

COUNTY LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS 2024-2025 (Winter & Spring Leagues)

The Leagues shall be known as the County League Winter and Spring hereafter known as the TWCNL.



Overview

TWCNL is a county league competition organised by Tyne and Wear County Netball Association (TWCNA) to enable clubs to compete against each other, encouraging participation and development in netball through an open, fair, progressive and transparent league structure. The regulations set out below outline the Rules and Regulations which govern the operation of the TWCNL. The Rules and Regulations **must** be followed by all teams, players, officials, spectators and administrators in the management, administration, and operation of TWCNL.

It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that all their players and relevant officials are fully conversant with these regulations. All clubs will be held responsible for the actions and behaviour of their players, officials and spectators.

In addition to these rules and regulations please also refer to the County webpage and the FAQs provided on the website to help with the procedures and processes of the TWCNL, some of which may be introduced mid-season.

1. Competition Management

TWCNA is responsible for the organisation and management of the TWCNL. TWCNA may delegate its powers and authority in this respect to a Competition Technical Support Group, (CTSG), to administer. The Chair of the CTSG will be the elected Competition Secretary of the TWCNA.

The decisions of TWCNA, or its nominee(s), in respect of these rules and regulations and on any other matter related to its' Leagues not provided for below, shall be considered final and binding on all parties (subject to the right of appeal provided for under the Complaints and Appeal Process).

Prior to the start of the TWCNL, TWCNA shall appoint a Competition Referee and a person to receive appeals of the decisions of the Competition Referee, as outlined in the Complaints and Appeals Process – please see the website for the current Complaints and Appeals Process.

The Competition Referee will have the authority and jurisdiction to make decisions on all matters arising throughout the Competition including, but not limited to:

- altering or amending the playing schedule as necessary;
- determining if there has been a breach of the Regulations and imposing an appropriate sanction (including disqualification of any individual, player or team)
- identifying and adjudicating instances of unsportsmanlike behaviour that brings the sport into disrepute including instances of team predetermining, or attempting to predetermine the outcome of the Match and/or the competition
- making recommendations to the County Committee on promotion or relegation issues and carry over of points penalties
- determine the score should any Match not be concluded due to any unforeseen circumstance
- any matter not covered specifically within the Regulations.

The Competition Referee may call upon additional persons from the CTSG to assist or consult with, prior to making any decision. Decisions will be reported to the CTSG and the TWCNA County Committee. Accountability for any decision, will rest with TWCNA.

2. Competition Eligibility and League Structure

The TWCNL shall be open to any Netball Club which is a member of England Netball, with Tyne and Wear as its primary county **and** which is situated within the geographical area covered by TWCNA. TWCNA covers the metropolitan boroughs of Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside. Clubs based outside of these geographical areas are not eligible for entry into the TWCNL. Clubs based outside these areas who are already competitors in the league may retain their places at the discretion of the TWCNA on an annual basis. If they choose to relinquish any of their places they may not be eligible to re-enter those teams in future seasons.

Entries to the Winter League are submitted in July at the County AGM and entries for the Spring League are submitted in January at the County General Meeting. Deadlines for entry along with dates of relevant meetings are published on the County Facebook pages and also confirmed via email to the Club Secretary's.

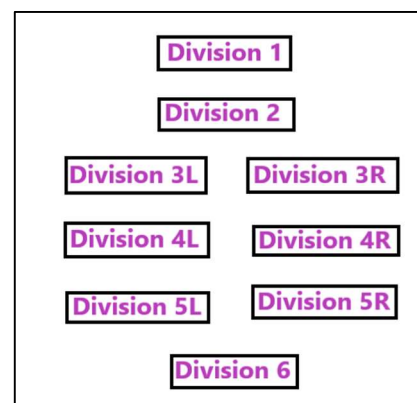
Existing Clubs who do not attend any relevant entry meetings and subsequently apply for entry may be relegated to a lower division and/or incur a financial penalty of up to £20, at the discretion of the TWCNA.

By entering a team in the Tyne and Wear County leagues, clubs agree that:

- They are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation in the TWCNL
- They will fulfil their obligations and responsibilities as set out in these Regulations
- They are bound by the Competition Regulations
- They are bound by all of the rules, policies, regulations and by-laws of England Netball, including the England Netball Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations, as may from time to time be in force and:
- Their participants acknowledge that participating in the sport of netball involves a risk of personal injury and by taking part in TWCNL whether as a player, team member, team official, other official or spectator, each participant does so at their own risk.

The league will consist of up to 90 teams in divisions of 10 teams or other as appropriate. The divisions will be organised as shown right: All new entrants to the league will be required to enter at the lowest division.

Promotion and Relegation - At the end of each season the team's finishing 1st and 2nd in each division will be promoted to the divisions above and the team's finishing 9th and 10th will be relegated to the divisions below. The team finishing 1st will go straight up (ie 4L to 3L) and the team finishing 2nd will go up and across (ie: 4L to 3R). The team finishing 10th will go straight down (ie: 4L to 5L) and the team finishing 9th will go down and across (ie: 4L to 5R). This is subject to the following exceptions:



- Division 3L & 3R - only the team finishing 1st will be promoted to Division 2.
- Division 6 (if applicable) teams finishing 3rd and 4th subject to the agreement of the clubs involved may be promoted.
- No Club will be allowed to have more than 2 teams in any one Division. Where this occurs due to promotion or relegation, amendments to the process above will be applied to avoid the clash. If this is not possible then the 1st/2nd placed team will remain in their division and the 3rd placed team will be offered the promotion. If the 3rd placed team refuse the promotion the team finishing 9th in the division above will avoid relegation.
- Clashes with Club training - As this competition is primarily aimed at increasing participation and supporting our county club structure, clashes between scheduled matches and a clubs regular training nights will be avoided wherever possible. In these circumstances the relegation and promotion process may be amended to avoid any clashes. **Note:** this will only be done for organised Clubs who train on a regular weekly basis throughout the season.
- All other exceptional promotion or relegation issues will be adjudicated on by the Competition Referee.

3. Player Eligibility

Before participating (being nominated to a team) in the TWCNL all players must be members of England Netball, having paid the **full** adult/junior membership fee due and received confirmation of their membership in advance of being submitted on the Team Sheet.

Players must be aged 14 years or over as at midnight 31st August/1st September prior to the commencement of the League. Any team containing players aged under 18 **MUST** adhere to the minimum requirements for safeguarding at matches as agreed by the TWCNA and published on the website.

Players may play for up to two clubs in the TWCNL subject to the following:

- Division 1 or 2. A player may only play for one club in these divisions.
- Division 3 and below. A player may play for two clubs in any of these divisions, but may only play for one club in any one division.

Players who are registered with England Netball through a club which does not have Tyne and Wear as its primary county will be required to pay a 'seconds' fee. Players representing two clubs in the TWCNL will be liable to pay a 'seconds' fee for their second club. Fees **MUST** be paid within 3 weeks of the start of the relevant league.

The 'seconds' fee is £10 per person and may be paid in full direct to the county. Or £5 may be paid via Engage and the remaining £5 direct to the County. The £10 fee covers both the Winter and Spring Leagues. See Nomination of Squads below for other eligibility rules regarding 'seconds'.

Where a club has more than one team the following playing limitations will apply:

- A higher nominated player cannot play for a lower nominated team within their club.
- A lower nominated player may 'play up' for a higher nominated team on a total of 3 (three) occasions in any one county league. After the third occurrence the Club must confirm which higher club they are to be assigned to **and they will not be permitted to 'play up' again for the remainder of the season.**

Players contravening any of the eligibility requirements outlined in this section will be deemed ineligible and the following sanction applied. **The five points for the match will be awarded to the non-offending team and a score of 20-5 recorded. The offending team may incur an additional points or financial penalty for repeated offences at the discretion of the TWCNA.**

Nomination of Squads

A minimum of 7 players (no maximum) must be nominated for every team. Nominations for the two county leagues (winter and spring) are separate. Nominations must be submitted by the deadline for the relevant league which will be communicated via the TWCNA facebook page. **The TWCNL is a competition for female players. Only female players can be included on the squad nomination sheet as a player.**

Clubs submitting nominations after the deadline may incur a points or financial penalty.

Each nominated squad MUST include 5 players for whom this is their main Club. 'Main' means this is the Club they would play for in the event that a clash occurred between the two clubs they play for in TWCNL. As 5 players is the minimum required to take the court this ensures clubs can fulfil their fixtures. Clubs who do not abide by this rule will be subject to disciplinary action which could include being barred from entry to the league or removed mid-season with no refund of fees. See also conceded matches.

Having nominated a squad as above only 'new' players to the league may be added to squads after the league has commenced. A 'new' player is one who isn't already taking part in the league. A Squad Amendment Form must be submitted for every new player **BEFORE** they take the court for that team.

Clubs fielding un-nominated players will forfeit any points awarded for that match and a score of 20-5 recorded. The points penalty may be increased for repeated occurrences or a financial penalty applied.

4. Matches

Match Scheduling

All matches will be played at a central venue (Blue Flames Sporting Club) as per the published fixture schedule. The first named team on the fixture will be designated the home team. The Home team will take the first centre pass, occupy the bench at the entry end of the hall and operate the flip over scoreboard. Each court will have designated home and away bench areas where coaches, substitutes, team officials and spectators of that club must remain throughout the match.

Fixtures will only be rearranged if the venue is deemed unplayable. No financial compensation will be paid by TWCNA in the event that fixtures have to be cancelled. Matches cancelled will be rearranged at the end of that season's scheduled fixtures if possible. Where matches can't be rearranged an appropriate outcome will be decided by the Competition Referee. If a match is abandoned after it has started, the result or rearrangement of that match will be determined by the Competition Referee. The details of the abandonment should be logged via the Issues Form and team sheets submitted by both teams stating the score at the time the game stopped followed by the word abandoned. **More information regarding abandoning matches is available in the Captain's Guide on the website.**

Application may be made to the Competition Referee if match clashes arise from progression in a national or regional netball event (this will not include clashes with other local leagues).

If a team have to cancel a match they must ensure they inform the opposing club and the two clubs providing the umpires, giving as much notice as possible. The club who has their match cancelled may request up to **£35 from their opponents** to compensate them for the costs of the lost match and their umpire. A score of 20-5 in favour of the non-offending team will be recorded for conceded matches. Guidance on cancelling matches is available in the FAQs on the TWCNA website. **Teams cancelling a match will be required to provide details of why they are cancelling the match. If a friendly is played both teams should submit a team sheet listing the names of the players who took the court.**

In the event that both teams concede a match then a score of 0-0 will be recorded and neither team will receive any points for the match.

Any team who concedes more than 2 of their 9 matches during the course of a league will be subject to a further penalty in the form of a points deduction.

Any team who concedes 3 or more of their matches during the course of a league, will have all their match results voided for that league. In addition, the team's circumstances will be reviewed by the County Committee for a decision as to whether any further penalties will be imposed. Examples of the penalties (non-exhaustive) that may be imposed include:

- **refusal of entry to the leagues in future seasons**
- **demotion to a lower division for future season**
- **removal from league mid-season with no refund of league fees**

Note: that a match deemed conceded because of a player eligibility infringement will not count towards the total of conceded matches over the season unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Match Timing

Matches will consist of four 12 minute quarters with intervals of 2, 3 and 2 minutes respectively. Central timing will be administered by the duty team. If a team is not on court at the starting time, the umpires **after** discussion and agreement with the Captain(s), should award the match to the team on court and the team not on court will be deemed to have conceded.

Every Team will be allocated at least one 'duty night' per league. Details of Duty Night tasks is available on the website. **Failure to attend for a 'duty night' will incur a £10 fine repeated failure will result in a points deduction.**

Match rules and format

All Matches shall be played to the World Netball Rules of the Game currently in force in England at the time, except where specific local exception and variations apply as detailed in these regulations.

Teams are required to provide Bibs and a Ball which meet IFNA regulations. They must take the court in matching/similar kit which as a minimum must not clash with their opponents. Teams should play in tops and skirts which co-ordinate with their basic kit colours, and similar colour skirts. Tracksuit bottoms, leggings and shorts may only be worn under a skirt/dress. Where clashes or issues arise with kit the umpires should be approached before the match and a solution found by applying common sense.

In the event that a match fails to go ahead due to either of the above the relevant team(s) will be deemed to have conceded the game and the penalty applied.

In the event of an accident, the reporting procedure as detailed on the England Netball website should be followed and the accident recorded in the venue's accident reporting book. This procedure should be followed for **ALL** injuries and accidents, regardless of whether or not medical treatment is given.

It is the responsibility of each team to provide all necessary first aid assistance and materials (ice packs, plasters, wipes, etc.) for its players, officials and spectators, which should be made available to the match officials on request.

Photography or video recording is not permitted at any match subject to three exceptions. Please see the TWCNA website for the details of the current Photography Policy and how to log any photography at a match.

5. Match Officials

For every match played there will be a reciprocal requirement for a team to provide a neutral umpire for another match. All costs associated with the provision of their umpire rests with the relevant club. It is the **Club's responsibility to ensure they provide a neutral umpire, failure to do so may result in a points penalty.**

All umpires who officiate in the Tyne and Wear County league must:

- be full members of England Netball
- be neutral to both teams on court
- attend at least one County Umpiring Seminar every year and more if required
- must not umpire for three hours on any one night or play and umpire for three hours where they are umpiring the third hour. Breaking the three hour rule will only be sanctioned where an umpire steps in to cover a gap on the night or if requested to do so by the County Umpiring Secretary.
- be qualified to C award level or above and achieve a fitness level of 4.1 to umpire in Division 3 and below. They must also have followed the progression procedure as outlined on the county website.

OR

- be qualified to B award level or above and achieve a fitness level 5.1 to umpire in Division 1 or below.

With the permission of the County Umpiring Secretary umpires actively working towards the C or B award qualifications may officiate in relevant divisions with a mentor present. See the County website for more information on progression and development.

All Clubs playing in the Tyne and Wear league are required to have a qualified and active umpire within their club or attached to the club.

If an umpire fails to arrive, or is injured or taken ill during a match:

- Another umpire with the appropriate qualification may step in or the next best-qualified umpire with the agreement of the two captains may step in. If both teams agree to the substitute umpire then there will be no right to appeal for a replay.
- **In the event that a match has to be rearranged due to an umpire not being provided by the club responsible that club will be liable for the costs of the rearranged match.**

Teams are required to provide a competent scorer for each of their matches. The only allowed exception to this rule is where both teams are from the same Club then one Scorer could score the full match.

In the event that a team fails to provide a scorer, one of their players should leave the court and take on this role. It is up to the team captains (not the umpires) to enforce this rule if they choose to. It is permissible for one team to score the whole match IF this is agreed between the two captains prior to the start of the match. In these circumstances the team without a scorer will have no right to appeal the final score.

On-Court Discipline - all recordable sanctions (warnings, suspensions, ordering off) awarded during any match will be reported by the awarding Umpire. The following sanctions will be applied and if necessary will be carried over from one league to the next:

- An individual who is ordered off in a match, will not be permitted to participate in any capacity during the next two TWCNL matches, other than to attend as a spectator
- An individual who receives two (2) suspensions during the course of one league, will not be permitted to participate in any capacity during the next TWCNL match, other than to attend as a spectator.
- An individual who is given four (4) warnings during the course of one league, will not be permitted to participate in any capacity during the next TWCNL match, other than to attend as a spectator.
- A team who has received four (4) Recordable Sanctions during the course of one league will have three (3) league points deducted from their league points total. Any further recordable sanctions during the course of that league will result in a further three (3) league point deduction.

6. Registration of Results

Each team must submit a completed Team Sheet for every match. This must be submitted **within 48 hours** of the completion of the match. **Note:** that for conceded matches both teams must now submit a team sheet listing the names of all players who took the court in the friendly match however any players playing up will not count towards their playing up total.

Teams who fail to submit a team sheet within 48 hours will receive a fine of £5. Teams who fail to submit a team sheet within a week of the fixture will be deducted one point. Teams who repeatedly fail to submit teams sheets will have further penalties applied.

Points will be awarded as follows: 5 points for a win, 3 points for a draw, 1 point for more than half score, 2 points for a loss within 5 goals of the winning score, ie: 20-24.

A League Table will be compiled and published on the County website. Final league positions will be ranked by points, then if required by goal average, goals difference and finally goals scored (higher taking preference). If none of the above differentiate between the teams, the Competition Referee shall determine the means of differentiation.

If it is deemed that one of the teams has had its final league position affected by conceded fixtures, the Competition Referee will review the results over the season and make an appropriate ruling. This will only be done for teams involved in relegation or promotion positions.

Local Regulation Variations

The following variations to the IFNA Rules of Netball will apply to the TWCNL. These variations are specific to TWCNL and may differ from variations in other leagues.

Injuries/Stoppages - as there is no additional time available to extend a match, Umpires are asked to keep all stoppages to the minimum possible and to adopt a flexible approach when required to ensure the safety, care and welfare of any injured player. Umpires will have to agree a common sense approach on the night when an issue arises as there are too many to dictate a formal response.

On court players should be allowed to leave the court during a match in order to assist an injured player during a stoppage. Blood stains should always be cleaned and dried but dried blood stains on kit may be allowed if dry or covered over with tape. An umpire may score a match temporarily whilst the scorer assists an injured player.

Concussions or Serious Injuries

In the event that an Umpire feels an adult player has sustained a significant injury or has been contacted in the head area, and assuming the player does not ask for injury time then the following process will be followed:

- Controlling Umpire blows whistle and holds time
- Umpire asks the relevant player if they are okay and wish to continue playing. For any injury around the head area or if there are concerns about possible concussion the Captain of the relevant team should be called over to observe and agree the conversation.
- Player and if appropriate Captain agree if the player will continue or be substituted.

In the case of a young player then the Coach or person acting as safeguard lead for the team may be involved in the conversation but the basic steps above should be followed. Umpires may choose to follow this procedure for young players in instances where the injury may appear minor to ensure the young player's wellbeing. Young players are less likely to be aware of the injury time process and less confident about approaching the umpire.

7. Miscellaneous

TWCNA will not be liable to any person, whether in contract, tort (including negligence) or otherwise for any direct or indirect loss or injury of any nature, howsoever caused and howsoever arising from the matters covered by these Regulations, provided that nothing in these Regulations excludes or restricts TWCNA's liability for any personal loss or injury caused by TWCNA's own negligence.

If any of these Regulations are held by any competent authority to be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of the Regulations shall not be affected thereby.

These Regulations shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with England law.

Any questions regarding these Regulations can be addressed to the T&W Competition Group on tandwnetballcompetition@gmail.com.

TWCNA reserves the right to amend these Regulations each year in advance of the Competition and such amendments will take effect from the first date of publication of the completed amended version on the TWCNA website.

Please also see the [Complaints and Appeals process and other guidance and FAQs documents available on the TWCNA website](#).