WEST CLUBS' WOMEN'S HOCKEY LEAGUE
REGULATIONS
SEASON 2020 – 2021

ALL REGULATION CHANGES AGREED AT THE ALM ARE RECORDED IN RED

1) NAME

The league shall be known as THE WEST CLUBS' WOMEN'S HOCKEY LEAGUE, hereinafter referred to as "the League".

2) ORGANISATION/MANAGEMENT

a) The organisation of the League shall be undertaken by a Committee of the WHA which shall operate and be appointed in accordance with the Association's constitution and byelaws.

b) Honorary Regional Secretaries, Honorary Divisional Secretaries, the Honorary Administrative Officer and the Honorary League Treasurer shall be appointed by the League Committee and, if not already members of the Committee, shall become full members upon their appointment. The Committee may co-opt additional people as members as necessary.

c) The League shall have one meeting (the Annual League Meeting) annually and after the completion of the programme, to which representatives of each competing team shall be invited to attend with each competing team entitled to one vote. No proxy votes shall be permitted.

d) All Committee members shall be entitled to vote at the Annual League Meeting.

e) The Annual League Meeting shall be held by 30th June.

f) The League Committee shall meet as often as is deemed necessary for the proper running of the League and in accordance with WHA constitution.

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 1st April in any one season. Failure to return a trophy shall incur a fine of £25. Any winning club failing to collect their trophy at the ALM will be fined £25 plus the deduction of 2 points from the offending team/teams at the start of the following season. The trophy will remain with the League Committee until the following season.

h) In the event of any dispute that may arise in connection with the Regulations of the League, a written application shall be made to the League Secretary, for consideration by the League Committee. In the event of an appeal against a decision of the League Committee, the matter shall be referred to the Appeal Panel of the WHA, whose decision shall be final. No appeals shall be considered unless accompanied by a £75 deposit, with a refund only being made if the disputed matter is upheld.

i) In the event of an emergency, a Committee comprising of at least five persons, to include two from the Honorary League Chairman, the Honorary League Treasurer and the Honorary League Secretary and three other members of the Committee, shall be empowered to take any necessary decision.

j) The League Committee reserves the right to make any decision it deems fit, to retain the integrity of the League and for the benefit of its members in maintaining the standards and promotion of hockey throughout the West.

3) THE STRUCTURE

a) The League shall consist of four Premier Divisions (1, 2a, 2b and 2c) 2c is administered by the South Wales Women's League, four Area Divisions and eight Regional Divisions. The Structure shall be as per Appendix 1 attached to these regulations. Any amendments to the Structure shall be presented for approval at the ALM, in the normal manner.

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 15th May**, and be replaced by the next highest placed team in the division if they so wish.

c) In the first season of a merger between two or more clubs, the number of teams which shall be allowed to compete in the League shall be decided by the League Committee, such teams to fill the various spaces in the League vacated by the separate clubs. Subsequently clubs may apply to enter further teams, provided they have been an affiliated team at the time of their application.

4) MEMBERSHIP

a) Each club by its entry into the League shall be deemed to have given its consent to the League Regulations and shall be deemed to have agreed to abide by the decisions of the League Committee on any adjudication, penalties or sanctions it may from time to time see fit to impose. Failure to comply with any such penalties or adjudications, within **28 days** of receiving the Committee's communication, may result in membership of the League being rescinded.

b) All clubs participating shall:

i) be affiliated to EH, the WHA and their appropriate County Association.

ii) pay a membership fee for each participating team. This fee shall be approved by the West Council and shall be paid by 14th September annually. Any club not having paid the League fees by 14th September will be sent a reminder. If a club fails to act on this reminder and the fees remain unpaid by 30th September, a fine of £25 will be imposed.

iii) As a condition of membership of the League clubs must ensure their basic details are on the WCWHL website and to update these by the end of September each season. **Clubs must ensure that at least one, but preferably two, per team contact details are set to private or public on the website.** Clubs should keep their contact details up to date at all times. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £25.

NB The Occasional Affiliation is not sufficient for League membership.

c) Any club having failed to pay ALL their affiliation feeds by the stated date MAY be expelled from the League.

d) Applications from new teams wishing to join the League must be received by 1st March in any one season. Any new team wishing to join the League must be affiliated to EH, the WHA and their appropriate County Association at the time of their application.

e) Any new team wishing to join the League must play their matches on an artificial surface.

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)

g) Any club wishing to change its name from one season to the next must have notified the League Secretary by 1st May. 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

a) Conduct of players in the League shall be in accordance with the EH Code of Ethics and Behaviour.

b) i) Players participating in the League must be fully paid up members of the club they are representing

ii) Players can register for more than one West League club prior to the start of the league season, but once they have played in a league game then they will be registered for that club and that club only.

iii) Players must be at least aged 13 or older on first appearance for their club

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 1st March in any season and the player must be a paid up member of her new club.

Guidance can be found on the website.

Any breach of this rule will incur a penalty under Regulation 12 e).

d) No player shall play for more than one league team on the same day. The second game shall invoke a penalty under Regulation 12 e)

REGISTRATION

e) Each club shall register players prior to them participating in the League on the official registration forms for the current season only.

i) By submission of a numbered list of all playing club members to ALL the appropriate Divisional/Regional Secretaries **seven days before the first start date of the league season,** annually. Failure to comply will incur a fine of £25. **THE DATE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE WEB SITE.**

ii) Any additions to this numbered list of playing members must be received in writing, by post, fax or email by ALL the appropriate Secretaries by the Wednesday and acknowledged by the Friday of that week prior to the player participating in a match.

iii) No registrations shall be made **after** 1st March in any season.

iv) In the event of a team playing a player (or players) who has not been correctly registered for a League match a penalty will be incurred under Regulation 12 e).

f) NOMINATION

The following regulations are applicable to:

All Clubs with a team/s playing in the England Hockey League
All Clubs with a first team playing in Premier Divisions 1, 2A or 2B
All clubs with any team playing in Premier Division 1, not covered by the above.
NB Any breach of Regulations f i), ii), v) or vii) will incur a fine of £25.

i) A minimum of 8 players shall be nominated.

ii) The list of nominated players is to be received by and acknowledged by **ALL** appropriate Divisional/Regional secretaries by 1st October.

iii) Players nominated for a team playing in the England Hockey League (EHL) shall not play in any West League matches.

iv) Players nominated for teams playing in the West League shall not play for a lower West League team.

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 the mid season break and the end of the season.

vi) A copy of every National League match sheet shall be forwarded to be received electronically by the appropriate Divisional Secretary within 48 hours of the match date. The original form must be retained for the remainder of the season in case of query, Failure to do so will incur a fine of £10.

vii) Clubs may change the list of nominated players twice in a season, by November 30th and again by February 14th, 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

viii) If any club finds a nominated player cannot fulfil the criteria of a regular player, as above, through injury, illness, or any other reason, then the appropriate Division Secretary is to be informed in writing and discretion may be applied.

ix) If a nominated player plays for a lower team without the approval of the appropriate Division Secretary, that match will be treated as a breach of Regulation 7h) and 7i) and penalties awarded accordingly.

x) Any club that has two teams in a Division, i.e. 2 in Premier 1, 2 in Premier 2A or 2 in Premier 2B, may nominate a minimum of 12 players. These players can play for either team within the Division. The above regulations remain applicable.

6) UNIFORM

a) Club uniform shall be worn by players participating in League matches. All field players shall wear uniform that is described in their Club Information and will include shirts, skirts/skorts/shorts and knee length socks, with any additional items of clothing of the same colour specified for the adjoining piece of clothing. In the event of a clash of colours the away team shall change shirts and socks as necessary. Players participating in each game shall wear registration numbers 1-upwards (i.e. each player must be allocated a different registration number which they shall keep for the whole season). They may however, in exceptional circumstances, wear an alternative number whilst playing, provided the umpires have both numbers on their list. Any players not wearing a number on her back will not be allowed to participate in the game.

b) Goalkeepers shall be dressed in accordance with the Rules of Hockey.

7) MATCHES

a) All matches shall be:

i) played in accordance with the current Rules of the Game of Hockey published by the Hockey Rules Board.

ii)) played on dates agreed by the League Committee or PRIOR to the set date, including midweek, 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.

In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of both teams and the appropriate Regional Secretary, Division 3 may play their matches on the Sunday immediately following the set date.

NB If a team has to play on both Saturday and Sunday of the same weekend to accommodate cancelled fixtures, players may play for the same League team or a higher League team on the Sunday but they may NOT play for a lower League team. However, if a regular team player has to play up on the Saturday they can

play for their normal team on a Sunday. (Regular has the same meaning as for nominated players – see Regulation 5). Infringement of this rule incurs the same penalty as 7 h)

iii) played on synthetic turf.

iv) played on a pitch at a time arranged by the first named team and confirmed by the home team within 4 weeks of the date of the match and not later than 10 days prior to the scheduled date of the match, 15 days if the start time is before 1300 hours or after 1700 hours. Confirmation and acknowledgement of start time and venue must be made by both teams in writing or electronically using a method whereby records can be kept and stored for use in the event of any dispute. No Premier League match shall start before 11 am. No other league match shall start before 10 am or after 4.30 pm unless mutually agreed by both teams. Once a match has been confirmed in writing the venue or start time can only be re-arranged with the mutual agreement of both teams. Continued abuse will invoke a penalty to be decided by the League Committee (See Regulation 12k).

ENTERING START TIMES AND VENUES ON THE LEAGUE WEBSITE IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE OF SUFFICIENT CONFIRMATION OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITHOUT THE WHOLE OF THE ABOVE REGULATION BEING IMPLEMENTED BY BOTH THE HOME AND AWAY TEAMS.

v) All clubs are required to enter the start times of their matches on the League website no later than 21 days before the relevant fixture. Once the time has been entered it can only be amended up to 10 days before the fixture date providing your opposition has agreed, in writing or electronically using a method whereby records can be kept and stored for use in the event of any dispute.

vi) of at least 50 minutes playing duration. If a match is less than 50 minutes playing duration it shall be deemed null and void and replayed. Abandonment of matches must be agreed by BOTH UMPIRES.

vii) aimed to be commenced within 15 minutes of the agreed starting time provided two umpires of the correct standard are present.

b) Teams shall have available for both umpires a completed team list showing each player's shirt number and League number (if different) prior to the start of each game, The purpose of this list is to enable umpires to verify names and numbers of participating players.

c) The first named team shall provide at least two suitable match balls for each game.

d) First aid equipment and personnel shall be the responsibility of each team.

e) Hospitality – first named clubs are expected to offer pre-match hospitality where possible. POST MATCH **HOSPITALITY** IS ALWAYS EXPECTED.

f) All League matches shall be completed by the last Monday in April in the current season, or within 3 weeks of the last scheduled league date, whichever is later.

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).

h) If a team is not involved in a match (including National League) the club shall select its League teams as if all teams were in fact playing and shall not, **for any reason,** unfairly strengthen lower sides by including players from the squad of a higher team without a game. Teams are expected to consult with their relevant League Secretary if there is any doubt about what constitutes 'player from a higher team'. The League Committee, after an investigation, may impose a penalty under Regulation 12h).

i) If the League Committee feels that the result of a match has been affected by players playing either 'up or down', after investigation a penalty may be incurred under Regulation 12 h).

j) With advance notification (by the Friday night before a Saturday league game) to the relevant league secretary, a player is permitted to play in the field for their regular side and ALSO to play as a goalie in Divisions 2 or 3 up to 6 times a season without incurring a penalty.

8) UMPIRES

Refer to the Guidance for Clubs at www.wcwhl.co.uk/Information/Downloads

The League is not responsible for appointing umpires to League games and no authority exists for umpires to make any decision upon the Regulations of the League.

FIH Rules of Hockey require TWO umpires to officiate for every game. If a game is played without two umpires then a penalty will be imposed under Regulation 12 f).

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 for an umpire of the correct standard, for all of their matches, who shall umpire the whole of the game.

Regulations for Umpires officiating at League matches:

a) i) Umpires for all matches in the Premier and Area Divisions and Divisions 1 of each Regional League shall be a Club Umpire-Assessed or higher qualification.

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. Only one Club Umpire-Unassessed umpire 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.

A Club Umpire-Unassessed is an umpire who has attended an England Hockey Level 1 Umpire Course since September 2013 and holds an Umpire Unassessed Certificate.

b) i) An 'appointed' umpire is an umpire appointed to a League match by the WHA Umpiring Sub-Committee or a County HUA. It is the responsibility of the home club to request appointments of the appropriate body and to notify appointed

umpires of the match arrangements at least 5 days in advance of the match date and make payment of any fees for appointed umpires. Failure to do so will incur penalties from the respective umpiring bodies.

ii) Where the appropriate Regional or County Umpires' Association is able to provide appointed umpires clubs must accept the appointments.

c) If an appointed umpire fails to arrive and a suitable replacement (as in 8 a) is available the game shall be played if both captains agree with the proposed replacement before the game commences. The replacement umpire shall umpire the whole game unless agreed by both captains prior to the start of the game.

d) If an umpire is delayed the game may still be played providing 7 a) v) is met.

e) An umpire who becomes incapacitated may be replaced by another suitably qualified umpire. If no suitably qualified umpire is available Regulation 7 a) v) applies.

NB No umpire may play in the same match after starting to umpire.

f) In the event of a team using an umpire who is not qualified to officiate at a League Match a penalty will be incurred under Regulation 12 f).

NB This Regulation will only apply if the match has been played.

9) POSTPONEMENT

a) Postponement of matches may occur in the event of adverse weather or ground conditions. 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. If BOTH umpires cannot agree then the match will be abandoned, and the League should be informed according to 10 b).

Bad Weather Procedure - Advice

The home team representative should ascertain from the opposition the latest time of notification of cancellation, i.e. what time the opposition intends to depart for the pitch venue. If it is clearly evident before that time that the pitch will be unfit the visiting side and umpires should be informed immediately.

It is the responsibility of the home team to inspect the pitch prior to the above mentioned departure time and take a realistic view of the situation. Consultation with the opposition is advised so as to avoid unnecessary travelling by both players and umpires.

The AWAY team also has a responsibility to contact the HOME team prior to departure to confirm the fitness of the pitch.

If the Away team considers the conditions for travelling to or from a match are hazardous, as supported by the Environment Agency, the Met Office or Police, then they may refuse to travel. The Home team and the appropriate Division/Regional Secretary MUST be informed immediately.

NB In the case of genuine adverse travel conditions a game may be postponed or delayed. Full details must then be sent to the appropriate Secretary on the day of the match and confirmed in writing by the Wednesday of the following week. **If required,** adjudication will then be made by the League Committee on the merit of each case.

b) 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.

c) Matches postponed prior to Christmas shall be re-arranged and played by 1st March. Matches postponed after Christmas shall be re-arranged and played in accordance with 7 f).

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. This should be within 14 days of the original date.

If a date cannot be mutually agreed within 14 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.

e) The League cannot legislate for any financial loss or inconvenience in respect of postponed games. However the League Committee, after investigation, may take appropriate action under Regulation 12 k) if it is found either team failed to follow the above advice.

10) RESULTS

a) Following each League match it is the responsibility of both the HOME and AWAY teams to report the result of the match to the League through the online reporting via the website no later than 8.00 pm on the day of the match.

If a League match finishes after 8:00pm then the result MUST be reported by BOTH teams, as above, within 3 hours of the start of the match.

b) If a match is abandoned or not commenced for any reason, that information must be provided to the appropriate Divisional/Regional Secretary. Matches not played or abandoned MUST be reported through the online reporting via the website by ticking the appropriate box, no later than 8.00 pm on the day of the match.

c) A copy of the match report form is to be received electronically by the appropriate Divisional/Regional Secretary, within 48 hours following the fixture, signed by both captains and umpires.

The original must be retained by the home team for the remainder of the season should any dispute arise.

d) If the match report form has still not been received by the appropriate Divisional Secretary, by whatever means (irrespective of any fine incurred) within one week of the date of a match, a further fine of £10 will be incurred, together with a further fine of £15 for every additional week that the match report form is still not received.

11) SCORING

a) Scoring of League games shall be 3 (three) points for a win and 1 (one) point for a draw.

b) In the event of equality at the end of the season places shall be determined by consideration of each of the following in order:

i) the team with the greatest difference between goals scored and goals conceded

ii) the team with the greatest number of goals scored.

c) If equality for the promotion and relegation places still exists a play-off match will be organised, by the League Secretary, at a neutral venue and with appointed umpires. If this match results in a draw at the end of full time a full penalty shoot out competition will take place (i.e. 1 round of 5 penalty shoot outs followed by sudden death rounds as necessary).

12) PENALTIES

The following is a summary of those penalties previously described:

a) Failure to submit completed registration forms by the due date shall incur a fine of £25.

b) Failure by a team to submit the result of a match through the online reporting via the website will incur a fine of £10.

c) Failure of the Home team to forward the Match Report form to the appropriate Secretary within the allotted time shall incur a fine of £10.

d) All match report forms shall be completed legibly in order of registration number and in BLOCK CAPITALS. The Umpires' names shall be entered in the appropriate boxes in BLOCK CAPITALS. Failure to complete the form in this manner shall incur a fine of £10.

e) In the event of a team playing a player (or players) who have not been correctly registered for a League match the result of the match shall be declared a win by 5-0 to the non-offending team and points awarded accordingly. If the result of the match was a win by the non-offending team by more than 5-0 then the result will stand. A fine of £50 will be imposed on the offending team, together with the deduction of an additional 3 points. (A player suspended under EH Code of Ethics and Behaviour shall be deemed to be unregistered for the duration of her suspension).

f) In the event of a team using an umpire who is not qualified to officiate at a League match a fine of £25 will be imposed on the offending team.

NB This Regulation will only apply if the match has been played.

g) Any team not fulfilling a League match shall be deemed to have lost the game by 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:

1st offence by the team: £50 plus opposition's costs

2nd offence by the team: £75 plus opposition's costs

3rd offence by the team: £100 plus opposition's costs

4th offence by the team: the team shall be excluded from the League for the remainder of the current season. Application for re-entry cannot be made during the current season and shall be in accordance with Regulation 4d)

h) Playing players 'up or down' 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.

i) Where reference is made throughout these Regulations to 'notification to ALL relevant/appropriate Divisional/Regional Secretaries' then failure to do so shall incur a fine of £15

j) Fines, once levied, must be paid within 28 days of the date of the fine letter being received or they will incur a £15 administration cost.

k) Repeated infringement of regulations with or without a fixed penalty or failure to follow the guidance and advice within the Regulations shall be penalised as deemed appropriate by the League Committee, including (but not limited to) expulsion of a club or team, suspension of a club for up to three years, relegating a team to a lower Division, deduction of points and imposition of fines. In addition the League Committee may rescind membership of the League. See also 4a)

l) Where penalties impose the deduction of points, these may be carried over into the start of the new season.

13) AMENDMENTS

a) Suggestions to amend these Regulations may only be made:

i) by Clubs sending any proposed changes to the League Secretary by 1st March. Suggestions must be seconded by another League club in writing.

ii) by the League Committee making recommendations to the Annual League Meeting.

b) The consensus of opinions **at** the Annual League Meeting will be considered by the League Committee and recommendations put before West Council for ratification, where changes must be approved by a simple majority.

Sep 2020