

The League Regulations for West Clubs Women's Hockey League have been amended to manage the impact of COVID-19 on League hockey for the season 2020/21. These are aligned to the guidelines issued by England Hockey.

Clubs are required to adhere to the Government guidelines in relation to COVID-19.

A sub-committee has been set up under Clause 2i) to support the Committee members in managing any issues arising due to COVID-19. The Sub-Committee will support the elected League Committee members and help ensure consistency to deal with these issues

The changes detailed in this document relate to the period from the date of this document to the start of the League season 2021/2022 ONLY.

2) ORGANISATION/MANAGEMENT

- (e)** The Annual League Meeting shall be held by no later than 1 month before League start date.

Query – it is unlikely there will be a physical ALM and I think this should be recognised in the regulation so would suggest:

If a physical ALM cannot be held at least 1 month before the League start date the proposed amendments to the Regulations will be circulated to clubs for agreement. The finalised Regulations for 2020/21 shall be published no later than 1 month before the League start date.

- (g)** All trophies will be presented annually at the Annual League Meeting and must be collected by a member of the winning club. Trophies must be returned to the Nominated Committee Member, by the date of the last match in the season following their win.

3) THE STRUCTURE

- (b)** Any team that has WON promotion in any of the West leagues below Premier 1, may opt out of promotion in the West by informing the League Secretary within 3 weeks from their last match. They will be replaced by the next highest placed team in the division if they so wish.

4) MEMBERSHIP

- (b)(ii)** pay a membership fee for each participating team. This fee shall be approved by the West Council and shall be paid by the first League match. Any club not having paid the League fees by this date will be sent a reminder. If a club fails to act on this reminder and the fees remain unpaid two weeks after the League has started, a fine of £25 will be imposed.

A club will not be required to pay a fee for a team that has been ghosted.

- iii)** As a condition of membership of the League clubs must ensure their basic details are on the WCWHL website and are updated by the start of the season

- d) Applications from new teams wishing to join the League must be no later than one month before the end of the season.
- f) Any club wishing to withdraw a team once the League has commenced, must withdraw their lowest team. Applications for re-entry cannot be made during the season in which the team withdraws and must be made in accordance with Regulation 4d. In exceptional circumstances and on written application the League Committee, may vary or rescind this regulation under Regulation 2 j)
- i) A club can apply to ghost a team up to the deadline of 11:59pm on Monday 5th October 2020 by sending a request to the League Secretary using the form on the League website. If the application is agreed clubs shall then face no penalty and may re-integrate those teams into the Division from which they ghosted for the 2021-22 season.
- ii) Where a club is granted permission to ghost a team which is not their lowest XI(s) (i.e. ghosting their 2nd XI, whilst the 3rd XI continue); the ghosted team shall be deemed to have finished the season on zero points and ranked accordingly, which may result in relegation.
- iii) If the ghosting request is due to player unavailability due to Covid-19 clubs shall be required to provide a list of those player names. Should these players return to hockey during the season without the approval of their Divisional Secretary sanctions may be imposed.
- g) Any club wishing to change its name from one season to the next must have notified the League Secretary before the last League matches are played. Before any such notification can take place the club must have received permission to change its name, firstly from the County Association through which it is affiliated then from EH, and then from the WHA.

5) PLAYERS

- c) A player shall be allowed to change her League club. This shall be done by the completion of the online version of the Player Transfer Form only. No other form will be accepted. The form must then be sent to ALL the appropriate Divisional/Regional Secretaries of her new and previous club. It is the responsibility of the player to notify her previous club of her intended move. The transfer form must be received, accepted and acknowledged by ALL the relevant Secretaries at least 8 days prior to the player participating in a match. No transfers will be allowed after in the last month of League matches in any season and the player must be a paid up member of her new club.

REGISTRATION

- e)(iii) No registrations will be accepted in the last month of the season.

f) NOMINATION

- ii) The list of nominated players is to be received by **ALL** appropriate Divisional/Regional secretaries within two weeks of the start of the season.

- v) Nominated players must be regular players for the relevant team, play at least 14 games of that team's fixtures, with the exception of a nominated goalkeeper, and must appear regularly on the appropriate match sheet. This will be assessed at both mid-season and the end of the season and discretion will be applied in respect of unplayed games or season not completed.
- vii) Clubs may change the list of nominated players twice in a season, two months and four months after the first League game of the season, and a revised list is to be received by ALL the appropriate Divisional Secretaries by these dates. However, if a nominated player is de-registered from the National League she must be replaced within 7 days

7) MATCHES

- a)(ii) played on dates agreed by the League Committee and the West Council or PRIOR to the set date with the agreement of both teams.

Due to the increased travelling involved with the introduction of teams from South Wales, Premier 1 teams can bring their games forward of the set date to allow for 'double headers' to be played over a weekend. The brought forward game can be played either on the Friday evening before the set Saturday game or on the Sunday after the set Saturday game. Both teams have to agree in writing in accordance with Regulation 7 iv) and the appropriate Division secretary and WHA Umpiring Sub Committee notified of any agreement.

To overcome poor pitch or player/umpire availability and with the agreement of both teams and the appropriate Regional Secretary, matches can also be played during the week prior to the original fixture, including Friday, or on the Sunday immediately following the original fixture.

No change to the remainder of (a)(ii).

- e) The home team is expected to offer post-match hospitality and if it is not able to do so must advise the travelling team when confirming the match details or at the earliest opportunity thereafter. Similarly, the travelling team should advise the home team at the earliest opportunity if they are not staying after the match but in any case no later than 48 hours before the match day.
- f) All League matches shall be completed within four weeks of the last scheduled date of the season. The exception to this may be those matches including teams involved in league play-offs.
- g) Any team not fulfilling a League match will incur a penalty under Regulation 12(g). If the reason is under 9(b)(ii) then a rearrangement may be allowed by the Divisional/Regional Secretary

8) UMPIRES

Umpires for matches in Premier 1 shall be appointed by the WHA Umpiring Sub-Committee where possible. ALL other teams shall be responsible for arranging both umpires for all of their home games. These must be of the correct standard, and they shall umpire the whole of the game.

Reason: To reduce travel and risk.

- a)(ii) Umpires for matches in Divisions 2 and below of each Regional League shall hold a qualification as in i) above and if not shall be a Club Umpire-Unassessed. Two club unassessed umpires per game will be allowed and this arrangement must be mutually agreed by both teams taking part in the game at least one week prior to the date of the fixture.

9) POSTPONEMENT

- a) Postponement of matches shall normally occur only in the event of adverse weather or ground conditions but Covid 19 concerns upon arrival at the pitch due to the requirements not being able to be followed will also be considered. Postponement because of the state of the pitch on arrival must be agreed by BOTH umpires. The match report form should be crossed through and signed by BOTH umpires and forwarded to the appropriate Secretary along with a full explanation if the postponement is due to Covid 19 concerns.
- b)(i) Postponement of any match in any League MUST be notified to the appropriate Division/Regional Secretary by no later than 7.00 pm on the date of the match. All late notifications shall incur a fine of £10.
- (ii) If the postponement reason is for Covid 19 reasons a written explanation of the reasons must be provided to the appropriate Division/Regional Secretary as soon as the need for a postponement is known. It is expected this would be no later than 24 hours before the match.
- c) Matches postponed shall be played within 22 days (which includes Sundays) of the original fixture. The express permission of the Divisional/Regional Secretary must be obtained for any times outside of this limit.
- d) Postponed matches must be re-arranged in accordance with Regulation 7 a) iv) and the appropriate Divisional/Regional Secretary notified in writing by the HOME team within 7 days of the original date.

If a date cannot be mutually agreed within 7 days, the Divisional/Regional Secretary will check the fixture lists of the respective teams and set a date accordingly. Premier Division teams must also notify the WHA Umpiring Sub-Committee of the date of any re-arranged match.

Reason: With no mid-season break and the scheduled season end date being 24th April rearranged games need to be played as soon as possible after the original fixture. The EH suggestion regarding slip dates was deemed too onerous to adopt.

11) SCORING

- d) At the end of the 2020/21 season if there are more teams on nil points, due to ghosting (see (f)(ii) above), than there are relegation positions then those teams will be ranked based on their final positions at the end of the 2019/20 season.
- e) For the 2020/21 season see Appendix 1 regarding the implications of a full season not being completed.

12) PENALTIES

- g) Any team not fulfilling a League match shall be deemed to have lost the game 5-0 and points will be awarded accordingly. The offending team will incur the deduction of an additional three points. Fines will be levied on the offending teams as follows:

Where the failure relates to issues caused by Covid the Divisional /Regional Secretary has discretion regarding points deduction and financial penalties and will take into consideration the level of control the Club had regarding the matter.

- h) Playing players 'up or down' that breaches 5(d) shall incur a fine of £50, loss of the game 5-0 and the deduction of a further 3 points. A further 3 points will also be deducted from the team(s) within the Club in which the players normally play.

13) AMENDMENTS

- a) Suggestions to amend these Regulations may only be made:
 - i) by Clubs sending any proposed changes to the League Secretary one month before the last date of League matches. Suggestions must be seconded by another League club in writing.

Appendix 1– 2020/21 season only

If the season cannot be completed due to the decisions of England Hockey and Hockey Wales that all hockey is suspended the following shall apply.

- If more than 80% of the scheduled League fixture dates have elapsed (based on a 12 team division) then the final table will be decided on a PPG basis when PPG represents the number of points gained by teams in all League fixtures divided by the number of fixtures played. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If all teams in the Division have played each other once but less than 80% of the scheduled league fixture dates have elapsed (based on a 12 team division) then the final table will be decided by the number of points gained by teams when each team had played each other once. i.e. only the results of these matches shall count to the final table, i.e. not the result of any reverse fixtures. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If less than half the scheduled league fixture dates have elapsed then the season shall be declared null and void. In this instance the 2021/22 season will be based on the team placements published for the 2020/21 season.

If the season is revised with the expectation that at least 16 scheduled dates are available.

- Each team shall play all other teams in its Division once, on a home or away basis, on revised dates specified by the League. This shall form Phase 1 of the Division. The Division will then be divided into two sections, top and bottom, based on placings at this time and each team will play all other teams in its section on a home or away basis on revised dates specified by the League.
- If the season cannot be completed and all teams in the Division have played each other once and more than 80% of the scheduled matches have been played then the final table will be decided on a PPG basis when PPG represents the number of points gained by teams in all League fixtures divided by the number of fixtures played. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If all teams in the Division have played each other once but less than 80% of the scheduled matches have been played then the final table will be decided by the number of points gained by teams when each team had played each other once i.e. only the results of these matches shall count to the final table, i.e. not the result of any reverse fixtures. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If less than half the scheduled league matches have been played then the season shall be declared null and void. In this instance the 2021/22 season will be based on the team placements published for the 2020/21 season.

If the season is shortened with the expectation that at least 50% of the fixtures can be scheduled.

- Each team shall play all other teams in its Division once, on a home or away basis, on revised dates specified by the League.

- If the shortened season cannot be completed due to the decisions of England Hockey and Hockey Wales that all hockey is suspended then the season shall be declared null and void. In this instance the 2021/22 season will be based on the team placements published for the 2020/21 season.