

# KENT COUNTY SENIOR NETBALL LEAGUE

## RULES & REGULATIONS

### 2024-2025

#### 1. OVERVIEW

The Kent County Senior Netball League was established in 2007 by the Kent Netball Association (Kent Netball).

It is a County league competition organised by Kent Netball to enable teams to compete against each other to determine a County winner, whilst encouraging participation and development in netball through an open, fair, progressive and transparent league structure.

These regulations set out below outline the Rules and Regulations that regulate the operation of the Kent County Senior Netball League.

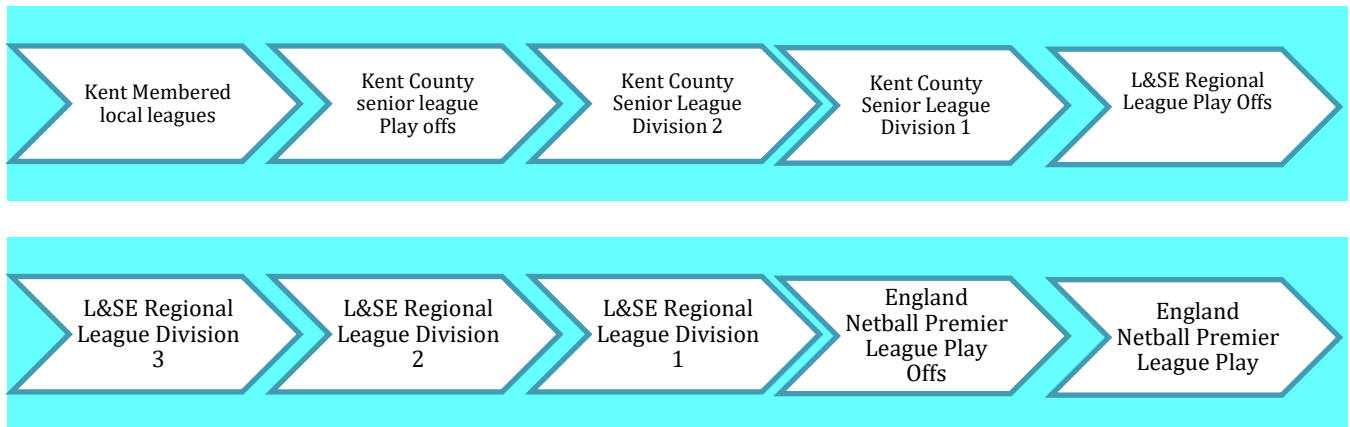
The Kent County Committee administer and manage these Regulations - they must be followed by all teams, players, officials and spectators involved in the League.

#### 2. COMPETITION STRUCTURE

- 2.1 The competition will be known as the Kent County Senior Netball League 1 and 2 (the League). There are two distinct elements of the competition, the League structure division 1 and 2 and the League Play-offs. These Rules and Regulations (the Regulations) cover all matters relating to the League structure, and the League Play-offs.
- 2.2 The League shall comprise of two (2) divisions, each comprising of six (6) teams, or at the discretion of the Kent Netball Association (Kent Netball).
- 2.3 **Division 1**
- 2.3.1 The team that finishes top of the League division 1 at the end of the season will be the County League champions and will have automatic entry to the L&SE Regional League Play offs.
- 2.3.2 The team that finishes bottom of the League division 1 will be relegated directly to division 2.
- 2.3.3 At the end of each season, any team relegated from the London & South East Regional League (L&SE League), based within the boundaries of, and is a Member of Kent Netball, may participate in the League in the following season.
- 2.3.4 In the event of a Kent Regional team being relegated back into the County League, and no Kent team is promoted to the Regional competition, the 5<sup>th</sup> placed team is also relegated unless the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> placed team are on equal points; positioned according to goals. In which case, these will go to play offs for the division 1 place and the losing team will be relegated to division 2.
- 2.3.5 In the event of a Kent team being promoted to the Regional competition, and no Kent Regional team being relegated back into the County League, the 6<sup>th</sup> placed team in Division 1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> placed team in Division 2 will play off for the one place in Division 1.
- 2.4 **Division 2**
- 2.4.1 The team that finishes top of the League division 2 at the end of the season will be the League division 2 champions and will be promoted directly to the League division 1.
- 2.4.2 The two (2) teams placed bottom of the League division 2 will enter the League Play-Offs with any team(s) wishing to enter the League.

## 2.5 Overview of County, Regional and National Netball Leagues

This shows the progression into the County League and promotion into the Regional League and the England Netball Premier League



## 3. ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 3.1 The competition and all rights and properties associated with it shall be owned, controlled and managed by Kent Netball.
- 3.2 Kent Netball is responsible for the organisation and management of the League and the League Play offs. Kent Netball will also deal with any complaints or appeals resulting from matters arising during the competition.
- 3.3 The decisions of Kent Netball or its nominee(s) in respect of these rules and regulations and on any other matter related to the League, which is not provided for below, shall be considered final and binding on all parties, (subject to the right of appeal which is specifically provided for under England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations).
- 3.4 Kent Netball is entitled to charge an entry fee to The League
- 3.5 Prior to the start of the League, Kent Netball shall announce the following:
- 3.6
  - 3.6.1 The Results Co-ordinator
  - 3.6.2 The Competition Referee(s)
  - 3.6.3 The person appointed to receive appeals on any decisions of the Competition Referee(s) as outlined in 3.3 is the County Senior Competition Secretary.

Kent Netball may alter the named Competition Referee(s) during the competition and will, through its best endeavours, inform all participating teams in the event that an alteration is made 3.7 By entering a team in the League, teams agree that:

- 3.7.1 they will abide by these rules and regulations
- 3.7.2 they are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation in the League

## 4. COMPETITION REFEREE(S)

- 4.1 Kent Netball will appoint Competition Referee(s) for each fixture date. Kent Netball will appoint separate Competition Referee(s) solely for the League Play-offs.

- 4.2 The Competition Referee(s) will have the authority and jurisdiction to make decisions on any matters arising on match days
- 4.2.1 The Competition Referee(s) may consult with, or call upon additional persons to assist prior to making any decision. However, the final decision and accountability for the decision will rest solely with the Competition Referee(s).

## 5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 5.1 Application for entry to the League shall be open to any England Netball and Kent Netball Member team, which has paid its subscription in this respect.
- 5.2 Entry to the League will be determined by Kent Netball at its absolute discretion, having due regard to the playing standard of teams wishing to participate. Casual vacancies, as may occur from time to time, will be addressed by Kent Netball at its absolute discretion.
- 5.3 No club may enter more than one team in the League. In the event of a Kent Regional team being relegated back into the County League (as detailed in 2.3.4 above) that club must forfeit their existing place in the League.
- 5.4 Teams entering the League must be represented at the Kent Netball Association Annual General Meeting held in September prior to the start of the season. **Failure of a representative from a team to attend for the duration of the AGM will result in the team being penalised. The penalty is at the discretion of the Kent County Senior Netball League Sub Committee and expulsion from the competition can be imposed for repeated yearly non-attendance.**
- 5.5 Any club entering a team in the League, who also play in the England Netball Premier League and/or the L&SE Regional League, will nominate their top 7 players before the start of the season to the League Results Co-ordinator. Any player submitted as a top 7 Premier League or Regional League player cannot participate in or be a registered player of a County League team.
- 5.6 In order to qualify to participate in the League all players and Team Officials (see section 11 for details of Team Officials) must hold current membership of England Netball as a Registered Participant having paid the full Membership Fee due and receive confirmation of their membership to the club and team in advance of submitting the registration form for the League.
- 5.7 All players must be over 14 years as at 23:59 on 31st August immediately prior to the commencement of the League playing season unless they have completed the age banding consent form and submitted it with the team registration form.
- 5.7.1 During all matches of the League, Team Managers must at all times carry proof of age for all Players under the age of 18 and a copy of Age Banding Consent Forms applicable to Players listed on the Squad Registration Sheet. Team Managers must be fully conversant with England Netball's Safeguarding Policies and Guidance - which can be found at:  
<https://englandnetball.co.uk/governance/safeguarding/>
- 5.7.2 Proof of age comprises of one or more of the following:
- a) Copy of birth certificate;
  - b) Copy of passport;
  - c) Copy of medical card;
- 5.8 Players become ineligible once they have played in 12 quarters at a higher level (within any Regional League Team or Premier League team). It is the Club's responsibility to keep a record of those playing at a higher level. Failure to comply with the ineligibility rule will result in penalties being applied as in 6.5.

- 5.9 Kent Netball recommends that individuals (player, coach, umpire) if pregnant should only participate with approval from their doctor and in accordance with any guidelines issued by itself.
- 5.10 The England Netball Personal Accident insurance cover excludes any loss or expense due to pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage or any consequence thereof. If, for example, a member who is pregnant is involved in an accident not related to the pregnancy, subject to the conditions of the policy, the relevant benefits would be payable. However, if any situation (such as hospitalisation) was prolonged as a direct result of pregnancy, pregnancy complications or even early childbirth, then this portion of any claim is not covered.
- N.B. The eligibility permissions contained in these rules may affect eligibility for Regional Play offs for players who compete at that level for a different club.*

## **6. REGISTRATION OF SQUADS**

- 6.1 A Player Registration Sheet for each participating team must be completed fully for each player and lodged with the Results Co-ordinator at least 7 days prior to the commencement of The League, accompanied by the participation membership roster. Teams may register as many players as they wish, providing a minimum of seven (7) players are registered.
- 6.1.1 Clubs must also submit their Club Roster Report (from the England Netball ENgage system) showing players flagged as 'active' for the current membership year at least 7 days prior to the commencement of the League.
- 6.2 Teams may only use those players whose names appear on their Player Registration Sheet list held by the Results Co-ordinator.
- 6.3 Any additions to the Player Registration Sheet must be lodged with the Results Co-ordinator at least 3 days prior to the playing fixture, accompanied by an updated participation membership roster list showing the additional players if not already listed on the list submitted previously.
- 6.4 The use of a non-Member player will result in a deduction of six (6) league points on each occasion.
- 6.5 The use of an unregistered player or an ineligible player (ie a player competing in Regional or Premier Leagues) or a player who is under age, without written permission from The Committee, will result in a deduction of five (5) league points on each occasion
- 6.6 Once a player has played, they cannot transfer to another team within the League during the course of the current playing season without the written authority of Kent Netball.
- 6.7 Any team who knowingly and deliberately provides false information regarding identity of players at registration and the naming of players on team sheets may be expelled from the competition. Disciplinary action may be taken against the club.

## **7. MATCH VENUES**

- 7.1 Matches will be played wherever possible on an indoor court with adequate surrounds and playing surface that have been approved by Kent Netball.
- 7.2 The home team is responsible for arranging the venue, and for the cost of this.
- 7.3 It is the responsibility of the home team to conduct a risk assessment prior to each match to ensure the match is safe to play.

## 8. MATCH SCHEDULE

- 8.1 All matches must be played as per the fixture schedule published by Kent Netball.
  - 8.1.1 In the event of a clash between the League fixture and a national competition, teams may apply in writing to Kent Netball for a rearrangement. Any application must be made at least 28 days prior to the League fixture date.
  - 8.1.2 If Kent Netball agree to a rearranged date, they will specify the date on which the rearranged fixture is to be played. If a team cannot fulfil this fixture on the specified date, they will forfeit the match points.
- 8.2 Matches are to start between 09:30 hours and 15:00 hours.
- 8.3
  - 8.3.1 The home team must provide the County with confirmation via email of the fixture, venue and start time, 21 days prior to the date of the fixture. Failure to advise the County will result in a one (1) point deduction.
  - 8.3.2 The home team must provide their opponents with confirmation via email of the fixture, its venue (with postcode) and start time, 21 days prior to the date of the fixture. Failure to advise the County will result in a one (1) point deduction.
- 8.4 Each team will be responsible for arranging its own travel arrangements.
- 8.5 If a team is delayed in arriving for a fixture, the following protocol must be observed:
  - 8.5.1 Inform the opposing team and umpires as soon as they are aware of a delay
  - 8.5.2 Any team which fails to arrive on time must take the court and be ready to play as soon as possible and in any event within 10 minutes of the agreed start time.
  - 8.5.3 Any team taking to the court more than 10 minutes after the agreed start time will concede the match, unless otherwise agreed with the Competition Referee(s)
  - 8.5.4 If extreme and unforeseen circumstances arise, postponement MAY be permitted but ONLY with the permission of the Competition Referee(s). Any rearranged match must be played as agreed by Kent Netball.
- 8.6 In the event of a game being conceded:
  - 8.6.1 The non-offending team will be awarded five (5) league points for the match, and the team which conceded will have five (5) league points deducted from their total
  - 8.6.2 The team which conceded may be liable to pay any costs which the non-offending team has incurred, subject to the determination by the Competition Referee(s) or their nominee(s)

## 9. MATCH RULES

- 9.1 All Matches shall be played in accordance with the World Netball Rules of the Game currently in force at the time of the relevant Match, except where specifically stated in these Regulations.
- 9.2 Each team must declare up to twelve (12) players prior to the start of each match by completing the Squad Member section of the League Match Card.
- 9.3 Matches must start on time except as allowed for in 8.5.
- 9.4 The game shall consist of four quarters of fifteen (15) minutes each, with an interval of four (4) minutes between the first-second and third-fourth quarters. The half time interval shall be eight (8) minutes but can be shortened to six (6) minutes if both teams and Umpires agree.

- 9.5 No form of glove should normally be worn when playing netball. However, Kent Netball recognises its responsibility for duty of care to all players playing netball, particularly those with a medical condition.
- 9.5.1 If for medical reasons gloves are required, then on production of an appropriate medical certificate/letter, Kent Netball will allow gloves to be worn. The player should ensure that the material worn does not endanger other player's safety and the player must ensure that they have appropriate personal liability insurance.
- 9.5.2 Gloves should be plain, soft leather or microfiber (E.g. Neoprene) which are manufactured without seams (or with internally sewn seams) and have no abrasive materials including but not limited to zippers, Velcro, metallic or plastic fasteners.
- 9.5.3 Umpires are reminded that they still need to be satisfied that any gloves worn do not present an obvious hazard to other players including Rule 3.12.(g) which states "Fingernails shall be short and smooth."
- 9.6 Kent Netball while being sensitive to climate, religious practices, cultural differences and health and wellbeing issues and with due regard to the safety of all participants, will allow the following:
- 9.6.1 A player may wear a hat / head covering and together with their coach they should ensure that the material used for the head covering is soft and without embellishments, which might constitute a danger to any other player on the court, and with potential flowing /flapping edges held securely around the neck or tucked into shirt collar. It should be as neat and secure as possible.
- 9.6.2 Headbands that meet the requirements as above will be allowed. Peaked 'baseball or tennis type' caps do not meet the requirements as above and will not be allowed.
- 9.7 All teams will be held responsible for their players, officials and spectators
- 9.8 In accordance with Rule 21 (point 11) of World Netball Rules of the Game; teams will be made up of players of the same gender.
- 9.9 It is the responsibility of each team to provide adequate first aid cover for its players and officials, which shall also be made available to the match officials on request.
- 9.10 An Accident Report Form will be provided to all teams participating in the League. In the event of an incident the Accident Report Form should be completed and a copy sent to the League Secretary and copy retained by the club.
- 9.11 In the event that a match is abandoned for any reason, the result of that match or the requirement to replay will be determined by Kent Netball, having regard to the score at the time and length of time played prior to the game being suspended.
- 9.12 If a fixture is abandoned it is the responsibility of the teams to report it to the Competition Referee(s) within 12 hours and to record details of the incident, time and score when the match was abandoned on the match card.
- 9.13 In the event of a player being ordered off court or a team official being required to leave the bench the matter will be brought to the attention of the competition referee.
- 9.14 In extreme extenuating circumstances, teams may apply to the Committee for the match to be rescheduled. Teams should apply in writing within 48 hours of the match date, detailing the reasons for the request and providing evidence as appropriate. The decision on whether the game is to be rescheduled rests with the Committee and is final. No team can apply to reschedule a match due to illness, injury or pregnancy.

## 10. REGISTRATION OF RESULTS

- 10.1 Teams are required to complete the results section of the official Match Result Card after each match. Both cards must be signed by the Team Captains, Umpires and Scorers. Umpires are required to add their qualification and Membership Number.
- 10.2 The Match Result Cards may be scanned/photographed and sent by email or posted to the Results Co-ordinator, to be received within five (5) working days of the match. The score for the match will not be registered until both cards have been received. Late arrival of the Match Card will result in one (1) point deduction.
- 10.2.1 The Game Management Form MUST be completed and submitted to the County Officiating Lead if any recordable Game Management issues arose, ticking 'YES' on the Match Result Card. The Form should be submitted within five (5) working days. If no such issues occurred the Game Management Form need not be submitted, ticking 'NO' on the Match Result Card.
- 10.3 Teams will be awarded league points as follows:
- 5 points for a win
  - 3 points for a draw
  - 2 points if within 5 goals of winner's score
  - 1 point for over 50% of the winner's score
  - 0 for a loss
- 10.4 A League table will be compiled on the basis of the points awarded to each team and these can be viewed via the County website at [www.kentnetball.co.uk](http://www.kentnetball.co.uk)
- 10.5 In the event of teams on equal points at the end of the League, the results of the games between the two teams decides the winner. However:
- 10.5.1 Goal average shall be used to determine their relative positions. Goal average will be determined by dividing goals scored by goals against.
- 10.5.2 If goal average is identical, then goal difference will be applied (i.e. the difference between goals for and goals against)
- 10.5.3 In the event of a further tie, the team scoring the most goals will be declared winner.
- 10.5.4 In the event that none of the above differentiates between the teams, Kent Netball, or its nominee(s), shall determine the means of differentiation.
- 10.6 If a team cancels a fixture:
- 10.6.1 The non-offending team will be awarded five (5) league points for the match, and the team which cancels will have five (5) league points deducted from their total.
- 10.6.2 The team which cancels may be liable to pay any costs which the non-offending team and match officials have incurred, subject to the determination of Kent Netball.
- 10.6.3 Failure to play on more than one occasion may result in expulsion from the League.
- 10.6.4 It is the responsibility of the offending team to ensure that the Results Co-ordinator, the opposition and both umpires are informed immediately the cancellation is known.
- 10.7 If a team withdraws from the League during the season, all associated points and goals (for and against) will be removed from the League table. The withdrawing team will forfeit any monies paid.

- 10.8 At the end of the season, the team that finishes top of the League will be the County Champions. They will be eligible for promotion to the L&SE League, and will contest a play-off (“Regional League Play-Off”)
- 10.8.1 If the winning team of the League already has a squad competing in the L&SE League, that winning team will not be eligible to compete in the Regional League Play-Off and the next highest eligible team may be put forward.
- 10.8.2 If the winning team of the League does not wish to go forward to the Regional League Play Off, the next highest eligible team may be put forward
- 10.8.3 Only players who are registered for and have played in the County League may play in the Regional League Play-Off. Full eligibility criteria for the Regional League Play-Off competition are listed in the London & South East Regional Rules

## **11. MATCH OFFICIALS**

- 11.1 Kent Netball requires umpires to demonstrate a standard of physical fitness which allows them to keep pace with the speed and variability of the games within The League. Therefore, all umpires officiating within the League may be required to submit a multi-stage fitness test minimum level 6.1 in the four weeks prior to 15th September. Kent Netball reserves the right to request further multi stage fitness tests as it deems necessary during the season.

### **11.2 Division 1**

- 11.2.1 Umpires who actively hold a Netball Europe ‘B’ Award or above, who have been identified by The Association, will be allocated to each fixture by Kent Netball, or its nominee(s), and their appointment will be notified to the teams in advance of the fixtures. Any changes immediately prior to the fixture will be notified to teams by Kent Netball or its nominee(s).
- 11.2.2 The Officiating Lead shall be responsible for providing both named umpires with confirmation in writing of the fixture (email is the preferred method), its start time and address/postcode ten (10) days prior to the date of the fixture
- 11.2.3 Teams experiencing changes to their match time / venue must ensure that Kent Netball together with the appointed umpires is notified as soon as possible.
- 11.2.4 Upon receipt of a claim submitted to the Umpiring Secretary, the Association will reimburse umpires their expenses and Umpire Fee.
- 11.2.5 The association may allocate C Award umpires working towards B in the presence of their Mentor for the purposes of umpire development.
- 11.2.6 Matches may be used by the Region or Kent Netball for the purpose of umpire assessment.

### **11.3 Division 2**

- 11.3.1 Umpires who actively hold a Netball Europe ‘B’ Award or above, who have been identified by The Association, will be allocated to each fixture by Kent Netball, or its nominee(s), and their appointment will be notified to the teams in advance of the fixtures. Any changes immediately prior to the fixture will be notified to teams by Kent Netball or its nominee(s).
- 11.3.2 The Officiating Lead shall be responsible for providing both named umpires with confirmation in writing of the fixture (email is the preferred method), its start time, and travel directions (including postcode) ten (10) days prior to the date of the fixture
- 11.3.3 Matches may be used by Kent Netball for the purpose of umpire development and assessment.

- 11.4 In the event that an umpire fails to arrive, or is injured or taken ill during a match, the following procedure will be applied:
- If another umpire of the appropriate minimum standard (B award) is available then she/he will umpire the match
  - Failing that, the next best-qualified umpire should be used.
  - Kent Netball must be informed immediately after the match.



- 11.5 Except in circumstances as at 11.5 no umpire may umpire more than one match on any fixture date without a minimum rest period of two hours.
- 11.6 Each team must provide a competent scorer/timekeeper, preferably a qualified umpire, and a minimum age 14. That scorer, once appointed, must do so for the whole game. The scorer will not be a player registered on the squad sheet for that match.
- 11.7 Kent Netball, at their discretion, may decide to take further action if the above is not adhered to.

## **12. PHOTOGRAPHY**

- 12.1 All teams should be aware of the Kent Netball photography policy and must be complied with.

## **13. QUERIES AND COMPLAINTS & APPEALS**

Process of query, complaint or appeal must begin immediately and be directed to the Competition Referee, or in their absence the County Secretary.

The process to be followed is outlined in England netball's 'Appeals Section for Leagues' document which can be downloaded via a link from the Kent Netball website or here:

<https://www.englandnetball.co.uk/support/support-for-organisations/leagues/competition-governance/>

## **N.B LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS**

Please refer to the document 'Rules and Regulations of the Play-offs' which is available from the Kent Netball website.