG within four (4) working days. Advance notice of such query or dispute should also be provided to the CEWG by telephone or email within 48 hours of the end of the fixture.
- 9.5 All queries, complaints and disputes regarding the playing of a match and/or its result will be determined in the first instance by a sub-committee convened by the CEWG, which will use best endeavours to determine the issue within ten (10) days of the complaint being received.
- 9.6 The CEWG shall determine the penalty to be imposed on teams and players who are in breach of these rules and regulations regarding the playing of matches in the Regional League. Such penalties will include reprimands, the deduction of league points, fines, suspensions, and expulsion from the competition, except as specified below:
 - The use of an unregistered player or player who does not hold EN Membership will result in a deduction of 3 league points.
 - The use of a player who is under age without written permission (see Clause 2.10) will result in a warning followed by a deduction of 2 league points if it occurs a second time.
 - Failure to play on more than one occasion may result in expulsion from the league. If a team cancels, the offending team will meet any costs incurred by the non-offending team.
- 9.7 In the event that any team wishes to appeal against the decision of this sub-committee, it must notify the CEWG within two (2) working days of receipt of the decision. In this event, the matter will be considered under England Netball's current Disciplinary Regulations or Complaints Procedures (howsoever named). The decision of the

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Appeals Panel will be final and binding on all parties. The Appeals Panel will have the power to:

- Endorse the decision of the CEWG, and uphold any penalty imposed.
- Endorse the decision of the CEWG and increase or decrease any penalty imposed.
- Overturn the decision of the CEWG, and increase, decrease or remove any penalty imposed.

- 9.8** Any team which wishes to appeal more generally against the governance and management of Regional League by the CEWG, or against specific decisions made by it, must also observe the procedures laid out in the current England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations or Complaints Procedure (howsoever named).
- 9.9** Any teams which fail to observe the procedures laid out in the preceding clauses will invalidate their right to raise a query, complaint, or appeal.
- 9.10** No team may claim victory by default in any match without first submitting itself to the procedures laid out in these rules and regulations.
- 9.11** Any complaint which does not concern the playing of a match and/or its result, but which is made in respect of a disciplinary offence, will be addressed in the first instance by an Investigation Committee convened under, and acting in accordance with, the Disciplinary Regulations of England Netball. Such a Committee shall have the power to refer the complaint to a Disciplinary Panel, which shall proceed in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations of England Netball.

10. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISOS

- 10.1** All clubs will be held responsible for their players, officials and spectators and their conduct.
- 10.2** It is the responsibility of each team to provide adequate first aid cover for its players and officials, which shall also be made available to the match officials on request.
- 10.3** If an accident occurs at any match where a player, coach, official (umpire or match bench), spectator or staff member is injured, the accident reporting procedure should be followed as detailed on <https://www.Englandnetball.co.uk/membership/insurance/report-a-claim/>

This procedure should be followed for ALL injuries and accidents, regardless of whether medical treatment is given.

- 10.5** Teams shall be responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with local league rules and regulations which may impact the movement of players between Regional League and local league squads.