

WATFORD NETBALL LEAGUE

CONSTITUTION & RULES

CONSTITUTION

1. The League shall be called "The Watford Netball League" and be a female player only league
2. The League shall have a President who will be non-voting.

The League Officers, who must be affiliated to England Netball, shall be:

- (a) **Chairman**
- (b) **League Secretary**
- (c) **League Treasurer**
- (d) **Fixtures Secretary**
- (e) **Umpiring representative**
- (f) **Coaching representative**

The League Officers shall have one vote each, unless they are representing a team at the meeting as stated in Section 4 in which case this will be their vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

3. League Fees

The Registration Fee per team, per annum, will be approved at the AGM and a non-returnable deposit of £30 will be payable by 31st July. The balance of the Registration Fee must be received by the date of the Start of Season meeting.

Non-payment of the full amount by the date of the Start of Season meeting will result in a penalty of 4 points per game outstanding.

4. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The Chairman shall conduct the AGM, and if not present, then the President.

The business of the AGM is to:

- a) Receive the Annual Report
- b) Approve the Accounts and Registration Fee.
- c) Approve any changes to the Constitution and Rules.
- d) Vote for the Officers, who can be re-elected each year.

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The AGM shall be held within 3 months following the last match session of the season.

One (1) voting representative from EACH TEAM must be present at the AGM. Failure to do so will result in 4 points being deducted at the start of the next season.

5. Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM)

The Chairman shall conduct the EGM.

The Officers on behalf of the League shall convene an EGM either: -

- a) at the request, in writing, of a minimum of three affiliated clubs. The request must be signed by an official of each club
- or
- b) by order of the League Officers.

Each request for an EGM must state the purpose for which a meeting is required, and shall set out, in full, any resolution being sought.

The EGM shall be held within 60 days of receipt of the request by the League Secretary, and 30 days' notice of the EGM and any resolution proposed shall be given to every team entitled to vote.

One (1) voting representative from **EACH TEAM** must be present at the EGM. Failure to do so will result in 4 points being deducted.

6. Start of Season Meeting

The Start of Season Meeting shall be held prior to the first proposed fixture.

One (1) representative from **EACH TEAM** must be present at the meeting. Failure to do so will result in 4 points being deducted.

The business of the Start of Season Meeting is:

- (a) Confirmation of Entry
- (b) Payment of balance of Registration Fee
- (c) Confirm the Club/Team Contact Sheet(s) has been completed online
- (d) Confirm the Team Signature Form has been completed online or will be completed on or before the first fixture
- (e) Confirm an email copy of the club roster from England Netball's Engage system has been sent to the league fixtures secretary (email address will be provided ahead of the start of season), or that it will be sent ahead of the first fixture. This enables the league, via the unique player ID number, to check each player is affiliated for the coming season and their registration type.
- (f) Confirm the Club is registered within in Engage (England Netball's membership

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system) to the Watford Netball League.

7. Amendments to the Constitution and Rules

Alterations to the Constitution can only be made at an AGM, and for Rules only at an AGM or EGM. Any suggested amendments must be sent to the League Secretary **IN WRITING AT LEAST SIX (6) WEEKS BEFORE THE MEETING**. A majority of 2/3 of those present will be necessary to pass any such amendments.

8. Netball Playing Rules

Games will be played in adherence to the current rules and directives of All England Netball Association (England Netball) and the Hertfordshire County Netball Association (Hertfordshire Netball). All teams must abide by the Constitution and the Rules herein.

9. Discipline

The Watford Netball League endorses the England Netball Code of conduct/Disciplinary Policy: www.englandnetball.co.uk/about-england-netball/Netball_Code_of_conduct.

Extracts for reference of the Code of Conduct for players, officials and coaches are on the WNL website.

10. Duty of Care

The League accepts the principles and core values of the England Netball Duty of Care guidelines: www.englandnetball.co.uk/make-the-game/safeguarding

11. Dissolution of the League

In the event of the dissolution of the League, all monies shall go to the Hertfordshire County Netball Association.

12. Equity Policy Statement

This League is committed to ensuring equity is incorporated across all aspects of its development. In doing so it acknowledges and adopts the following Sport England definition of sports equity:

Sports equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognizing inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society.

The League respects the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equally within the context of their sport, regardless of age, ability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/economic status.

The League is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.

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All League members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity. The League Officers will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour.

RULES

1. Facilities for play

Matches will take place at a central venue on hard courts booked by the League.

2. Application for next season

League Registration forms must be submitted online with the appropriate non-returnable deposit by the date specified at the AGM. New teams wishing to enter the league must complete a registration form with the appropriate non-returnable deposit one week later than the date shown on the form.

3. Divisions

The number of teams entering the league will dictate the number of teams in a division with the aim to have at least 8 teams in a division. The Officers will make every attempt to provide a full schedule for all teams and have the discretion to reject applications if the need arises.

4. Teams

(a) Clubs may enter 1 or more teams; on the condition no players play down into a team of lower standard. Teams infringing this rule will be penalised by two (2) points per player every time it occurs. A club with more than 1 team must specify 1st, 2nd and subsequent teams.

(b) **Playing up.** Players may play up into the next higher standard team for up to 12 quarters only in the season. In their 13th quarter that player is then deemed a member of the next higher team, whether it be a team within the WNL League or up into a Herts League team or other higher league and may no longer play down into the lower team. Infringement of this rule will be penalised by a two (2) point deduction per player on that game.

(c) If the Club has more than two teams in the WNL this rule will apply to each team individually.

(d) All teams must complete online its Team Signing on Form and supply via email its England Netball Roster to the Fixture Secretary prior the Start of Season Meeting, or on the first fixture of the season. Failure to do so will result in a four (4) point deduction per team for each fixture it is not submitted.

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(e) All teams must **PRINT the full name of all players on** the back of the scorecard for each game and indicate when a player has `played up` and for how many quarters. If a player has played up and there is no information on how many quarters have been played, then the player will be deemed as having played 4 quarters. A penalty of two (2) points per player will be deducted if their name is not on the back of the scorecard. This will occur even if the team involved lost the game.

(f) Any unaffiliated player (see 5 below) will be penalised four (4) points per player.

5. **Players**

Players must be registered to the Watford Netball League (see 4(d)) and have full England Netball registration as required by England Netball for club league competition

Players registered in the Herts League, or any other higher league, are not eligible to play in the League.

Players can only be registered to one Watford Netball league club, except in (b) below.

(a) Players will be 14 years of age or over, unless they are selected for a Satellite or County Academy in that season. There can be no more than three (3) Under 14 players per team and must be notified on the Team registration form. Once they attain 14 years, they are eligible to play providing they have full England Netball Club affiliation.

Player infringements -2 points per player on that game.

(b) A player may change clubs within the League once only in any one season providing:

- (i) They have agreement of both clubs.
- (ii) They notify the League in writing two (2) clear days before playing for their new club.
- (iii) They re-register with their new club.
- (iv) Two (2) clear League matches elapse between club appearances.
- (v) This may not happen for the last three (3) League fixtures of the season.
- (vi) In the case of injury, illness or pregnancy, if a player has not played for 3 consecutive matches she may, on production of a medical certificate, play for a team of the same club in a lower division. Cancelled matches are not included in this calculation. The League Secretary must be notified in writing 7 days beforehand. This would also apply to Watford League clubs who have teams in the Herts League, or higher league.
- (vii) If a Herts League player has not played in the Herts League for 4 consecutive

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games, they can apply to play for a club in the Watford League, at the discretion of the Committee, but they then cannot play in the Herts League for the rest of the season.

Any infringement -2 points on that game

- (c) Herts League, or higher league players, are **not allowed to play down** into the Watford League, except for when Rule 5(b)(vii) applies.

Any infringement of the rules in section 5 (a), (b) or (c) will incur a deduction of two (2) points per player for the offending team every time it occurs. An infringement of the rules in section 5 (d) will incur a deduction of four (4) points per player for the offending team every time it occurs.

(d) **Players** joining a team after the first fixture must complete the online player form before the start of their first game. Failure to do so will result in four (4) point deduction per player for each fixture that it is not submitted.

They must have full England Netball Club affiliation before they play their first match.

6. Promotion and demotion

The bottom 2 teams in the higher division will change with the top 2 teams in the next lower division. In the event of teams withdrawing their place will be automatically filled in the next season by the teams moving up to maintain the required minimum.

The League Officers reserve the right to alter the two up two down if necessary. In the event of a tie for promotion and demotion places it will be decided by goal difference. If still a tie it will be decided by goal average. Cancelled games will not count in the goal average.

7. Herts League teams

Former Watford League teams relegated from the lowest division of the Herts League may return to Watford League in a suitable vacancy at the discretion of Officers of the League. Former Watford League teams leaving the Herts League for other reasons may apply to re-join the Watford League on the same criteria as new teams.

8. Umpires

All umpires must be registered to England Netball.

9. Provision of Umpires

No match can take place without 2 umpiring officials - see Rule 10 - and both must be either a qualified umpire or umpire who holds a current Into Officiating Award (IOA) Each team **MUST** provide one non-playing umpire for each match. In the event of no umpire being present and the team has a player who meets the qualification for that Division (see 10), that player **MUST** be dropped to umpire. If the team cannot supply an umpire, the game is

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FORFEITED, and the other team records a **WIN**.

If the umpire arrives late, the dropped player may enter the game after a goal has been scored but only into the position left free. Positions can only be changed at quarter-time.

10. Qualified umpires

Teams of all divisions must provide an umpire for their game. The top 2 divisions must have a qualified umpire of C Award or above. The other divisions require an umpire with proof of having attended the online Into Officiating Course (IOC). Proof of qualification should be available for inspection at all matches, along with the umpire's current affiliation number.

Into Officiating umpires can be mentored and tested on 2nd Division games.

Where an umpire is being mentored in 2nd Division games the mentor must be on the approved England Netball Mentor List and be present at the game. The mentor must be confident that the umpire is competent in maintain the standard of the game.

If a team takes the court without an appropriate umpiring official, then the game must be forfeited unless:

Divisions 1 & 2

If the team has a player who is a qualified C award or above umpire, they must officiate the game.

Divisions 3 & 4

If the team has a player who has attended as a minimum the online IOC or has a higher qualification, they must officiate the game.

Should a team complete a fixture with an umpire who defaults on the above rule they will have four (4) points deducted.

11. Start of play

All games must start at the appointed time. All matches are started and stopped by the umpires. However, all games must be finished 10 minutes before the next game is due to start

Once a team and an umpire are on court, timing for the first quarter will commence. No team may start with less than 5 players and an appropriate umpire – see Rules 9 and 10. If a team is late on court, the team present will be credited with 1 goal for every complete minute their opponents are late on court.

If the opponents have not arrived by the end of the first quarter, they forfeit the match, with 1 point deducted, as long as some players have arrived. If no players have arrived, it will be deemed a cancelled fixture and a six-point penalty will apply. This match will not count when calculating either team's goal difference or defence record. The umpires will note the result on the scorecard.

If after 15 minutes, due to unforeseen circumstances, a team has less than 5 players and an umpire, they will forfeit the game, but have right of appeal to the League Officers regarding the 1-point deduction. This appeal must be recorded by the umpires on the scorecard.

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12. Scoring

4 points for a win; 2 for a draw; 1 to the losing team if the winning team's score is not more than 5 goals above that of the losing team.

At the season end, in the event of a draw on points, the result for League positions will be decided on goal difference. If still a draw, then goal average will be used.

13. Notification of results

It is the **team's responsibility** to ensure the scorecard is correct and:

- (a) It shows the correct result,
- (b) Players **names are clearly PRINTED** on the back of the scorecard and any players playing up are indicated, including the number of quarters played
- (c) Umpires have **PRINTED** and signed their names and their qualification level ,
- (d) If **less than 7 players** take to the court for the duration of a whole game, it should be marked on the Score Card so points for non-signature are not deducted,
- (e) The scorecard (front & back) is uploaded to the league's website site.

Any team failing to upload its scorecard on the day of the fixture, will be penalised with a two (2) point deduction regardless of the result.

14. Postponement and Cancellation of matches

Postponements are allowed for:

- (a) Extreme weather conditions, in which case the League Secretary will attempt to contact each club secretary, or team captain. If in doubt they can contact the League Secretary.
- (b) The Officers will consider **requests for postponement** of matches in writing to the League Secretary, 4 weeks in advance, and before the last fixture. Postponed games should be re-arranged with the agreement of both teams, and played 4 weeks either side of the fixture, and the postponing team will be responsible for arranging the venue and cost.
- (c) If any team, for any reason, should **cancel** 3 or more fixtures throughout the season the Officers of the League will review their application for the following season.
- (d) **Cancelled matches** will incur a penalty of 4 points to the cancelling team. The cancellation must occur before 9 pm on the Friday prior to the Sunday match. Any cancellation or failure to turn up after this time will incur a penalty of 6 points in total.
- (e) In the event a fixture is cancelled on the original fixture date by one of the teams in accordance with rule 14(d) above and the fixture is subsequently cancelled by the League, this cancellation will stand, and the appropriate penalties applied. The game will not be replayed at a future date.
- (f) In the event a game is cancelled by a team, the non-offending team will be awarded 20 goals. The award of goals in games that do not take place will only be used to calculate best defense and best attack.

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15. Complaints

The Officers of the league are empowered to deal with any complaint arising on match days as they see fit. All those taking part in match days, including but not limited to players, spectators, team managers, bench official and umpires are encouraged to make every effort to resolve complaints and disputes on the day with the parties concerned. If this is not possible then with a league official if one is available.

Notice of any unresolved complaints or dispute should be sent in writing to the League Secretary when an Officers meeting may be called.

16. Appeals

Appeals must be made in writing, signed by a Club official, to the League Secretary. Full details of the reasons for the appeal must be included and the President of the League will review the appeal.

Date Approved: 22nd July 2021

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Summary of Penalties

NOTE: Penalties are applied AFTER any match result has been recorded.

Constitution Description	Offenders Penalty
3. Non-payment of court fees, in part or full	- 4 points per game while fees are outstanding
4. No representation at AGM	- 4 points
5. No representation at EGM	- 4 points
6. No representation at Start of Season meeting	- 4 points
Rule Description	
4. Teams (a) Playing down (b) Failure to stay up on 4 th occasion (d) Failure to submit full names on Team registration form (e) Missing printed full name on score card (f) Unaffiliated player	- 2 points per player on that game - 2 points per player on that game - 4 points per team per game - 2 points per player on that game - 4 points per player on that game
5. Players (a) Under 14 players infringements (b) (i) Lack of agreement of both clubs (b) (ii) Failure to notify WNL in writing 2 clear days prior to playing for new club (b) (iii) Failure to re-register with new club (b) (iv) Failure to allow 2 clear WNL matches between club appearances (b) (v) Playing for new club in the last 3 WNL fixtures (b) (vi) Failure to produce a medical certificate, and/or failure to notify League Secretary in writing 7 days beforehand (c) Higher league player except in 5 (b)(vii) (d) New players - Failure to submit name and signature	- 2 points per player on that game - 2 points on that game for any of these infringements - 2 points per player on that game - 4 points per player on each game
10. Inappropriate umpire	- 4 points if game completed, or forfeit game if can't be played
11. Late on court	1 goal awarded to team on court for every minute up to a maximum of 15 goals -1 point if match is not played after 15 minutes
13. Notification of results (b) Lack of PRINTED full names players names (c) Lack of PRINTED and SIGNED umpire names (e) Not uploaded on the day of fixture	- 2 points for any of these infringements
14 (d) Cancelled match (not postponed) or failure to turn up 14 (f) Cancelled match (not postponed) or failure to turn up	- 4 points if game cancelled BEFORE 9 PM Friday before fixture - 6 points if after 9 PM on Friday before fixture 20 goals to non-offending team (goals awarded here will only be used to calculate best defense and best attack)