

# WORCESTER CITY NETBALL LEAGUE



## WORCESTER CITY NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26

### LEAGUE RULES – AFFILIATED AND GOVERNED BY THE INTERNATIONAL NETBALL FEDERATION (INF) RULES OF NETBALL AND NETBALL ENGLAND DOMESTIC RULES

*These rules have been adopted to best meet the needs of WCNL, where no rule or accompanying policy exists England Netball Rules will apply. All policy documents are available on WCNL and must be read in conjunction with these WCNL Rules.*

**ALL RULES WILL BE UPHELD BY A COMMITTEE WHO HAVE BEEN ELECTED BY THE REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS WHO WILL ENSURE THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF ALL MEMBERS ARE DEALT WITH EQUALLY AND FAIRLY.**

**THE WINTER AND SUMMER LEAGUES WILL OPERATE WITHIN THE OFFICIAL NETBALL SEASON, WHICH RUNS FROM SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> TO AUGUST 31<sup>ST</sup>. BOTH LEAGUES WILL BE OPEN TO NETBALL TEAMS THAT HAVE BEEN FORMED FROM THE REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS OF THEIR CLUB.**

1. The number of divisions will depend upon the entries to the League.
2. New teams entering the League will be reviewed prior to entry and will be placed in the appropriate division providing that there is a place vacant in that division.
- 2.1. League divisions will be decided at the discretion of the Committee. Teams are responsible for informing the Fixtures Secretary of any alteration which may affect their divisional placings, i.e. amalgamations. Abuse of this rule will result in re-assessment of their present divisional position and re-entry to the league.
3. Points awarded to each team will be:-  
5 (five) points for a win, 3 (three) points for a draw, 2 (two) points if within 5 (five) goals or less of winning score and 1 (one) if 50% of winning score was achieved. In the event of teams finishing on equal points the goal difference will determine the final placings.
4. Teams must adhere to the WCNL Kit Policy.
5. All teams entering the WCNL must have a suitably qualified umpire recorded on their league entry form and available to umpire for them throughout the season. Please refer to the Umpiring Policy.
- 5.1 All umpires must be over the age of 18 at 31<sup>st</sup> August of the affiliation year. Any qualified umpire not over the age of 18 as at 1<sup>st</sup> September of the affiliation year must submit a request to umpire in writing to the Umpiring Secretary and this will be considered by the Committee.
- 5.2 Umpires who are approved must not participate (umpiring or playing) in ~~umpire~~ more than two games on the same evening.
- 5.3 All umpires in the WCNL must score games themselves and call out the score after each goal is scored. Independent scorers are not accepted. This rule applies except in exceptional circumstances and only with prior approval from the WCNL Committee.
- 5.4 Umpires must check the fingernails of all players. Fingernails must be cut short and NO JEWELLERY/ADORNMENTS/ACCESSORIES to be worn. If wedding rings are worn they must be taped. The chewing of any substance will not be permitted during a match.
- 5.5 Medical aids such as wrist and knee supports must be of 'flexible' form and must not inhibit movement and all medical sensors must be taped - this applies to all players and umpires. In terms of umpires carrying any injury, they must be able to fulfil their duties as an umpire, move freely around the court (as the courts allow) and their movement is not restricted by injury.

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6. Prior to commencement of a match, it is the responsibility of the coach or captains to approach the umpires to determine the area of the court to be designated for the qualified coach and 5 (five) additional players of each team. Supporters will be given a designated area set by the umpire.
7. All players/umpires must be affiliated online and affiliation paid for prior to playing/umpiring using ENgage. Players paying by direct debit must provide a screen shot of proof of registration as they will show affiliated until 1st payment is taken. A copy of the team roster must be sent to the Fixtures Secretary prior to the first match of every season. If there are any additions to teams part way through a season, the Fixtures Secretary must be notified before the new player(s) participates in a game. All players/umpires must link themselves to WCNL on Engage prior to playing/umpiring and affiliation and team allocations will be checked throughout the year. For any subsequent players either affiliated or 2<sup>nd</sup> claim throughout the season, notification must be submitted to the Fixtures Secretary prior to their first match. Affiliations will be checked.
  - 7.1 Teams shall have a minimum of 7 (seven) players upon entry to the leagues plus a qualified umpire. Maximum of 12 players per game.
  - 7.2 Transfer of players between teams after the start of a season must be requested in writing to the General Secretary and will be considered by the Committee.
  - 7.3 A Club with two or more teams may play a lower division team player to higher division team(s) a maximum of 2 (two) occasions. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> (third) occasion with any higher division team that player may not return to any other team. Any part of a match constitutes 'an occasion'. The match played after the 3<sup>rd</sup> occasion will be deemed as the team that player has chosen to play with for the rest of the season. This must be indicated by using the initials 'PU' on the result card.
    - 7.3.1 Where a player has not been placed on a team roster prior to playing any games in the current season, then the player will be assigned to the team/division for who they play their first game. In respect of playing future games rules 7.4 and 7.5 are to apply.
    - 7.3.2 If a player has been placed on a team roster the player is automatically assigned to that team/division, even if the player has not played any games in the current season and rules 7.4 and 7.5 are to apply to any games played by the player.
  - 7.4 A Club with two or more teams will not play players from a higher division to a lower division.
  - 7.5 A Club with two or more teams cannot play players between teams who are in the same division.
  - 7.6 Any regional players playing in the non-regional division can only play for teams in prem and division 1 and will not be permitted to play in division 2 or below.
    - 7.6.1 Where a player is considered to be a regional player, however due to exceptional circumstances a team believes they should not be considered a regional player, a request must be submitted in writing to the Committee for consideration.
  - 7.7 The maximum number of players that can be played up, on any occasion, in any match, for a higher division team game is 3 (three).
  - 7.8 Teams can request Tactical Changes - these can only happen after a goal is scored and in agreement with England Netball, Tactical Changes may not be requested within the last 30 seconds of a quarter/match. Where these are requested, umpires will simply decline the request and play will continue. See Match Times & Stoppages Policy.
  - 7.9 Players cannot play in WCNL until they reach their 14th birthday. Individual teams have a duty of care for players Under 18 and must adhere to the WCNL Safeguarding Policy. The Committee must be notified of any players that are under 14 that it is anticipated will play for a team once they turn 14.
    - 7.9.1 Each team or club entering WCNL requires a named Club Safeguarding Officer as per England Netball requirements. The Club Safeguarding Officer must be named when a team or club affiliates to WCNL and their details are to be shared on all league entry forms. All clubs/teams must adhere to the WCNL Safeguarding Policy.

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8. All league games **MUST** be started with allocated umpires and the number of players present at the time on the fixtures. Failure to play the game due to lack of players or an allocated umpire will result in the non-offending team claiming 5 (five) points from the offending team. Games can be played with a minimum of 5 (five) players per team.
9. If a team does not turn up to play, their opponents must claim the points **WITHIN THREE DAYS OF THE FIXTURE** by submitting a score sheet and stating reason. Teams conceding matches will be deemed to have lost the game by 20 goals and will be deducted 5 (five) points. Failure to comply then Rule 19.1 will apply. Umpiring fees are at the discretion of each team.
10. All matches are to be played on the date/time stated on the fixtures. Any revisions to the fixtures will only be decided by the Committee. If a team concedes more than two games within one season then this will be discussed by the Committee which may result in a penalty being imposed.
- 10.1 Teams unable to fulfil a fixture other than in extreme circumstances must advise a member of the opposition within a timely manner **PERSONALLY** (i.e. **NOT** by leaving a message and not via the divisional WhatsApp groups) as soon as possible prior to the match – if this has not been possible then a member of the team cancelling the match must turn up at the venue.
- 10.1.1 Any team cancelling a fixture will be liable for all initial venue costs (please refer to Cancellation Policy for further information). Umpires' costs remain an arrangement between each team as usual.
- 10.2 Postponement of matches due to severe weather conditions, where games have not been cancelled in advance by the Committee, that may affect the safety of the players will rest with the umpires and captains. Final decision rests with umpires.
- 10.3 Under no circumstances are players, umpires or spectators of teams to bring dogs into the grounds where a match is being played. Failure to comply then Rule 19.2 will apply. This allows us as a league to adhere to the rules of our venues.
- 10.4 If after commencement of third quarter games are abandoned due to severe weather conditions the score at that time will stand. Decision to abandon rests with umpires and captains. Final decision rests with umpires.
11. Result cards must be received by the Fixture Secretary, within **3** days of the fixture date. Home team to provide the score sheet, but each team to send in one copy of the fully completed sheet. Should neither copy be received or not fully completed then the match will be void. Club Affiliation number and players' full Christian and Surname as per their affiliation **MUST** be printed on the score sheets.
12. Team representation from all teams currently entered into any WCNL competition must be made at the Annual General Meeting. Penalty for not doing so will be a fine of £25.00. If a team fails to attend the AGM but have won a winner/runner up prize this will be honoured.
13. Any team withdrawing from the leagues will be fined a minimum of £25.00 plus any already incurred fees which is payable upon withdrawing and must accompany the notification of withdrawal. Teams withdrawing may not be allowed in the same division the following season and will be assessed prior to entry. All matches played up to the time of withdrawal will be made void so as not to give advantage.
- 13.1 Any players from a team withdrawing from the league that owes money to the league will not be permitted to play in any other team until the outstanding money is paid in full. This will be at the discretion of the Committee.
14. Each team entering the WCNL must designate a Treasurer and Team Captain within their team, who will be responsible for payments to the WCNL. Name to be submitted on the WCNL entry form. The designated Treasurer and Team Captain will be held responsible for any monies outstanding.
- 14.1 The designated Treasurer and Team Captain from a team that owes money to the league will not be permitted to play in any other team until the outstanding money is paid in full. This will be at the discretion of the Committee.

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15. All outstanding monies owed to WCNL must be paid in full prior to teams entering the next season. A team with outstanding monies at this date will not be permitted to enter the next season. It will therefore be deemed that withdrawal is being made by the offending team and rule 13 and 13.1 will apply.
16. Invoices must be settled in full by the date stated on the invoice, failure to do so will result in an 8% surcharge being added. Any refunds or invoice amendments will be made by the committee at the end of the season.
17. Under no circumstances should any affiliated member of WCNL use social media as a means of bringing any individuals, players, umpires, teams or the league into disrepute. If any such conduct is brought to the league's attention the associated person/s will be put to the league's disciplinary committee.
18. Any player that is repeatedly sent off will be reported to the Committee. Any penalty imposed will be at the discretion of the Committee. Please also refer to the Umpiring Policy.
19. All affiliated members and spectators shall uphold the aims, objectives, ethos and all Rules and Policies of WCNL at all times. Any instances of unacceptable conduct that is brought to the Committee's attention will dealt with and any penalty imposed will be at the discretion of the Committee.
- 19.1 Teams and umpires of teams who do not comply or break any of the WCNL Rules and associated policies during a game will have their points deducted for that affected game.
- 19.2 Teams and umpires of teams who repeatedly do not comply or break any of the WCNL rules will have their total points gained at the end of the season halved.
- 19.3 Any subsequent offence will be dealt with by the disciplinary committee.