

Relaxation of Rules

Note forming part of the rules for the 2020/21 season.

Clubs must adhere to the requirements stipulated by their governing body in order for competitive hockey to be played.

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2.1(e) Withdrawal of teams

- (i) Any club wishing to withdraw a team from the League shall notify the League Secretary in writing, or by e-mail, no later than 1st May otherwise it shall be liable to pay subscriptions for the following season. Any club which withdraws a team from the League after that date will not be eligible to enter a new team into the League for two seasons (including the season in which a team has withdrawn) and may be liable to a financial penalty.
- (ii) Should a club wish to withdraw a team from the League this must be their lowest team save in exceptional circumstances which must be fully advised, in writing, to the League Secretary. If the League permits a higher ranked team to be withdrawn the club should be aware that penalties by way of a points deduction may be imposed against their lower teams.

Add:

- (iii) For the 2020-21 season a club can apply to ghost a team up to the deadline of 11:59pm on Monday 5th October 2020. If the application is agreed clubs shall then face no penalty and may re-integrate those teams into the Tier from which they ghosted for the 2021-22 season.
- (iv) Where a club is granted permission to ghost a team which is not their lowest XI(s) (i.e. ghosting their 'A' XI, whilst the 'B' XI continue); the ghosted team shall be deemed to have finished the season on zero points and ranked accordingly, which may result in relegation by one tier.

Note: the conditions regarding named players and their ability to participate later in the season will be covered in the decision notice following their application.

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2.2 (c) The allocation of teams to Tiers at the start of each season.

Add:

For the 2021/22 season teams who ghost will be integrated into the Tier they were in for 2020/21. The exception is where it was not the lowest team that was ghosted Rule 2.1(e)(iii) will apply.

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2.3 Teams' positions in Divisions

- a) Points shall be awarded for each completed League match, with teams scoring three points for each match won and one point for each match drawn.
- b) The position of teams in each Division shall be determined by:
Points, then
Goal Difference, then
Goals Scored in descending order of priority.
If two or more teams are equal and it is necessary to distinguish between them for promotion, the Area Secretary shall arrange a play-off.

**Add: For the 2020-21 season, in a division comprising English & Welsh teams, where all teams played a minimum of 50% of the scheduled games, the final positions will be determined by:
A points per game (PPG) basis, then,
Goals per game**

Add:

- (c) **For the 2020/21 season see Appendix 3 regarding the implications of a full season not being completed.**

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2.4 Promotion and relegation

- (c) At the end of each season, the two bottom placed sides of each Division shall be relegated to the appropriate lower Tier, with the exception of Tier 2 where the four bottom teams will be relegated, Tier 3 where the three bottom teams will be relegated and Tier 5 where the four bottom teams will be relegated. All placements for the next season are subject to ratification by the Committee.

Add:

- (d) **At the end of the 2020/21 season if there are more teams on nil points, due to ghosting (see 2.1(e)(iv) above), than there are relegation positions then those teams will be ranked based on their final positions at the end of the 2019/20 season.**

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5.3 Start times and playing under floodlights

- a) Start times of matches shall be as shall be as follows:
 - i. Between 12:00 and 14:30 hours for weekend matches in Tiers 1 & 2
 - ii. Between 12:00 and 16:00 hours for weekend matches in Tiers 3 & 4
 - iii. Between 11:00 and 17:00 hours for weekend matches in all other Tiers.
 - iv. Between 18:30 and 20:00 hours for any match on a weekday regardless of Tier unless with the permission of the Area Secretary.

- b) Home clubs wishing to start matches outside of the time specified in a) above must give at least three weeks notice in writing, or by e-mail, to the away team who have the right to raise an objection if they consider this to be unreasonable given the distance and travelling time. The home team must receive positive confirmation from their Area Secretary that the start time is acceptable and they will update the website. Failure to comply with these requirements may incur penalties

Note: clarified to include the Area Secretary in this process.

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6.1 Qualification

- (b) Any player who has already played for another club in the League, the National League, another outdoor regional hockey league or a club in another country in the current season may not play for a club in the current League season unless he has transferred in accordance with Rule 6.2. If playing for a club in another country applies he must also complete any appropriate inter-country transfer process.

Add:

For the 2020/21 season any player named by a club in a successful ghosting application will be deemed to have played for that club and if they wish to move to another club then Rule 6.2 applies.

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6.2 Transfer

A player may transfer to a new club subject to the following conditions:

- a) A written request is made to the Area Secretary by his new club in the form prescribed by the League - a transfer request form (which is available for download from the League website).
- b) The player shall have paid up to date any subscriptions or fees properly due to his former and new clubs for the season and both clubs shall confirm the same in writing in the form prescribed by the League. The club making the request shall ensure that all the relevant information has been completed in full and signed by all the relevant parties involved before sending it to the appropriate Area Secretary.
- c) The player will be eligible to play for his new club provided that four scheduled League weekends have passed since the last league match he played for his old club. A reduction to this period will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and can only be granted by the Area Secretary after consultation with the League Chairman. A League match is defined as any of the following - West of England & South Wales Men's Hockey League fixture, any other regional League (England & Wales) fixture, a National League fixture or a League fixture in another country. A scheduled League weekend is defined as one of the published League fixtures.

Add:

- d) **For the 2020/21 season where a student was playing for their home club due to Covid restrictions at their college/university and wishes to return when the restrictions are lifted, then provided that club is not affiliated to the WSWHL they will be eligible to play with no time restrictions.**

- e) **For the 2020/21 season Covid 19 will be deemed an exceptional circumstance and the four scheduled League weekends will be reduced to two. The ability to request a reduction to that period remains.**

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10.4 Post match responsibilities

The home team is expected to offer post-match hospitality and if it is not able to do so must advise the travelling team when confirming the match details or at the earliest opportunity thereafter. Similarly, the travelling team should advise the home team at the earliest opportunity if they are not staying after the match but in any case no later than 48 hours before the match day.

Add:

For the 2020/21 season there is no expectation that post-match hospitality must be provided. Clubs must, however, advise their opposition of the position when confirming match details. Similarly, away clubs must advise if they intend not to attend hospitality where it has been provided.

Appendix 3 – 2020/21 season only

If the season cannot be completed due to the decisions of England Hockey and Hockey Wales that all hockey is suspended the following shall apply.

- If more than 80% of the scheduled League fixture dates have elapsed (based on a 12 team division) then the final table will be decided on a PPG basis when PPG represents the number of points gained by teams in all League fixtures divided by the number of fixtures played. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If all teams in the Division have played each other once but less than 80% of the scheduled league fixture dates have elapsed (based on a 12 team division) then the final table will be decided by the number of points gained by teams when each team had played each other once. i.e. only the results of these matches shall count to the final table, i.e. not the result of any reverse fixtures. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If less than half the scheduled league fixture dates have elapsed then the season shall be declared null and void. In this instance the 2021/22 season will be based on the team placements published for the 2020/21 season.

If the season is revised with the expectation that at least 16 scheduled dates are available.

- Each team shall play all other teams in its Division once, on a home or away basis, on revised dates specified by the League. This shall form Phase 1 of the Division. The Division will then be divided into two sections, top and bottom, based on placings at this time and each team will play all other teams in its section on a home or away basis on revised dates specified by the League.
- If the season cannot be completed and all teams in the Division have played each other once and more than 80% of the scheduled matches have been played then the final table will be decided on a PPG basis when PPG represents the number of points gained by teams in all League fixtures divided by the number of fixtures played. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If all teams in the Division have played each other once but less than 80% of the scheduled matches have been played then the final table will be decided by the number of points gained by teams when each team had played each other once i.e. only the results of these matches shall count to the final table, i.e. not the result of any reverse fixtures. If teams are level on points Rule 2.3(b) applies.
- If less than half the scheduled league matches have been played then the season shall be declared null and void. In this instance the 2021/22 season will be based on the team placements published for the 2020/21 season.

If the season is shortened with the expectation that at least 50% of the fixtures can be scheduled.

- Each team shall play all other teams in its Division once, on a home or away basis, on revised dates specified by the League.

- If the shortened season cannot be completed due to the decisions of England Hockey and Hockey Wales that all hockey is suspended then the season shall be declared null and void. In this instance the 2021/22 season will be based on the team placements published for the 2020/21 season.

If the season is disrupted due to the requirements for competitive hockey differing between England Hockey and Hockey Wales e.g. one organisation not permitting competitive hockey

- The League Committee will seek an equitable solution to ensure that the impacted teams are not, as far as possible, adversely impacted by such a decision that is outside of their control.

Version

3.10.20