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|   | <b>Women's Senior League Rules</b> |   |

In accordance with the Constitution, Bye Laws, and policy of Netball Ireland (NI) all rules of competitions are within the control of NI. Any such rules shall bind all officials, members and all persons engaged in competitions or other events organised by NI.

The official rules of the NI Women's Senior League (the "League") are set out below.

## **1.0 Registration**

1.1 The League is open exclusively to clubs, affiliated to Netball Ireland, who have agreed to comply with the Constitution, Bye-Rules, policies and recommendations of Netball Ireland. By entering a team in the League, clubs/teams agree that they will abide by these Rules.

1.2 All clubs must pay a registration fees to enter a team in the League. The League Administrator will notify team captains of fee arrangements for the particular season however, the following general principles will apply:

- Each team pays the amount, as approved at the AGM of Netball Ireland, to register to play in the League and will be issued with an invoice for these fees.
- League Fees may be paid in instalments with the first instalment of 50% to be paid before the first game and second half paid by December 1st. If not received into the netball Ireland bank account by then, that team will be taken out of future fixtures starting in January.
- A €25 discount will be available for teams who pay their fees in full by the 31st of October.
- Any new clubs must pay full league fees for all teams within their club before the first match of the season for their first 5 seasons within the Netball Ireland club league. If a team's fees are not received into the NI bank account by the specified deadline a penalty of a 10-point deduction will be incurred.

1.3 If a team's fees are late received into the Netball Ireland bank account in any particular season a penalty of a 10-point deduction will be incurred.

1.4 Teams may only use players whose names appear on their Team List as held by Netball Ireland. In order to secure the points for the game, the team must have a minimum of 4 players registered to that team on the court.

1.5 All players participating in the League must be a registered member of the affiliated club for which they are competing. Players may be added to a team's pool at any given stage of the competition, but must be affiliated to Netball Ireland before taking to court by completing their individual registration on the Netball Ireland website.

1.6 Individual registration will be available on the NI website from 1st of September and will be open until 5pm the day before the first game of the season. Each player must register individually via this process.

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- 1.7 Each team must be registered via the Netball Ireland team registration process on the Netball Ireland website 14 days before the first match of the season as notified by the league secretary.
- 1.8 A maximum of 15 players can register to any one team without incurring an additional player registration fee. Only 12 players can be named on a Netball Ireland team sheet for any one game.
- 1.9 If an unregistered player takes the court they will be considered illegible and any games in which they have played will be forfeited.
- 1.10 Once a player has been named and has played on a team they cannot be transferred to another team during the course of the current League season. Netball Ireland may at its absolute discretion allow players to transfer between two teams during the course of the playing season (for example should a person move house where playing for the original club would not be practical).
- 1.11 Within the same club, players may play for the team billed higher than their own, but not in a lower team i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> team players cannot play for the 2<sup>nd</sup> team. For the avoidance of doubt players can only be registered for one team within the club.
- 1.12 Players can play for a higher billed team twice in any one season. On the third time playing for the higher billed team the player cannot return to their original team and are now considered registered to the next lowest billed team they have played for e.g a player on the 3rds can play two games for the 2nds and one game for the 1st, this player is now considered a registered 2nds player. The same rule now applies again to this player for all higher billed teams and previously played games for higher billed teams will stand.

## **2.0 Integrity Clause**

Netball Ireland expects its members and all League participants to act in a manner that reflects the objectives and principles of the Association. Any team who knowingly and deliberately provides false information regarding the identity of players at registration and the naming of players on team sheets may be suspended or expelled from the League. ¶

## **3.0 Organisation and Administration**

- 3.1 The League shall be managed and administered by Netball Ireland. The League Administrator shall be the key point of contact between the League and the Executive Committee of Netball Ireland.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of team captains to ensure that all players are conversant with Netball Ireland's Constitution, Bye-Laws, League Rules, Policies and Recommendations.

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3.3 All teams are responsible for the overall conduct (behaviour, demeanour and actions) of all members associated with the team, including players, officials and spectators and must comply with the relevant policies of Netball Ireland.

3.4 In accordance with the Sports Equity Policy of the Association, Netball Ireland encourages the involvement of all sexes' as volunteers, coaches, officials, and administrators.

#### **4.0 League Structure, Fixtures, Points, and Results**

- 4.1 The League will be divided into two divisions. The number of teams competing in each division will depend on the number of teams that register each year.
- 4.2 The League will run from approximately October to April. At the conclusion of each division's league matches there will be semi-finals (1<sup>st</sup> vs 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> vs 3<sup>rd</sup>) and finals held for each division.
- 4.3 All semi-finals will be held on the Wednesday following the completion of the league for Dublin based teams. Any semi-final involving a regional team (i.e. Cork Rebels, Galway Netball Club) will be held on the next available Saturday after the league table is finalised. The finals will be held the next available Saturday.
- 4.4 All finals and semi-finals will be held in Dublin.
- 4.5 Where there are two teams within the same division on level points, goal difference will be used to determine relative table positions i.e. precedence will be given to the team with the greater difference between goals scored and goals conceded.
- 4.6 The team that finishes top of Division 2 will be placed in Division 1 for the next year.
- 4.7 The team that finishes bottom of Division 1 will be placed in Division 2 for the next year.
- 4.8 Dependant on unforeseen circumstances the league co-ordinator has complete entitlement to organise and balance teams fairly between the divisions. Teams will be assigned according to the previous seasons final standing.
- 4.9 Fixtures will be available on the Netball Ireland website and it is the responsibility of the teams to check the website for confirmation of their next fixture.
- 4.10 All teams will play an equal number of fixtures and will play each other a minimum of two times.
- 4.11 League games played will follow the scoring system below:

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- **Win 5 points**
- **Draw 3 points**
- **A score within 5 goals of the winning score 2 points**
- **A score of 50% or more of opponents score 1 point**
- **Any other loss 0 points**

- 4.12 It is Netball Ireland's wish to see as many of the scheduled League games played as possible, if not all fixtures. However, should a team require to forfeit a fixture, Netball Ireland must be made aware of this before 9am on the day of the fixture except weekend fixtures which must have 24hour notice. The cancelling team captain should email the league administrator on [netballirelandla@gmail.com](mailto:netballirelandla@gmail.com). If a team forfeits a match within the 24 hour period there will be a deduction of 5 points. Both teams of the cancelled match must still provide an umpire if scheduled to do so on the evening of the cancelled match.
- 4.13 If a team consistently forfeits, i.e. if they forfeit more than three games in a rolling six not only will they lose the points of those games, there will be a penalty incurred of an extra 5 points.
- 4.14 Once dates are set for all fixtures involving regional teams' clubs they must be adhered to. A deduction of 10 points will be made against any team who cancels per fixtures.
- 4.15 If a forfeit situation arises the non-offending team will be awarded the win and the forfeiting team a loss, with a result of 10-0 allocated in favour of the non-offending team.
- 4.16 If a team has been allocated to umpire a match and their own match is cancelled, they must still provide an umpire. If said team fails to provide an umpire they will be deducted 10 points.
- 4.17 In the event that a team forfeits a game during match play, the non-offending tea can choose to keep the score or to take a 10-0 score. The team captain must communicate their preference to the umpires and this should be documented on the score card before submission.
- 4.18 In the event when a game is stopped during match play by the umpire e.g. health and safety reasons, outside a player conduct, the score at the time of the game being played will stand.
- 4.19 Both teams are required to complete the relevant sections of Netball Ireland's team sheet for each match, including the names of all players and indicating which players have taken to court in that match. The Netball Ireland team sheet will be circulated electronically by the league secretary. Each team must print and complete this team sheet for submission before each game. The team sheet must be signed by both umpires and both captains. It will be null and void if submitted unsigned.
- 4.20 The official match scorecard must be signed by both team captains at the end of the match. By signing this document team captains are confirming all details to be correct.

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4.21 It is the responsibility of each team captain to submit the team sheet and match scorecard within 2 days (scanned copies and/or pictures of the scorecard). All results and score cards (scanned copies and/or pictures of the front of the scorecard accepted) should be returned to:

- [netballirelandla@gmail.com](mailto:netballirelandla@gmail.com)
- Or by WhatsApp message

4.22 All results and updated league tables will be published on the Netball Ireland website. Publication will be delayed if all results are not received within the designated time frame.

4.23 Always subject to Rule 1.9, in order to be eligible to play in a League semi-final or final all players must have played a minimum of 3 league matches for any team within the club during the season and be a registered player within the league.

## **5.0 Match Play**

5.1 Games will be played according to the rules of the World Netball Rules of as currently in force in Ireland at the time. Copies of the INF rules are available on the Netball Ireland website.

5.2 Scheduled games will typically be played on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

5.3 Games will start at the allotted time and it is up to the umpires to strictly enforce this for the benefit of subsequent matches and the efficient operation of the League. Games will be 48 minutes (12 minutes each quarter). 2 minute intervals between quarters and 3 minutes during half-time. In the event that there is a breach of rule 5.3 the timing per quarter will be at the discretion of the umpires subject to consultation with the team captains.

5.4 In the event of a team being late; The team have 10minutes to take the court, any team that does not take the court within 10minutes will automatically concede the game.

5.5 Regardless of when a game starts it must END before the next game is scheduled to start within the hour. This is to ensure the next game is not delayed.

5.6 Teams can start a game with a minimum of 5 players; any team with less than 5 players will automatically concede the game.

5.7 The procedure for extra time in any Semi Final or Final:

- There shall be a two minute interval at the end of full time;
- Extra time shall consist of two halves of seven minutes each, with an interval of one minute at half time. Teams shall change ends at half time. The centre pass is taken by the team entitled to the next centre pass;
- During extra time, normal injury or illness procedures shall apply.

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- In the event of a tie remaining at the end of extra time, a visual signal shall be used to indicate that play shall continue until one team has a two goal advantage

- 5.8 Semi-final and final games will be 60 minutes (15 minutes each quarter). 3 minute intervals between quarters and 5 minutes during half-time.
- 5.9 Each team may declare up to 12 players prior to the start of each game by completing the team sheet that is provided. Substitutions are unlimited amongst these 12 players but must be in accordance with INF rules.
- 5.10 Teams named first on the schedule are the 'Home Team' and are responsible for the provision of a match ball.
- 5.11 All Division 1 players must wear their team dress/skirt & top for each game. Players in team kit will be recorded on the submitted team sheet by the umpires. For each player that takes the court without team kit a point will be deducted.
- 5.12 In the event of a clash on uniform colours or bibs, the Away Team will be required to change their bibs. To facilitate this Away Teams should carry an extra set of bibs.
- 5.13 Team captains are responsible for ensuring the umpires receive the designated umpiring fee as amended from time to time (currently €14 for each umpire)

## **6.0 Health and Safety**

- 6.1 Suitable sports footwear must be worn. They shall be of lightweight material. Spiked soles are not allowed.
- 6.2 No item of jewellery, except a wedding ring and/or medical alert bracelet, shall be worn. If either or both are worn, each shall be taped.
- 6.3 Sports gloves can be worn at the discretion of the umpire.
- 6.4 Fingernails shall be short and smooth. Umpires must check all players' nails before the start of each match. Players can only take the court when their nails have been checked and confirmed by the umpire. Any late arriving players MUST report to an umpire for a nail check.
- 6.5 Pregnant players or umpires may not take part in competition beyond the 12th week of pregnancy. If a player knowingly plays past the 12th week of pregnancy there will be a penalty incurred. There will be a 10 point deduction applied to that team. If this occurs in the semi final the team will be disqualified from the final. If it happens in the final the deduction will carry forward to the next season.

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- 6.6 In the event of an injury or illness, please refer to the current INF Rules of Netball for injury and illness stoppages.
- 6.7 In the event that the court is wet, umpires are responsible for mopping up/drying the court before the game is played/restarted.
- 6.8 All participants acknowledge that participating in the sport of netball involves a risk of personal injury and by taking part in the League each participant does so at their own risk.

## **7.0 Photography**

It is expected, unless otherwise stated in writing to Netball Ireland that all players, coaches and officials agree to the taking of photographs during any event hosted by Netball Ireland, including

League matches, and to the use of these images by Netball Ireland and any event partners/sponsors.

## **8.0 Regulations for Umpires and Bench Officials**

- 8.1 The teams responsible for supplying two umpires for a given game each week are set out in the fixture list available on the Netball Ireland website. Any proposed changes in the schedule of umpires must be approved in advance by the League Administrator.
- 8.2 Each team must provide a volunteer Bench Official when scheduled to umpire. Responsibility for scorekeeping and keeping time will be allocated to the Bench Officials by the umpires.
- 8.3 Fair play and professionalism are expected from Umpires and Bench Officials at all times.
- 8.4 Umpires are expected to be punctual, properly attired (not in club colours) and prepared with the necessary tools.
- 8.5 The Umpire is responsible for controlling the game and their decisions are final.
- 8.6 To manage a match umpires may, in addition to normal sanctions, use any of the following:
- Caution a player: a player is advised that the behaviour specified must change
  - Issue an official warning to a player: a player is warned that suspension will follow if the behaviour specified continues
  - Suspend a player: a player who is suspended takes no part in play for 2 minutes
  - Order a player off: a player who is ordered off takes no further part in the match

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- 8.7 A decision to give an official warning, to suspend a player, or order a player off, will be considered to have been made jointly by the two umpires and is binding on the co-umpire. The umpires may confer before deciding on the action to be taken.
- 8.8 A player may not dispute a ruling given by an umpire or direct any offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures at an umpire. If an umpire's call is not clearly heard a player may ask the umpire to repeat the infringement penalised or seek clarification of where a sanction is to be taken. If any player is in breach of this rule the umpire may award a penalty pass and the player may be either cautioned or given an official warning. In a serious case the umpire will suspend the player.



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## **9.0 Complaints and Appeals**

- 9.1 Any concerns/disputes by teams in respect of individual League matches and/or the overall operation of the league must be sent by the team captain or vice-captain only complaints received from these nominated role holders and designated umpires will be considered as official complaints by Netball Ireland.
- 9.2 Concerns/disputes must be sent to Netball Ireland's League Secretary, in writing, via email within a week of the incident. No personal or widespread emails or calls to the League Administrator or other members of the Executive Committee will be allowed or tolerated.
- 9.3 If the matter cannot be resolved, to the satisfaction of all parties directly with the League Administrator this shall be referred to the Executive Committee of Netball Ireland.
- 9.4 Decisions of the Executive Committee shall be made within a reasonable timeframe and shall be sent in writing to the team concerned within 10 days of the date of the decision of the Executive Committee. Disciplinary powers as set out under section 14 of the Constitution will be available to the Executive Committee as required.
- 9.5 The decisions of Netball Ireland in respect of these rules and on any other matter related to the League shall be considered final and binding (subject to the rights of appeal as set out in section 15 of the Netball Ireland constitution).

## **10.0 Disputes**

- 10.1 Each team must identify one team member that will act as the dispute officer. This will be nominated at the team registration form.
- 10.2 In the event of a dispute, the league secretary will request a written report of the event from each team captain and both umpires. These reports will be shared with 3 independent dispute officers. The dispute officers will review all reports and report back to the league secretary with their recommended sanction from the following;
- No Sanction
  - Point deduction as decided by the dispute officer
  - Written Caution
  - Player ban

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- Team ban

10.3 If the dispute is of a recurrent theme the league secretary can inform the dispute officer of the historical decisions.