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**2023/24**

**LOCAL LEAGUE RULES**

**MATCHES**

1. All players must be affiliated to England Netball before they can play in this League. **Checks will be made throughout the season and three points deducted per player, per game where a non-affiliated player is named on the team sheet.**
2. All affiliations must be done through ENgage and a download of all players emailed to the League’s Affiliation Officer as detailed in document M H Netball League – Providing ENgage evidence. This must happen prior to the match taking place.
3. If a player is affiliated to another area / region, to play in this league, they must as a minimum, second affiliate to East Midlands, Leicestershire and the club that is a member of MHNL.
4. Where a team plays a non-affiliated player in a tournament nominated as affiliated, regardless of the number of games played in, the tournament in its entirety will be considered as one game and a three point penalty imposed as described for any unaffiliated players played or named on the team sheet, which will be reflected in the League Table. Some tournaments are friendly and non-affiliated and this clarification will be detailed ahead of the tournament.
5. Affiliations can be made throughout the season.
6. New players joining once the season has begun must be affiliated prior to playing their first match. Receipted proof of affiliation must be forwarded to the Affiliations Officer as described and evidence emailed BEFORE the player takes to court.
7. All league matches will be played at Market Harborough Leisure Centre on Saturday afternoons at times specified on the fixtures list, other than in exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the MHNL Executive Committee.
8. Matches will consist of four quarters of fifteen minutes each. There will be a two-minute break between quarters one and three, and, a three-minute beak at half time.
9. Teams must have a minimum of five players on court to start a match. Captains must have previously tossed and confirmed to the umpires which team has the first centre pass.
10. If a team is late or has less than five players on court at the correct time, ie.one minute past the match start time, a further three minutes will be allowed for the offending team players to arrive (umpires will monitor time keeping). If latecomers have not arrived by this time, then the game will be abandoned, the full eight points will be awarded to the opposing team as well as a score of 35 – 0 and the offending team will also be liable to pay the court fee for both teams as per Rule 27 below.
11. Where a club has more than one team playing in the League, no tied first team player can play for a lower team. However, lower team players may play for a higher team but, on the third game the player playing up must stay in the higher team (tied). At the start of the season a minimum of five players must be affiliated/tied to the higher team and cannot subsequently play down. These 5 nominated players must be advised to the League Exec Committee.
12. In the event of player shortages, clubs with more than one team in the League, regardless of the division they play in, must draw from lower teams before a game is cancelled (subject to rule 8 above).
13. Any player changing clubs during the season must inform the League Chair in writing of her intentions and, once the Chair has given approval for the requested change, the player will notify their team captains.
14. A player must play in at least three league games for the same team to be eligible to play for that team in a cup, or plate semi- final or final. Exceptions to this ruling are maternity leave or when a player is injured and unable to play for her team for three games before a cup match. The player will have been registered with this club in a prior season to prove that they are a regular club member and not being drafted in for a cup game. Any team wishing to field a player, who has not completed three league games due to injury or maternity leave, must notify the Executive Committee and obtain confirmation of her dispensation to play ahead of her participation in any cup game. Teams failing to obtain the required dispensation will be subject to disqualification.
15. To be eligible to play in MHNL, players who are 16 and under on 1 September, but over 14 must complete a young player’s application through LCNA. Only following approval of the young player, may a club play a player who is over 14 but under 16 in this league. The captain of the Club with any approved player under 16 must advise the League Secretary of the players name so that the league have this shared knowledge and can check approvals are in place. A player playing without LCNA approval will be penalised in the same way as an unaffiliated player.
16. **SCORING** Points will be awarded as follows: • Four points for a win • Two points for a draw • One point for the losing team if it scores 50% or more of the winning team’s score • One point per quarter to the team which scores the most goals • Half a point to both teams if the quarter’s score is a draw
17. **CLOTHING** All teams should aim to wear a club uniform if possible i.e. the same colour dresses or tops. Shorts or tracksuit bottoms may be worn under skirts/dresses. The league understands that this may not be possible and comfort and inclusivity is key when playing sport. However, matching bibs must be worn and must be marked on the front and back with court positions.
18. No jewellery except a wedding band is permitted (this must be taped over).
19. Fingernails must be short and smooth and will be checked by the umpires prior to the start of the game. We recommend that a player does not have acrylic nails.
20. No hats, hair adornments or gloves are permitted whilst playing. Gloves for medical conditions are permitted if medical evidence is provided, the umpire will ask for this. The player will however play at their own risk.
21. Any player not conforming to rules 16, 17, 18 & 19 above will not be allowed on court at the beginning of the match and will be treated by the umpire as a latecomer. If this means that the player’s team does not have five players on court rule 7 will be implemented.
22. **DUTY TEAM** Each team will be required to act as Duty Team at least once a season. Teams must comply with the Duty Team’s responsibilities as shown on the league’s website and Duty Team document which has been shared.
23. The Duty Team is responsible for ensuring each team completes a MHNL Team Sheet, showing each player’s full (first and last) names and a match scorecard. Collection of the duty bag, checking and advising of any shortages and the bag’s subsequent return to the reception at the Leisure Centre.
24. **FEES.** Invoices will be produced three times a season. Payments will be made by direct transfer into the League’s bank account (account details will be provided on the invoice).
25. **CANCELLATIONS.** All matches will be played according to the League Fixtures Schedule issued
26. MHNL does not allow teams to cancel and reschedule fixtures
27. Prior to the start of the season, if a team knows that it will not be able to play a specific fixture it must state this on the application form.
28. Should a team (despite ruling 26 above) still need to cancel a game, the cancelling team must pay the court fees for both teams and all eight points and a score of 35 – 0 will be awarded to the opposing team. Cancellations must be notified by 9am on the Thursday prior to the scheduled match.
29. The team cancelling the match (in 25 above) must contact: • The opposing team • The two umpiring team captains • The Fixtures Secretary • League Table Secretary.
30. If both teams cannot field a team and BOTH agree to cancel the fixture by Thursday at 9am prior to the scheduled game, this will be recorded as a draw. A score of 20 all will be recorded. Both teams will pay their own match fees and each team will be awarded 2 points for the draw. If an agreed cancellation is notified after 9am on the Thursday prior to the game, the result will be recorded as a nil v nil draw. Both captains will advise • The two umpiring team captains • The Fixtures Secretary • League Table Secretary
31. If a team cancels a match, it is still responsible for its umpiring and scoring duties on the day and, if appropriate, any duty team responsibilities.
32. **POSTPONEMENT.** In the event of severe weather conditions i.e. snow, lightening etc the Fixtures Secretary will contact the Leisure Centre before 10 am on match day to determine if matches are to be postponed. (She will then liaise with the relevant team captains.)
33. In the event of bad weather or poor court conditions when teams arrive to play, the umpires will decide if the matches should be abandoned and rescheduled for a later date. In such circumstances a period of 10 minutes decision time will be allowed. It will be the Duty Team’s responsibility to advise all teams scheduled to play on that day that the matches have been cancelled. The Fixtures Secretary will be notified of the cancellations and will rearrange the affected matches.
34. In the case of postponement, the Fixtures Secretary will rearrange the match and provide one further date (on a Saturday) for the rescheduled match to be played. If the match cannot be played on that date it will be cancelled.
35. If one of the teams playing in the rescheduled match cannot provide five players for the rearranged date, the team which can make the rescheduled date will be awarded all 8 points and will be allocated the full 35- 0 score.
36. If neither team can provide five players for the rearranged date points will be shared per 30 above.
37. **UMPIRING AND SCORING.** Teams must comply with the umpiring schedule. It is the team’s responsibility to provide its own umpire not the Umpiring Secretary or Committee.
38. As well as providing an umpire, all teams must provide a scorer for each match played.
39. An asterix\*next to a team on the Fixtures Schedule indicates that the marked team must provide qualified umpire for the indicated match. Where no asterix is shown, an unqualified umpire may be provided who is competent. If the umpire is not competent, a mentor should support the unqualified umpire.
40. If the League runs a rules revision session, all umpires (whether qualified or not) must attend to be eligible to umpire in this League in any capacity.
41. Failure to supply a suitably qualified umpire for a match will result in a three-point deduction to the offending team. Should a suitable umpire be found within 10 minutes of the match starting time, the game can commence for the remaining minutes on the timekeeper’s clock.
42. If a game needs to be re-arranged as there are no umpires, the team failing to provide the umpire will be responsible for the court costs for both teams where the game is cancelled and this is payable to the league to cover the costs of the re-arranged game. The teams unable to play will pay their match fees as normal as their game will be re-arranged by the Fixtures Secretary.
43. If the nominated umpire arrives late and another umpire has taken her place, she should assume control at the beginning of the next quarter.
44. If an umpire is taken ill or injured during a match and a substitute cannot be found then the match may be abandoned and replayed at a later date, subject to rules above. The date will be arranged by the Fixtures Secretary.
45. **CONDUCT ON COURT**. The Umpire’s decision is final and not to be contested. Any player using unsportsmanlike behaviour will be treated in line with current code of behaviour (COB). A Captain may however approach the umpires at quarter time for any rule clarifications.
46. Code of Behaviour (COB). All players, League Officials, League committee and scorers must accept and sign (electronically) the League COB PRIOR to taking part in any League game.
47. The COB outlines the leagues expectations and management of any breaches of the COB
48. If a person as outlined in rule 45 has not signed the COB prior to taking part in our league in any capacity (not just playing), **three points will be deducted per player, per game. Checks will be made throughout the season**.
49. If a team is of the opinion that their opponent did not play in the spirit of our League or their behaviour breached the COB, they must tick poor on the team sheet. You must then email the League Secretary with detailed information as to the nomination of poor. The Exec Committee will investigate further and thoroughly and sanction any team or persons applicable in line with these rules or those in the COB.
50. **INJURY.** Players have a duty to ensure the safety of themselves and others. In the event of a serious injury on court, the players or umpires should contact the Leisure Centre to obtain the advice of a qualified first aider before the injured player is moved.
51. Each Team should have a first aider and first aid kit. Ice packs are in the Duty bag.
52. Where a serious injury severely disrupts a match, at the discretion of the Umpires, the match may be abandoned and played at a later date (subject to rules above.) The Fixtures Secretary must be informed of all such occurrences.
53. Injury time will be allowed in line with current rules but at the Umpire’s discretion and bearing in mind the current EN concussion policy. Common sense must prevail.
54. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.** If a Team leaves the League during the playing season, it will be charged £50 to cover court hire costs, all remaining match fees of the season and any administration charges. The fine will be imposed only if the departing Team cannot give a justified reason for its withdrawal from the League. The Executive Committee will decide if an additional penalty is to be levied.
55. All games played against the departing team will be nullified and points scored for all matches will be deducted accordingly.
56. If a team breaks any of the MHNL Local Rules, a letter of notification will be sent from the League Secretary, within 7 days of the learnt infringement, to the offending team. The team will then have seven days to appeal against the decision, fine or points deduction. The Executive Committee will give a written ruling response to any appeal, within seven days of receipt of the team’s appeal. This decision will be final and not open to further appeal with the League. LCNA can be approached if further appeal is considered.
57. All League Teams MUST be represented at both the LCNA and MHNL AGMs. Failure to attend either meeting will result in a fine issued by LCNA or MHNL. LCNA will confirm their fine value, MHNL fine for non-attendance is £25.00 per Team.
58. **CONTACTS.** Any complaints or issues must be raised in writing to the League Secretary so they can be raised at the subsequent Committee or Exec Committee meeting or, forwarded by the League Secretary to the relevant contact. Issues must not be raised during or after matches verbally as the correct attention cannot be given at that time by the Exec Committee, Fixtures Secretary, Match Reporter, League Table Secretary , Umpiring Secretary or Harborough Leisure Centre.

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