



Norfolk Hockey Association
Norfolk Women's Hockey League

League Rules for 2016/2017

The Name:

- 1.1** The League shall be known as the **Norfolk Women's Hockey League** and must be referred to as such in all correspondence and publicity.
- 1.2** The **Norfolk Women's Hockey League** is sponsored by **Empresa Limited**. Clubs must refer to the League Sponsor's name at all times and use the official logo on all fixture cards, handbooks and correspondence.

2. The Management of the League

- 2.1** The management of the League shall be undertaken by the **League Management Committee**.
- 2.2** It is the responsibility and duty of the **League Management Committee** to uphold the **Constitution of the Norfolk Hockey Association** and to abide by any decisions and/or rulings made by the **NHA Management Committee**.
- 2.3** It is the responsibility and duty of the **League Management Committee** to uphold the rules of the **International Hockey Federation (FIH)** and to ensure that the **Rules of Hockey** apply to all **players and officials**.
- 2.4** Terms of Reference will be set and agreed annually by the **NHA Management Committee**. The **League Management Committee** will make **Committee meeting minutes** available online or via e-mail not less than two weeks after the next **Committee meeting**.
- 2.5** The **League Management committee** shall consist of the following members:
The **League Administrator**
The Minutes Secretary
Divisional Secretaries
Junior Boys Development Division
Junior Girls Development Division
NHA Secretary
Umpire Representative
Results Co-ordinator
- 2.6** With the exception of the **NHA Secretary** and the **Umpire Representative**, the **Committee** shall be elected at the **League AGM**.
- 2.7** Each **Club** joining the **League** shall appoint the following to administer their own **Club**:
Club Secretary
Fixture Secretary
Cancellation Secretary
Umpire Liaison Secretary
- 2.8** Full contact details must be advised to the **NHA Hon. Secretary** by **1st July** each year. Details to include: -
Home phone numbers
Mobile phone numbers
E-mail addresses
Home addresses

3. Entry and Affiliation:

- 3.1** Entry into the **Norfolk Women's Hockey League** shall be at the discretion of the **League Management Committee**.
- 3.2** All participating **Clubs** must be affiliated to **England Hockey** and the **Norfolk Hockey Association**.
- 3.3** Fees:
a) £5 per team as confirmation of each **Club's** participation
b) £5 affiliation fee to the **NUA**
Fees must be paid to the **Treasurer** of the **NHA** by the **31st of August** each year.

4. Fixtures and Fixture Cards:

- 4.1 Clubs must refer to the League Sponsor's name at all times and use the official logo on all fixture cards, handbooks and correspondence.
- 4.2 Each Club must provide two fixture cards to the NHA Hon. Secretary and one fixture card for each Division Secretary.
- 4.3 Fixture cards must be presented at the Clubs meeting held annually in early September.
- 4.4 Any amendments to personnel, dates, fixtures, mobile numbers etc. may be passed on at the Clubs meeting.
- 4.5 Hon. Results Co-ordinator must receive the fixture list for all Norfolk Women's Hockey League teams from every Club. The list must show whether the games are home or away and include times and venues.
- 4.6 The list must reach the Hon. Results Co-ordinator before midnight on the 21st August 2016 (21.8.16)

Penalty:

Failure to comply with 4.6 will result in a **£50** fine.

- 4.7 Fixture lists must be sent by post or electronically on the official form.

5. Conduct:

- 5.1 The NHA supports the EHA RESPECT campaign and expects all Clubs to support the NHA in upholding the aims of this campaign.
- 5.2 Conduct of players in all League matches will be monitored in accordance with the Disciplinary Code agreed by the EHA.
- 5.3 Red, yellow and green cards will be recorded by the Umpires on the match report with the reason for the card given on the back of the result sheet.
- 5.4 Division Secretaries will record card offences and monitor patterns of conduct.
- 5.5 Where a team/ individual show persistent poor conduct, an investigation will be undertaken by the League Management Committee and action taken.
- 5.6 Red card offences are subject to a special EHA form which umpires must complete. They are obtained from the County Discipline Officer immediately following the incident.
- 5.6.1 Where a player has been disciplined for a red card offence or for violent conduct, the matter will be discussed at an emergency meeting of the League Management Committee.
- 5.6.2 The Committee will gather reports from the umpires, both teams and the individual player(s).
- 5.6.3 The Club of the offending player(s) will be notified immediately of the Committee's decision.
- 5.6.4 Any appeal must be sent to the NHA Management Committee Secretary within ten days with an appeal fee of £25. If the appeal is successful, the fee will be returned.

Penalty: Card penalties may result in the loss of points and/or a fine for the team and suspension for the player(s).

- 5.5 Failure to comply with the rules will result in a 1 match ban for 4 yellow cards.
- 5.7 Anything placed on social network sites, such as Face book or Club websites, must not be abusive, detrimental or damaging towards another player, official or Club.
- 5.8 If the conduct of a Club or an individual player is regarded as having manipulated or abused the League rules, an investigation will be undertaken by the League Management Committee and appropriate action will be taken.

Penalty: The penalty for rule manipulation may result in the loss of points and / or a fine. Individuals may be suspended or permanently excluded. Decisions concerning this penalty will be at the discretion of the League Management Committee.

6. Structure:

- 6.1 The make-up of each Division will be agreed at the AGM
- 6.2 The make-up of the divisions will be as follows:
 - a) Premier and Division 1 will be made-up of 12 teams.
 - b) Division 2 will be made-up of 12 teams when there are nine (9) or more teams in Division 3.
 - c) Division 2 will vary ONLY when the number of teams in Division 3 falls below nine (9) teams.
- 6.3 Promotion and relegation will be based on the following: -
 - (a) The number of Clubs relegated from and promoted to the East Leagues
 - (b) The number of Clubs participating in any one season.
 - (c) The end of season league position of each team. Any team that withdraws from or is withdrawn from the league during the season will be considered to be a relegated team and if they wish to re-enter the following season, they will be admitted to the league in the next Division down.
 - (d) The decision made by the AGM as to the number of teams in each Division.
- 6.4 Clubs with more than one team in the same league will play each other on a home and away basis.

7. Scoring System:

7.1 Three points will be awarded for a win and one point for a draw.

7.2 In the event of equal points at the end of the season, promotion and relegation shall be determined by the following and in this order: -

- a) Goal difference
- b) Highest number of goals for
- c) Aggregate result of games between the teams concerned
- d) Playoff game between the teams concerned at a neutral ground
- e) Penalty stroke competition in accordance with the EHA rules.

If more than two teams are involved in a penalty stroke competition, a draw shall be made for the order of play.

8. Dress Code:

8.1 Club strip must be agreed with the NHA Hon. Secretary and noted in the Handbook.

8.2 Strip colours or any change of strip colours or any change of the combination of colours must be agreed with the NHA Hon. Secretary.

8.3 Each team shall wear their Club strip when playing league matches.

8.4 A Club strip shall consist of a skirt/skort, shirt/top and socks. Leggings and skins may also be worn.

8.5 In the event of a clash of colours, each Club shall have an alternative strip and the away team shall wear the alternative strip.

8.6 All players shall wear visibly numbered shirts/tops.

8.7 No two players in the same team, playing in the same game shall wear the same number.

8.8 Goalkeepers shall wear tops in a contrasting colour to both teams.

8.9 Captains shall wear a distinguishing armband.

Penalty: Where teams fail to comply with the dress code rule, the penalty will be: -

1. A warning
2. A £10 fine
3. 3 points deduction for every re-occurring offence.

Dress Code - Advisory:

1. It is strongly advised that players should wear mouth guards.

2. It is strongly advised that defenders should wear face masks for penalty corner routines.

3. It is strongly advised that goalkeepers wear all necessary protective clothing.

4. It is strongly advised that jewellery should not be worn during the game. Rings should be taped.

5. It is strongly advised that every team should carry a First Aid Kit to both home and away games. First Aid Kits should be checked on a regular basis to ensure equipment is up to date.

6. It is strongly advised that at least one member of the team or the bench shall have a First Aid Certificate or an equivalent qualification.

9. Hospitality:

9.1 Visiting teams should be made welcome by the home Club.

9.2 Players and spectators must be made aware of any health and safety rules concerning the pitch and viewing area before the start of the game.

9.3 Captains are responsible for the behaviour of their players and spectators.

9.4 Home teams must provide refreshments to visiting teams, team officials and umpires.

9.5 Refreshments shall consist of a hot and cold drink, hot or cold savoury and cakes and/or biscuits.

Penalty: Where refreshments are reported to the Committee as falling below the accepted standard, the penalty will be a £25 fine.

9.6 At least two days' notice must be given when a team is unable to stay for refreshments.

Penalty: Where the away team fails to notify the home team that they do not wish to stay for refreshments, the penalty will be a £25 fine.

9.7 Teams must always give notice if they are cancelling or conceding a game.

Penalty: Where the away team fails to turn up for an agreed fixture and no notice has been received, the away team will be charged with the cost of the pitch hire and the cost of refreshments (£25)

9.8 All teams should give 2 days' notice if they are unable to fulfil the fixture. If it is late notice, the team must ensure the message has been received.

Penalty: Where the away team fails to give 2 days' notice, the Committee will impose a penalty according to circumstances.

10. Umpires:

- 10.1** Each team must provide an Umpire at the start of each game and all Umpires must be registered with England Hockey.
- 10.2** Umpires should not be changed during matches. In exceptional circumstances, a change may be made if an Umpire is incapacitated during a match or if a temporary Umpire is needed until a delayed Umpire arrives.
- 10.3** Where the temporary Umpire is less qualified but is acceptable to both Captains and is covered by Club or Umpiring Association or individual liability insurance, the match may go ahead.
- 10.4** If Captains cannot reach agreement regarding a replacement Umpire, the League fixture should not be played and the Division Secretary informed as soon as possible. It must also be recorded on the team sheet and signed by both Captains.

10.5 Minimum qualifications:

A "County Umpire Award" holder or "Club Umpire (Grade A)" award holder may umpire in all Norfolk leagues.

A "Club Umpire (Grade B)" award holder can umpire in Divisions 2, 3 and both development leagues.

A "Club Umpire (Grade C)" award holder can umpire in Divisions 3 and both development leagues.

Advisory:

An umpire is expected to hold the required qualification and experience as detailed on the NHUA website: <http://www.norfolkhockey.co.uk/level-1-umpire-development/>.

Appendix:

1. Umpires should not adjudicate on League rules unless they are also Norfolk League Secretaries. The League Management Committee should not adjudicate on Umpiring decisions in matches.
2. All Clubs must appoint an Umpiring Liaison Officer (ULO) with whom NHUA and other Clubs can communicate on Umpiring matters. Details of the ULO must be included in the Norfolk Handbook.
3. The League Management Committee reserves the right to appoint appropriate Umpires in conjunction with the NHUA to any League match.
4. It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure the Umpire is appropriately experienced and competent to take charge of the game to which they are appointed.
5. The League Management Committee welcomes comments on the appropriateness of the Umpire appointed by the Club. The comments should be written on the back of the team sheet and signed by both Captains. The comments will be passed to the Umpiring Association for monitoring purposes.
6. A list of qualified Umpires is held by the NHUA and can be found on the NHA website.

Penalty:

Failure to uphold these rules may result in: -

- a) The loss of 3 points,
- b) A 3-0 result awarded
- c) The fixture being replayed
- d) A financial penalty decided by the League Management Committee

11. Players:

- 11.1** Players must be fully paid up members of their Club in the current League season.
- 11.2** Any player may transfer to a new Club prior to the start of the season.
- 11.3** Once the season has started, a player may transfer to one new Club but this must be agreed by both Clubs and both the League Administrator and the Division Secretary must be informed.
- 11.4** Once the season has started, a player may transfer to one Club only. She may not return to her original Club nor join another Club until the end of the season.
- 11.5** No player may transfer after **31st January** until the start of the new season.

12. Starred Players:

12.1 Clubs entering more than one team in the National, East and the Norfolk League must enter on the county website seven starred players before midnight on Friday, 16th September 2016.

Penalty: Clubs failing to register their starred players on time at the start of the season will result in the deduction of 3 points.

12.2 Clubs must re-register their starred players between Sunday, 9th October 2016 and midnight Friday, 14th October 2016 and between Sunday, 8th January 2017 and midnight Friday, 13th January 2017.

Penalty: Failure to re-register players will result in the loss of 3 points and a £20 fine.

12.3 A starred player may play in a higher team but may not play in a lower team.

12.4 A starred player should not be starred unless they can fulfil 60% games.

12.5 The Committee will identify a player who has not met their correct quota of games and seek the reason for this at the end of the starring period.

12.6 A new set of starred players or a new individual can be identified when Clubs re-register their starred players for the new starring period.

Penalty: Where a team fields a starred player in a lower team, the penalty will be the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score.

12.7 If a Club does not select a team at any level for lack of players but still fields lower teams, players in the lower teams are deemed ineligible.

Penalty: The penalty will be the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against for the conceded team and all teams below.

Divisional Secretaries will monitor the starred players closely and if clubs openly abuse the starring rule the committee will issue an appropriate penalty.

13 Non-Starred Players

13.1 Any non-starred player may double-up and play down one team in order to make the lower team up to 12 players. A club's lowest team may be made up to 13 players ONLY if that team is in either Division 2 or Division 3.

13.2 A goalkeeper doubling as a goalkeeper up will not count in the 12 (13) players permitted on the team sheet.

14 Goalkeepers

14.1 A non-starred goalkeeper may double-up as a goalkeeper for any team. But, in the interest of safety, it is the Club's responsibility to ensure the goalkeeper is at an appropriate level for the game.

14.2 A non-starred outfield player may play for any team as a goalkeeper provided the player is fully kitted up as a goalkeeper throughout the game. The goalkeeper will not count in the 12 (13) players permitted on the team sheet.

14.3 A non-starred goalkeeper, doubling up as an outfield player, may play for any team provided they do not artificially strengthen the team. This player will count in the 12 (13) players permitted on the team sheet.

15. The Committee's Guide to Doubling-up of Non-Starred Players

15.1 Doubling-up will be defined as: A player who plays more than one game in any one day in order to enable another team to field 12 or 13 players according to the Division. (see rule 13.1)

15.2 All teams within a club must be selected on playing strength so that the strongest available side is put out at each level commencing with the highest team. If a team is not involved in a match, the Club shall select its League teams as if all teams were in fact playing, and shall not unfairly strengthen lower sides by including players from the squad of a higher team without a match.

15.3 In the interest of fair play, doubling-up should be viewed as the exception rather than the rule.

15.4 A Club must not gain, or seek to gain, unfair advantage by doubling-up a player or players to a lower team.

15.5 Any doubling-up deemed by the League Management Committee to be contrary to the spirit of the rule will be viewed as a breach of the rule.

15.6 Any player doubling-up must be indicated on the team sheet of the lower team and advised to the opposing Captain before the start of the game.

15.7 A Club must be prepared to submit a team sheet for a higher, non-playing team if requested by the League Management Committee.

Penalties: Where the League Committee believes doubling-up has artificially and unfairly strengthened a team, the penalty for the offending team will be the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against.

16. Matches: All league matches are played: -

16.1 In accordance with the rules published by the International Hockey Federation.

16.2 On the dates agreed by League Management Committee and with reference to those set out by the ERHA and EH.

16.3 At a ground nominated by the home team.

16.4 All Premium and Division 1 games will be played on a synthetic surface.

16.5 All start times must be notified to the away team, to the Hon Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary at the start of the season and cannot be changed without the permission of the Division Secretary.

Penalty: Failure to notify the Hon Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary of start times will result in the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against.

16.6 Home teams must confirm the fixture at least seven days in advance.

16.7 In the event of a league match being postponed or abandoned, it must be re-arranged on the next available slip date and the Division Secretary and the Hon Results co-ordinator informed.

Penalty: Failure to notify the Hon Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary of the re-arranged time and date will result in the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against.

16.8 If no slip date is available, the re-arranged match will be at the mutual convenience of both teams. Where this cannot be agreed, the Division Secretary will decide. The home team will inform the Hon. Results Co-ordinator of the outcome.

16.9 Exceptions to the above must be agreed with the Division Secretary.

16.10 Notification of any changes must be lodged with the Hon. Results Co-ordinator.

Penalty: Failure to notify the Hon Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary of the re-arranged time and date will result in the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against.

16.11 All league games will take precedence over friendly fixtures.

16.12 Where a team has less than seven players present ten minutes after the agreed start time, they shall forfeit the game.

16.13 If both teams have less than seven players present after the agreed start time, the game shall be deemed a postponement and re-arranged on the first slip date.

Penalty: Failure to notify the Hon Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary of the re-arranged time and date will result in the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against.

16.14 All league games must be played as league games. If a game is played, the league status of the game cannot be changed by either team.

16.15 If a team breaks a rule, such as fails to turn up on time or fails to provide an umpire, and the game is played, then the game is judged as a league game.

16.16 At the end of the game, the Captain should notify their opponents and their Division Secretary that they are claiming the game. This should be done by writing on the back of the team sheet and the decision confirmed by telephone to the Division Secretary not later than 6:00pm on Thursday of the following week.

16.17 The Division Secretary will inform the Management Committee and the Management Committee will decide the dispute at their next meeting. The League Administrator will inform the Club of the decision and if necessary, notify the Results Co-ordinator.

17. Team Sheets & Match Results:

17.1 All teams must use the official team sheet.

17.2 Team sheets must be completed, signed by the Captain and handed to the umpires before the start of the match.

Penalty: Failure to comply with rule 17.2 may result in the loss of 3 points.

17.3 Only those players listed on the team sheet prior to the match starting shall be eligible to play.

17.4 Names and numbers should be written clearly on the team sheet with the goalkeeper marked as GK, captain as C, starred players as SP and players doubling-up as DU.

17.5 At the end of the game, Umpires must enter their registration number and sign and print their name. Umpires are asked to give the reason if green, yellow or red cards are issued.

17.6 Goal scorers should be listed at the end of the game by the Captains.

17.7 Any comments should be made on the back of the sheet and signed by both Captains.

17.8 Captains should 'sign off' the sheet to acknowledge the score is correct and the goal scorers are correct.

17.9 Both team sheets may be sent electronically to the Division Secretary to arrive not later than

midnight Wednesday of the following week.

17.10 Where team sheets are sent by post, they must arrive not later than Thursday of the following week.

17.11 Results must be sent by text to the Hon. Results Co-ordinator as soon as the game has finished.

Penalty: Failure to comply with rules 17.9, 17.10 and 17.11 will result in: -

1. a fine of £10 for the first offence
2. £15 for the second offence
3. £20 for all subsequent offences.
4. Persistent failure to comply with rule 17.9, 17.10 and 17.11 may also result in the loss of 3 points and a score of 0-3.

18. Postponements:

Postponements may occur only:

18.1 In adverse weather conditions or ground conditions. Such postponements shall be the home team's decision unless adverse weather conditions are advised by the away team. Such advice must be given as soon as is reasonably possible before the start time or such other time when confirming the fixture.

18.2 In the event of both teams having less than seven players present ten minutes after the agreed start time.

18.3 In the event that the agreed match start time is delayed by more than 30 minutes through no fault of either of the participating teams.

18.4 Postponements must be recorded with the Hon. Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary on the Saturday of the fixture.

18.5 The match must be re-arranged for the next available slip date and this date should be recorded with the Hon. Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary.

Penalties: Failure to comply with rule 18.4 and 18.5 may result in the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score.

18.6 At the start of the season only, Clubs with their (lowest) team in Division 3 may postpone one match if that team fails to raise more than seven players. Only one match may be postponed by a Club during the first 3 matches of the season.

The Club must give a minimum of 2 days' notice to their opponents and both the home and away teams must agree to the postponement.

The postponement must be recorded with the Hon. Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary by both home and away teams. The match must be re-arranged for the next available slip date and this date should be recorded with both the Hon. Results Co-ordinator and the Division Secretary.

No further postponements will be allowed after one postponement.

19 Conceded Matches:

19.1 Conceded Matches shall occur only where a Club's lowest team fails to raise a team of seven players or more.

Penalty: Conceded matches will result in the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against. Their opponents will be awarded 3 points and a 3-0 score.

19.2 Teams will be excluded from the league on the 4th conceded game in any one season. The team will be relegated one division if they re-enter the League the following season.

19.3 Clubs may not concede matches where their teams in lower divisions are still fulfilling their fixtures. Clubs must cascade players up or down in order to fulfil their fixtures in the higher divisions.

Penalty: If a Club concedes a higher team game but still fields lower teams, the penalty for the conceding team will be the loss of 3 points and a 0-3 score against and this will be the same for all teams below.

19.4 Where a team has conceded their 4th game, all points awarded to that team's opponents shall be deemed null and void.

19.5 Where a game is conceded, the team sheet must be submitted to the Division Secretary and a text message sent to the Results Co-ordinator by **both** teams.

20. Abandonments:

20.1 Where a game is abandoned, the team sheet must be submitted to the Division Secretary and a text message sent to the Results Co-ordinator.

20.2 The score will stand if both umpires agree to abandon the match after at least 55 minutes and one team is leading by at least two goals.

20.3 Where the game is abandoned with less than 55 minutes, the game must be replayed on the first available slip date and the home team must notify the Division Secretary and the Hon. Results Co-ordinator of the re-arranged fixture.

Penalty: Failure to comply will result in the game being awarded to the away team with 3 points and a score of 3-0.

21. The Binding Force of the Rules:

By its entry into the League, each Club agrees to abide by:

21.1 The rules of the League as agreed at the AGM of the Norfolk Women's Hockey League.

21.2 The rules of the League as amended at an EGM.

21.3 The decisions of the League Management Committee in applying rules, penalties and sanctions it may seem fit to impose.

21.4 Where teams break the rules, the League Committee may impose any of the following penalties:

a) The loss of 3 points per match. The opposition may be awarded the 3 points.

b) The loss of a match by 0-3. The opposition may be awarded the match 3-0.

c) A fine of £10, £15, or £20 and this may be recurring.

d) Where two opposing teams break one or more of the rules, the match will be null and void and neither team will gain points or retain goals scored.

Penalty details can be found alongside the rules.

22. Disputes and Appeals:

Disputes: Where a team is in dispute during a League match or with the League rules or any matter relating to the League, the following action may be taken:

22.1 Written comment can be added to the back of the team sheet. The Division Secretary will investigate the dispute by contacting both teams and/or official and then raise the matter at the next meeting of the League Management Committee where a decision will be made on the action to be taken.

22.2 Written comment in the form of a letter detailing the dispute can be sent by post or e-mail to the League Administrator. If the dispute is to be part of a Club's appeal, a cheque for £25 must accompany the letter.

22.3 The League Administrator will notify both Clubs and/or official named in the dispute of the outcome. The Division Secretary concerned and the Results Co-ordinator will also be informed of the outcome.

Appeals: Where a team has been issued with a penalty, a fine or is in dispute, the following action may be taken:

22.4 A letter of appeal must be posted to the League Administrator before the next meeting of the League Management Committee or the date on the Penalty Notice.

22.5 A cheque for £25 must accompany the letter of appeal and this will be returned if the appeal is successful.

22.6 All appeals will be judged against the rules of the Norfolk Women's Hockey League by the League Management Committee.

22.7 If the penalty is upheld, following the appeal, the Committee will confirm the action taken in the penalty notice or dispute and the Administrator will inform all those concerned. The Hon. Results Co-ordinator will adjust the league tables as necessary.

22.8 Where a Club has been fined and no appeal is forthcoming, the money must be paid before the next meeting of the League Management Committee. Failure to pay the fine will result in a single warning and after that the deduction of 3 points every month until the fine is paid. A Club may appeal this decision in the same way as a dispute.

Final Appeals:

22.9 Where a Club disagrees with the outcome of the appeal, they may appeal to the NHA Council.

22.10 All decisions made by the NHA Council are final.

22.11 Any appeal to the NHA Council must be made within 10 days of the League Management appeal failure.

22.13 The appeal must be sent by registered post to the NHA Hon. Secretary.

22.14 A non-refundable cheque for £50 must accompany the appeal.