**NORTH LONDON NETBALL LEAGUE**

**LEAGUE RULES 2015 – 2016**

The North London Netball League (hereafter to be known as the League) will be divided into seven Divisions of eight teams. The Divisions will be called Premier, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

**TEAMS**

1.1 Games will be played according to England Netball Rules and to England Netball Codes of Conduct for Athletes/Coaches/Umpires/Parents and Carers. Each club must confirm that the Codes of Conduct have been shared with all club members. Team Managers are responsible for the conduct of their team’s players, officials and supporters on match days.

1.2 All clubs and members shall comply with England Netball’s ‘Safe Guarding Young People in Netball’ policy.

1.3 All clubs shall comply with the league’s ‘Photographic & Imaging’ policy.

1.4 No piercings, or any item of jewellery, except a wedding ring and/or a medical alert bracelet, shall be worn. If either or both are worn, each shall be taped. No adornment that may endanger player safety shall be worn. Fingernails shall be short and smooth.

1.5 No team may commence playing until the annual subscription is paid.

1.6 Prior to the start of the season all clubs shall put up a bond against cancelled/forfeited games. The penalty for not fulfilling a fixture shall be agreed at the AGM. All monies forfeited will go to the League Development Fund. Outstanding monies will be returned to the club at the AGM, or at the clubs request can be carried over for the following season’s bond

1.7 At the beginning of each season each team shall register its playing colours. No player shall be allowed on court unless wearing the registered playing colours***.***

1.8 Each team must provide its own ball and unless it does so a match cannot be played.

1.9 Gloves may not be worn when playing netball. The League Committee may allow gloves to be worn in exceptional circumstances on production of an appropriate medical certificate.

1.10 Registration of players

1.10.1 Teams will be allowed an unlimited number of registered players per team in any one season, but a minimum of seven players per team must be registered with the Registration Secretary by midnight on the Thursday before the first match of the season. Players must be aged over 14 at 11.59pm on the 31st August immediately prior to the start of the season. Players aged under 14 may play in the league provided that a fully completed Age Banding Application Form is received by the Registration Secretary at the close of play on the day of their first game.

1.10.2 A team registration sheet with at least seven players’ names and signatures must be submitted to the registration secretary by close of play on the first game of the season.

1.10.3 Additional players may be registered provided that notice is given to the Registration Secretary by Midnight on the Thursday before the match on Saturday. All registrations must be made via email to the Registration Secretary

1.10.4 Additional players must submit documentation detailing their full name, specimen signature and England Netball affiliation number with the scorecard on the day of their first fixture.

1.10.5 Players registered in regional/premier leagues, or higher, may play in the league. However, they may only play in their club’s highest team. Any exception to this is at the discretion of the League Committee.

1.10.6 Players must be registered in teams A, B, C, D, etc. at the beginning of the season. In the event of a player being promoted or having to withdraw, a replacement registration must be made so that the team maintains the minimum registration of seven active players per team throughout the season.

1.10.7 If a player hasn’t played for 4 consecutive fixtures, they will be considered a dormant player and a replacement registration must be made immediately to maintain the minimum registration of seven active players per team. NB – Cancelled / forfeit games do not count towards the consecutive fixtures rule (for either of the teams involved).

1.10.8 A lower team player may be upgraded THREE times only during the season, on the FOURTH occasion she is deemed to be a member of the team to which she has been promoted. She may not be further promoted or demoted.

1.10.9 A lower team may only use ONE player (and not one who has previously been promoted in the same season) from a higher team on any one day, and no player may be demoted after the 11th fixture of the season (this also applies to those players changing clubs as per 1.10.10) unless at the discretion of the Committee. A higher team player may only play for a lower team permanently.

1.10.10 A player may only play for one club in the league at any one time. Should a player wish to leave their original club and play for another club during the course of a season, they will need to be formally released by that original club. This release must be received by the Registration Secretary by Midnight on the Thursday before their first game for the new club.

1.10.11 The demotion and promotion rules apply to active and dormant registrations alike.

1.10.12 Teams defaulting on any of 1.10.1 to 1.10.10 will have FIVE points deducted from their total.

1.10.13 If a club needs to withdraw a team, the club may only withdraw their lowest placed team in the league. The players from the withdrawn team may continue to play in the league but must be re-registered in a higher team.

1.11 Affiliation of players and umpires

1.11.1 All players and umpires must be affiliated with England Netball through their appropriate County. Clubs must submit a copy of the England Netball Club Roster to the Registration Secretary before the start of the season. Players or umpires may be added during the season but the club must confirm that they have been affiliated by re-submitting the England Netball Club Roster.

1.11.2. The League Committee reserve the right to undertake spot checks at any point during the season, to validate player registrations and umpire affiliations.

1.11.2 Teams found to use unaffiliated players or umpires will have FIVE points deducted from their total.

1.12 Team Benches

Premier Division and Division 1 only- The Team Bench, comprising the Team Manager, Coach 1, Coach 2, Primary Care 1 and Primary Care 2, together with up to 5 substitutes named on the scorecard, will be located in the area between Courts 8 and 9, adjacent to the Scorers/Timekeepers. All other spectators will be located on the side opposite the Team Bench.

**2.0 MATCHES**

2.1 All matches shall be played on the pre-arranged dates and at the times and on the courts allocated.

2.2 In exceptional circumstances teams may submit a request for a change in fixtures e.g. club wedding, club tour. Notification of the request to change must be received by the Fixtures Secretary by the 31st July. Any changes to fixtures will be at the discretion of the League Committee.

2.3 There will be central timing with a bell at the beginning and end of each game, but the umpire's whistle will start and finish the game. The games are to start at 9.00am (Division 6) 10.00am, 11.25am, 12.50pm and 2.15pm.

2.4 A team may claim points if their opponents do not have a minimum number of five players on court when the umpire’s whistle signals the start of play. A player arriving late may only enter the game after a goal has been scored or immediately following an interval or at a stoppage for injury or illness.

2.5 A match can only be replayed in the event of bad weather. In the event of temporary bad weather during a match, the umpires will decide whether it is safe to continue play. The duty League Committee member will decide whether play will be resumed or the match is to be abandoned. Teams must remain at the ground until the decision has been announced.

2.6 If a match is abandoned, the League Committee will decide whether the scores are to stand or if the match is to be replayed. Rearranged matches will be played at the same time as the original fixture on one of the two allocated spare dates (any deviation to this will be at the discretion of the League Committee).

2.7 Teams cancelling or failing to fulfil a fixture must concede the points. Teams cancelling a fixture with prior notice (i.e. up to the Friday before the game) will forfeit TWO points. Those failing to fulfil a fixture without prior notice will forfeit THREE points.

2.8 Upon completion of promotion and demotion tables at the end of the season, any team which has cancelled and/or failed to fulfil three games or more will be dropped a division in the following season. Any team in Division 6 which has cancelled and/or failed to fulfil three games or more will be demoted to the bottom of the waiting list.

2.9 In the event of teams withdrawing from the League during the playing season, all previous matches and points are removed from the record.

**3.0 MATCH OFFICIALS**

 **UMPIRES**

3.1. Each team must provide a suitably qualified umpire for their own match.

3.2 The minimum age for umpires is 18. However, umpires aged between 16 and 18 years of age, holding a C Award, can umpire any match according to the qualification required by the division but England Netball would recommend that they did not umpire “senior” matches. A club that supplies an umpire under 18 years old has a duty of care to the umpire and is responsible for providing a suitable adult for duration of the match, i.e.club coach or safeguarding officer. Clubs that fail to provide a suitable adult to a junior umpire will be reported to Middlesex County Netball Association.

3.3 Umpires must have reached the minimum of level on the multi stage fitness test for their division within 6 weeks of the start of the season.

3.3.1 Premier Division

Umpires in this division must have reached a minimum of level 6.1 on the multi stage fitness test and hold a

minimum B award, or C award being mentored within the England Netball Mentoring Scheme for their B award. The mentor must be present for the duration of the match. Umpire and mentor must print their name on the scorecard.

 3.3.2 Division 1

Umpires in this division must have reached a minimum of level 6.1 on the multi stage fitness test and hold a minimum C Award, actively working towards their B Award, and must have attended a B Award course in the last 2 years.

 3.4.3 Division 2, 3 and 4

Umpires in this division must have reached a minimum of level 5.1 on the multi stage fitness test and hold a minimum C Award.

The League Committee reserves the right to allocate umpires for the purpose of C Award testing in any division up to, and including, Division 2 Umpires being mentored within the England Netball Mentoring Scheme for their C Award may officiate in any division up to, and including, Division 2. The mentor must be present for the duration of the match. Umpire and mentor must print their name on the scorecard.

3.4.4. Divisions 5 and 6

Umpires in this division must have reached a minimum of level 4.1 on the multi stage fitness test and must provide proof of attendance at a Working towards C Award Course within the last 2 years.

3.5 No match is valid or may be played without two suitably qualified umpires.

3.6 Umpires must ensure that the score card is fully completed and signed by all players before the start of any match. Substitutes must also sign the cards before they come on to court for the first time.

3.7 Any team that fails to provide an appropriately qualified umpire will have THREE points deducted. TWO points will be deducted for teams who do not have an umpire present and ready to start when the bell rings to signal the start of a match. Any team which fails to provide an appropriately qualified umpire for three or more games in a season will be dropped a division in the following season**.**

3.8 Substitution of an umpire is only allowed when, due to illness or injury the allocated umpire cannot continue, or where a late arriving allocated umpire replaces a temporary umpire (appointed to cover in their absence). In all other instances a member of the League Committee must approve any change of umpire.

3.9 An umpire’s clothing shall be white or cream in colour on the upper body. Umpires shall wear appropriate sports footwear and clothing when officiating.

3.10 Umpires may umpire no more than two games on one day, preferably with an hour’s break in between matches. Umpires may only umpire a third match in exceptional circumstances and with the prior permission of the Duty League Committee member.

Playing umpires may play and umpire no more than three times on the same day. It is the responsibility of both the individual umpires and the clubs they are umpiring for, to comply with this rule. Umpires continuing to breach this rule will be given an official warning. Any further breach could result in a ban from umpiring in the league. Penalties will apply at the League Committee’s discretion.

 **SCORERS**

3.12 In addition to providing a suitably qualified umpire, all teams must provide a person to take and keep score for their umpire. The scorer must time the match, intervals and injury time.

3.13 Any team that fails to provide a scorer will have THREE points deducted. TWO points will also be deducted for teams who do not have a scorer present and ready to start when the umpire’s whistle signals the start of play.

**4.0 SUBSTITUTION AND TEAM CHANGES**

4.1 As per England Netball rules.

**5.0 STOPPAGES**

5.1.1 Play may be stopped for an injury or illness at the discretion of the Umpires. A stoppage of up to two minutes is allowed from when time is called to decide whether the injured or ill player is fit to continue play. This decision shall be left to the team's Officials. If the full two minutes are utilised, then the injured or ill player must either resume play or leave the court in response to the umpire’s notification of 30 seconds and 10 seconds remaining of that stoppage time. If the injury is such that the player cannot be moved, the match must be abandoned.

5.2 Play may be stopped by the Umpires for an emergency relating to:

(i) the equipment, court, weather or interference by outside agencies

(ii) a player's person or clothing

(iii) Officials officiating at a match.

Umpires shall decide the length of the stoppage or whether the match should be abandoned.

5.3 In the event of a match being abandoned, a written report should be submitted by the umpires to the League Committee, who will then decide whether the match is to be replayed.

**6.0 RESULTS**

6.1 FIVE points will be awarded for a win, THREE for a draw, TWO if you are within 5 goals of winning team and ONE point for the losing side if they score more than 50% of the winning team's score.

6.2 Each player and both umpires must print their name and sign the reverse of the score cards. Captains are responsible for the full completion of their team’s score card i.e. team name, date, time, player’s names & signatures, umpires’ signatures with the affiliation number and the correct final score that matches the other team’s score card.

Teams defaulting on any of the above will have ONE point (per omission) deducted from the team's total.

Captains must place the fully completed score cards in the box in the changing hut to be forwarded to the Registration Secretary. Teams failing to provide the score card will have FIVE points deducted for their team’s total.

6.3 Results will be posted on the website. Any penalty adjustments will be made only after consideration by and confirmation of the League Committee.

**7.0 PROMOTION / DEMOTION**

7.1 The team gaining the highest number of points in their Division shall be adjudged the winners of the Division. The two teams gaining the highest number of points shall be promoted from each Division (with the exception of the Premier Division) and those two teams with the lowest shall be relegated (subject to 7.3 below).

7.2 In the event of two teams being equal on points at the end of the season, promotion and relegation will be decided on goal difference.

7.3 Promotion and relegation shall be decided at the AGM and the League Committee shall have power to promote teams into different divisions if numbers drop in that division.

7.4 The winning team shall hold the perpetual trophy for twelve months.

**8.0 DISCIPLINE**

8.1 All queries or complaints regarding the playing of a match, the scoring and/or its result MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING to the League Complaints Co-ordinator within 72 hours.

8.2 Where the Complaint relates to the playing of a Match, the scoring, and/or its result, the relevant Team Captain/Official must do the following:

8.2.1 Inform their opponents and the Umpires of their complaint at the match.

8.2.2 Mark the Score Card with the words ‘under protest’.

8.2.3 Submit the Score Card in the usual way.

8.2.4 Submit the written complaint in full to the Middlesex County Liaison Officer who will acknowledge receipt.

8.3 ALL complaints and disputes regarding 8.2 will be determined in the first instance by the League Committee, which will use its best endeavours to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

8.4 The decisions made by the League Committee in relation to 8.2 are binding apart from where parties to the complaint have the right to appeal the decision under Section 9 APPEALS PROCEDURE.

8.5 Where a complaint relates to the administration of the league by the League Committee, such complaints will be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure of the Middlesex County Netball Association.

8.6 Where the complaint relates to the behaviour of an individual Player or Team participating, volunteering or individual attending a Match 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.

8.7 Members who misuse social media by engaging in offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour and/or abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end will be referred to Middlesex County Netball Association.

**9 APPEALS PROCEDURE**

9.1 The decision of the League Committee in relation to a complaint submitted in accordance with section 8.2 shall be final and binding on all parties save that a party has a right to appeal in the following circumstances:

9.1.1 If the decision has a potential impact on a match result, a league table, or the outcome of the Competition; AND

9.1.2 If there has been a failure by the League Committee to follow or act in accordance with these Regulations and/or has 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 set out below:

9.2 An appeal should be forwarded in writing from the Captain of the appealing Team to the Middlesex County Liaison Officer within 72 hours of receiving the decision, who will refer it to MCNA.

9.3 The appeal must be accompanied by a cheque for £100 (payable to MCNA) which will be returned if the appeal is upheld or if there are any other extenuating circumstances, a decision taken by the Competition Appeals Committee (9.4).

9.4 The MCNA will establish a Competition Appeals Committee which will consist of individuals that are independent of and not connected to the North London Netball League. One of those individuals will be appointed as the Chair.

9.5 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.

9.6 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.

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

9.8 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.

9.9 The CAC shall have the delegated power of the MCNA 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.

9.10 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.

9.11 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.

9.12 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.

9.13 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.