



NETBALL LEAGUES HANDBOOK

WINTER SEASON 2023 TO 2024

Covering all netball competitions held at:

Bury Sport for All Centre, Philips High School, Higher Lane, Whitefield, M45 7PH

Oldham Sport for All Centre, Newbridge School, Roman Road, OL8 3PT

Stockport Sport for All Centre, Reddish Vale High School, Reddish Vale Road, Reddish, SK5 7HD

Warrington Sport for All Centre, Sir Thomas Boteler CE High School, Knutsford Road, Latchford, Warrington, WA4 1JL

1. Team entry fees

- a. Junior team entry fee - £17.50 per team
- b. Senior team entry fee - £26.00 per team

2. Team game fees

a. All indoor venues

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Juniors | £22.00 game fee + £8.50 for an umpire |
| Seniors | £29.50 game fee + £9.50 for an umpire |

b. All outdoor leagues

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Juniors | £22.00 game fee + £8.50 for an umpire |
| Seniors | £26.00 game fee + £9.50 for an umpire |

If the match fees above have changed from last season, implementation of these changes will take place at the senior leagues start date for both junior and senior leagues.

3. Definitions

- a. SFAC – Sport for All Centre
- b. Team entry form deadline:
 - i. Monday 24th July 2023 – junior leagues
 - ii. Monday 25th September 2023 – senior leagues
- c. Season start date:
 - i. Saturday 2nd September 2023 – junior leagues
 - ii. Monday 9th October 2023 – senior leagues
- d. Closure dates (no games – all dates inclusive)
 - i. Friday 22nd December 2023 to Monday 1st January 2024 (Christmas & New Year)
- e. End of season / Grand Finals
 - i. Sunday 8th February 2024 (junior leagues)
 - ii. Sunday 24th March 2024 (senior leagues)
- f. Cut-off date
 - i. Monday 13th November 2023 (junior leagues)
 - ii. Friday 22nd December 2023 (senior leagues)

4. Team responsibilities

a. Team organiser

Each team shall nominate one person as a team organiser for communication purposes during the season. It is the responsibility of the team to familiarise team members with league regulations and to distribute relevant information.

b. Team entry forms and player registrations

- i. Team entry forms are to be completed fully, with all details, on entering a team and it is the team contact's responsibility to ensure that this form is updated throughout the course of the season.
- ii. Players must be registered on a team's entry form before they can play for that team. Teams playing unregistered players will forfeit all associated matches.
- iii. Teams must complete a registration form and make full payment before entering the competition.
- iv. Teams playing in the previous season, who return a fully completed entry form by the closing date with the appropriate team fee, will be guaranteed a league position for the new season.
- v. After the team entry form deadline, teams will be allocated on a first come first served basis
- vi. Teams can only register 12 players on each registration sheet, players must be removed before adding others, under no circumstances are team managers to have more than 12 players at any one time registered on any one team. Deregistered players cannot be re-registered to the same team during the season. League points will be deducted to offending teams for games played where surplus or reregistered players have been played.

c. Score sheets

- i. All team players should print their full name and position on the score sheet at least 10 minutes before the scheduled start time to help ensure games can start on time. Score sheets cannot be removed from reception until both teams have paid the correct team fee and the score sheet is stamped "PAID". Match fees must be paid in full as one payment. Players are not permitted to pay individually. The last team to pay is responsible for taking the score sheet to the score bench. At the end of the game, the winning team should return the score sheet to reception.
- ii. Players who do not attend a match who have been recorded on the sheet should be crossed off the score sheet at half-time by the umpires.
- iii. Players can join the game at any time only if they are registered for that team prior to the scheduled start time. Their name needs to be recorded on the score sheet.

d. Team official (SCORER)

- i. Every team is required provide a competent scorer or timekeeper, who is at least 13 years old (junior competitions and Warrington seniors) and may provide a scorer for senior competitions at Bury, Oldham and Stockport.
- ii. The umpire may delay the start of a match (not the clock) if teams fail to provide a scorer.

- iii. Any team failing to provide a scorer may not lodge a protest in the event of a match dispute.
 - iv. If there is a discrepancy between the score sheet and the scoreboard at the end of the game, the result on the score sheet will be the one used.
 - v. For Warrington senior netball competitions, teams may request for the centre to supply a scorer at a cost of £5 per team. This may only be done twice in a season. Beyond this, games may be forfeited if failing to provide a scorer.
- e. Tournaments and county leagues
- i. Summer season –The SFAC will try to arrange fixtures around the tournaments that junior clubs wish to attend, providing the Centre is informed in writing of those dates prior to fixtures being issued. Games being re-arranged will be re-scheduled to a Saturday or a Sunday providing courts are available. Games can only be re-arranged with the full agreement of the opposing team, with a mutually agreed time being arranged.
 - ii. Winter season - Teams playing in county leagues will also have to play their game at the SFAC on that day. These games will not be replayed at a different date or time.
 - iii. Where replays cannot be organised or there is failure to comply with these rules, missed games will be treated as walkovers with walkover fines being applied.

5. League age restrictions

- a. All junior players must be in the appropriate school year on the first day of the season.
- b. Cut-off dates for junior competitions are:
 - Under 17s, born on 1st September 2006 or later
 - Under 18s, born on 1st September 2005 or later
 - Under 19s, born on 1st September 2004 or later
 - Under 20s, born on 1st September 2003 or later
 - Under 21s, born on 1st September 2002 or later
- c. For health and safety reasons, junior players can play in their own age group competition and one age group above their own age group only, and no age groups above this.
- d. The exception to this rule is for players in school year 9 or above who are permitted to play in all age groups from school years 9&10 upwards, including senior competitions.

6. England Netball Affiliations

All clubs, teams and players must be affiliated to England Netball. SFAC reserves the right to check affiliation status of clubs or individuals at any point.

Information on England Netball affiliations and its services can be obtained via:
www.EnglandNetball.co.uk

7. Rule modifications

a. High 5 competitions

“High 5” netball rules will apply to all primary school aged competitions, where the nets shall be lowered to 9 feet. Information on High 5 netball is available from the SFAC reception. Where the netball posts are lowered, a goal shall not count if it first hits the back post before passing through the goal.

b. High 7 competitions (Warrington centre)

“High 7” netball rules will apply to all primary school aged competitions, where the nets shall be lowered to 9 feet. Information on High 5 netball is available from the SFAC reception. Where the netball posts are lowered, a goal shall not count if it first hits the back post before passing through the goal.

c. Adult mixed

- i. Teams must have a minimum of 2 men on court at all times except in circumstances where there are injuries or disqualifications where women may replace these players.
- ii. Teams may field up to 3 men in each game who must all take positions in different thirds (eg. player 1 – GK or GD; player 2 – WA, C or WD; and player 3 – GA or GS).

8. League administration

a. League tables

- i. League points for matches will be as follows:
Win = 3, Bye=3, Draw = 2, Loss = 1, Walkover = 0
- ii. New teams entering the leagues will be credited with 1 point for every league fixture for the 1st 8 weeks of the season. After the 1st 8 weeks new teams will not be credited with 1 point per fixture to date.
- iii. The two top teams from all divisions, will be promoted at the end of each season. The bottom one or two teams will be relegated.
- iv. Junior leagues at Bury, Oldham & Stockport – teams will receive points for up to 3 byes. Any byes allocated beyond this will be classed as excess which will be zero points for each.

b. Fixture requests

- i. All teams can expect to receive a fair distribution of match times throughout the season. Teams wishing to make any special requests regarding scheduling must do so in writing using the special request form (available on the SFAC website and QR codes) and lodge this with the team’s entry form or by the published fixture requests deadlines. Requests received after the deadlines will not be considered and any forfeited matches as a result will be classified as walkovers with associated fines.
- ii. It should be noted that only legitimate requests will be considered. Every attempt will be made to cater for teams; however there is no guarantee that all requests will be met.
- iii. Teams are expected to play at all times and overflow venues (when in use) and for all dates scheduled for their associated programme.

- iv. Fixture requests will not be carried over from one season to the next.
- v. All matches must take place at Sport for All Centres venues and dedicated overflow venues. Games cannot be played off site – for example – at club training venues where teams from the same club are scheduled to play each other.

c. Moving divisions

- i. Teams may move division only with a legitimate reason and with written permission from the Netball Programme Manager. The Netball Programme Manager will have the authority to move a team at any time in the season to an appropriate division to suit their ability level.
- ii. Teams moving UP a division will carry forward their current league points. Teams moving DOWN a division will be credited with 2 points per fixture to date.
- iii. After the cut-off date, teams & players will not be permitted to change divisions / teams (except in exceptional circumstances; teams will not receive any league points to date).

9. Conduct of players, coaches and spectators

- a. Any player, coach or spectator reported to have conducted themselves in a manner contrary to the best interests of netball may be suspended or disqualified from SFAC competitions. Any person suspended or disqualified may not play, coach or be a spectator at any Sport for All Centres
- b. Copies of the SFAC codes of conduct for players, coaches and spectators, as well as the SFAC disciplinary code may be obtained from the SFAC on request.

10. League competition rules

a. Timing

- i. High-5 or 7 (primary schools): 4 x 9 minute quarters with 2 minutes half time and 1 minute between the other quarters.
- ii. Junior competitions (school year 7 and above): 4 x 10-minute quarters with 2 minutes half time and 30 seconds between quarters.
- iii. Senior competitions: 4 x 10-minute quarters with 2 minutes half time and 30 seconds between the other quarters (1 minute between quarters in Bury and Warrington).

b. Uniforms

- i. Teams must wear matching uniforms a similar colour and provide their own bibs or patches for playing position. Teams will be penalised 1 goal per player if in incorrect uniform implemented by the umpire at half time, and no later.
- ii. Playing positions should be worn front and back and shall be at least 6 inches high.
- iii. Tracksuit bottoms or leggings are permissible as long as they match the same colour of the rest of the team.
- iv. Borrowed players are not penalised.
- v. New teams have a period of 6 weeks to ensure that all players are wearing the correct kit. After this, penalties apply.

c. Colour clashes

- i. Teams with similar coloured uniforms should organise a change of bibs (available from the centre staff) before their scheduled start time.
- ii. The first named team on the match fixture shall have priority of uniform colours.
- iii. It is the responsibility of the playing teams to ascertain that there is a potential clash and to organise the bibs before the scheduled start time as games will not be delayed.

d. Walkovers

- i. A walkover occurs when:
 - A team cancels a scheduled match
 - A team is more than ten minutes late (see late start penalty)
 - A team fields an illegal player (see player restrictions)
- ii. In the event of a walkover the none-offending team will receive a win, with a match score 20-0.
- iii. In the event of a game not taking place due to a walkover the offending team will receive a walkover fine:
 - UN-NOTIFIED WALKOVER: double team match fee penalty
 - NOTIFIED WALKOVER: (over 48 hours' notice) double match team fee less umpires payments
- iv. Any team giving two (2) walkovers (notified or un-notified) may be disqualified from the competition, unless there are extenuating circumstances, and the Netball Programme Manager has been informed and agreed.
- v. In the event of exceptional circumstances, the Netball Programme Manager has the authority to replay a forfeited match at a mutually convenient time for the teams concerned. Teams have up to 3 weeks before the end of the season to play any outstanding re-arranged matches. After this period, they will be classed as a walkover.
- vi. Walkover fines must be paid within one week. Teams with outstanding fines will lose all their league points until all outstanding fines are repaid in full, in which case all league points will be reinstated. League points will not be reinstated after the last day of the season.
- vii. For leagues that do not involve play-offs and finish with league standings, teams must have paid off any fines or short-payments in full no later than 7 days prior to the end of the season to have their points reinstated and to be eligible for position on the league tables.
- viii. For leagues that involve play-offs, teams must have paid off any fines or short-payments in full no later than 7 days prior to the semi-final matches to have their points reinstated and to be eligible for play-offs.
- ix. The Centre reserves the right to refuse entry to the next season to any teams that have any debts outstanding at the end of these season.
- x. Any player of a team who has not paid overdue fines or fees may be refused registration with another team until their portion of any fines/fees have been paid.

- e. Scratch match
 - i. A scratch match is a match where ineligible players are involved to avoid a walkover.
 - ii. Both teams are required to pay their full game fees with the match being played under normal conditions. A team refusing to take part in a scratch match will be issued with a walkover.
 - iii. In this situation the team who was unable to field a legal team, will not receive a fine and will receive one (1) league point. The other team will receive a win, with score of 20-0.
- f. Late start penalty
 - i. The umpires will commence all games on time.
 - ii. When time is called to begin play, any team not present on court with a minimum of 5 of its registered players ready to play (4 for high 5 netball) will be penalised 1 goal per minute, implemented by the umpire at the start of the game.
 - iii. The score sheet must be on the score bench with a paid stamp next to both teams before the game can start. After 10 minutes walkover penalties apply.
- g. Borrowed players
 - i. A team must have 5 registered players to commence a legal match or 4 registered players for high-5 matches.
 - ii. Where a team only has 5 or 6 registered players available to play (or 4 for high-5 matches) it may borrow 1 player from either the same division or the one below. In junior netball this can be from the age group below. If a team borrows more than 1 player, or a player is from the wrong division or age group, they will forfeit the game and incur a loss.
At the Bury centre, for junior netball leagues only, teams may borrow 2 players if they only have 5 players.
 - iii. The borrowed player's details must be entered on the team score sheet and the umpires notified.
 - iv. In a high-5 league, the borrowed player may play in any position and will move position as per the high-5 rotation of the team.
 - v. For all other netball leagues, the borrowed player will play in any centre court position (C, WA or WD) only. The borrowed player may change positions in between periods of play but must remain in one of the centre court positions (C, WA or WD).
 - vi. The borrowed player may join a game at any point, once approved by an umpire, but only after a goal, an interval of play or stoppage. There must be a vacant centre court position available for the borrowed player to join.
 - vii. If a team member turns up late they can replace the borrowed player, but only after a goal, once summoned on the court by the umpire, and to replace the borrowed player's position on court. If the borrowed player is replaced they may not be substituted back on later in the game.
 - viii. A player who is injured, and unable to continue to play, may be replaced by a borrowed player where the team affected does not have any substitutes to take their position. The borrowed player can join at any point in the game after the injured player has left the court, whilst there is vacant position to fill. They can only join the game once approved by an umpire, and only after a

goal, an interval of play or stoppage. The borrowed player must take a centre court position, which may result in one other player moving out of a centre court position to allow this to happen.

A player who has left the court for injury, who has been replaced by a borrowed player can only return to the game and replace the borrowed player at an interval of play. Borrowing a player to replace an injured player can only happen once in a game.

- ix. A team may not borrow the same player more than twice in any season.
- h. Player restrictions
 - i. All Yr 3&4 and Yr 5&6 are mixed competitions. Yr 7&8 up are single sex competitions, unless stated otherwise.
 - ii. Players can only register and play for one team per competition. A competition is defined as a league for a particular age group and gender (for juniors) or for a particular day and gender (for seniors). Note some competitions for days / age groups may have different genders allowing registration for more than one team (eg. male, female, mixed).
 - iii. Any teams fielding illegal players will forfeit the game 20-0.
- i. Player transfers
 - i. Players may transfer to another team/club during the first 10 weeks of the season. Players wishing to transfer between team/clubs may only do so by completing a transfer form & with authorised permission of the Netball Programme Manager. Players transferring teams without permission will forfeit or lose all matches whilst illegally participating. After ten weeks, players will not be permitted to change teams (except in exceptional circumstances).
 - ii. The transfer rule applies during and across seasons, which includes breaks between seasons. A transfer request is not required for players who subsequently do not register for one or more seasons. Transfers between teams from the same club are permitted between seasons without the need of a transfer form.
 - iii. Poaching of players from other teams or clubs is not permitted. This normally involves approaching players (or their parents for juniors) from other teams or clubs and offering them the opportunity to join their team or club. Where this is found to have occurred, the associated transfers will not be approved and disciplinary action will be taken against those found to be poaching.
- j. End of Season / grand finals
 - i. Awards will be given to league winners and runners up, in all competitions, unless specified in 10.j.iii
 - ii. Participation medals will be awarded to all other teams competing in the primary school aged competitions.
 - iii. Grand finals
 - i. Grand finals will be held for junior leagues at the Warrington centre and for the Bury junior regional leagues (school years 7 through to under 21s).

- ii. It is the club/team responsibility to ascertain a player's final eligibility at least two (2) weeks prior to the end of the season. Players have to have played 5 games to qualify for a place in play offs or finals. Byes do not count as a game played.
 - iii. Team organisers should not write a player's name on the score sheet unless he/she plays in that game. If players' names are on the sheet and they haven't played, a line must be put through the name. This should be done for every game.
 - iv. All other competitions, the top four placed teams in the league will qualify for play-offs and will play semi-finals (1st v 4th, 2nd v 3rd) on the game before grand finals followed by a final on grand finals day. All other teams will play on semi-finals and finals days.
 - v. For all semi-final and final matches, in the event of a tied match at the end of regulation time, one period of extra time will be played of 2 minutes running clock. If after 2 minutes the scores are still tied, the end of time siren will be ignored and play will continue. The first team to score after this will win the game.
- k. Court responsibilities
- i. The team coach or, in their absence, team captain is responsible for the conduct of his/her team's players, scorers and spectators. All participants are requested to read the guidelines concerning codes of conduct and spectator behaviour. Coaches and spectators must stay in their teams appointed area & are not permitted to move up and down the side lines.
- l. Blood rule
- If a player should bleed during the course of a game they must leave the court immediately and may not return until all bleeding has stopped or suitably covered. Any blood on players clothing, the ball or surface of the court must be cleaned before play can recommence.
- m. Pregnancy
- For health and safety reasons, no player may compete once she has passed the 3-months mark.
- n. Jewellery & fingernails
- i. All jewellery is to be removed with the exception of medical alert bracelets.
 - ii. No adornment that may endanger player safety shall be worn. This includes hair clips/slides etc.
 - iii. Fingernails must be short and smooth. The umpire may check this, but captains should check players before games. Acrylic nails will only be allowed if short and smooth. Nails are not allowed to be covered in order to avoid cutting.
- o. Personal belongings disclaimer
- All participants, spectators, coaches and match officials are responsible for their own personal belongings and vehicles whilst attending the Centre. B. H. Sports Management Ltd will not accept any responsibility for any items lost, stolen or damaged at the Centre. It is advised that items of value such as jewellery and mobile phones are not brought to the Centre.

p. Insurance & First-aid

- i. All players are covered by the SFAC Public Liability Insurance but players and officials take to the courts at their own risk.
- ii. Teams should provide their own first aid kits and ice packs and strapping tape.
- iii. The Centre does not provide ice packs for injuries. Any application of ice to injuries is done at the discretion of the team.
- iv. The Centre has a basic emergency first aid kit located behind reception.
- v. All injuries are to be reported to the SFAC as soon as they occur and the Accident Book completed.

q. Alcohol & drugs

- i. No player or official is allowed to compete / officiate at the SFAC if they are under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- ii. If any SFAC member of staff feels that a player, official or spectator is under the influence of any substance, they will be asked to leave the SFAC.
- iii. No alcohol or illegal substance may be brought into the centre.

r. No-smoking policy

The Centre has a no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building or outside the front entrance to the Centre.

s. Photography

- i. Anyone wishing to use a camera, still or video must before attempting to use that camera, register their intent with the Centre staff at reception. This includes the use of camera-phones for photography. This involves filling in a disclaimer form and taking a sticker to wear so staff and other Centre users know this has been approved.
- ii. The Centre staff reserve the right to refuse permission to use cameras due to safeguarding concerns of vulnerable individuals at the Venue.
- iii. From time to time the SFAC will have professional photographers on hand to take pictures of teams and players. These pictures will be available to buy after matches on these days. SFAC may use some of these images for promotional purposes.
- iv. From time to time the SFAC will take photographs and videos for use on social media.
- v. If your team or a member of your team does not want to be photographed, this must be brought to the attention of the Centre, and this will be logged in the Centre photography logbook.

11. Complaints procedure

- a. Where teams are having problems with their match, such as excessive rough play or concerns about the officials, teams are advised to:
 - i. Not confront the officials in the match or make comments towards officials.
 - ii. Locate a member of staff who should aim to attend and observe the game where they may intervene and speak to the officials if needed and obtain their own account of the situation in the match.
- b. Where possible complaints should be directed to the Netball Programme Manager at the time of the game in a calm and courteous manner. Written complaints should be addressed to the programme manager – their contact details are available on request.
- c. A copy of the SFAC complaints procedure is available on request.
- d. Threatening and abusive conduct towards SFAC staff from players, coaches, spectators and officials will not be tolerated and such actions will be reported to the Management who will take disciplinary action against offenders, which may lead to prosecution.

12. All other netball rules

All other rules as per the “IFNA official rules of netball” and England Netball rules for high 5 or high 7 apply.

SPORT FOR ALL NETBALL COMPETITIONS

| BURY CENTRE | |
|---|---|
| DAYS | COMPETITION |
| Monday evenings (start times of 6:15pm to 9:35pm) | Women's Mixed |
| Tuesday evenings (start times of 7:00pm to 9:30pm) | Women's |
| Wednesday evenings (start times of 7:00pm to 9:30pm) | Women's Mixed walking (social session) |
| Saturday & Sunday days (start times of 8:30am to 8:30pm) | School years 1&2 mini netters high 5 School years 3&4 mixed high 5 School years 5&6 mixed high 5 Under 12s School years 7&8 girls' School years 9&10 girls' Under 17s & under 21s girls' Performance/Development/Community leagues |
| OLDHAM CENTRE | |
| DAYS | COMPETITION |
| Monday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 9:40pm) | Women's |
| Tuesday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 9:40pm) | Women's |
| Wednesday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 9:40pm) | Women's |
| Thursday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 9:40pm) | Women's Mixed |
| Saturday & Sunday days (start times of 8:30am to 8:30pm) | Development / Community leagues enter through Bury (see above) |
| STOCKPORT CENTRE | |
| DAYS | COMPETITION |
| Monday evenings (start times of 7:00pm to 9:30pm) | Women's |
| Tuesday evenings (start times of 7:00pm to 9:30pm) | Women's |
| Wednesday evenings (start times of 7:00pm to 9:30pm) | Women's |
| Sunday days (start times of 8:30am to 8:30pm) | School years 3&4 mixed high 5 School years 5&6 mixed high 5 School years 7&8 girls' School years 9&10 girls' Under 19s girls' Development / Community leagues entered through Bury (see above) |
| WARRINGTON CENTRE | |
| DAYS | COMPETITION |
| Monday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 10:00pm) | Women's |
| Wednesday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 10:00pm) | Women's |
| Thursday evenings (start times of 6:40pm to 10:00pm) | Women's Over 40's women's |
| Sunday days (start times of 8:30am to 8:30pm) | School years 1&2 School years 3&4 mixed high 5 School years 5&6 mixed high 5 & high 7 School years 7&8 girls' School years 9&10 girls' Under 17s/19s girls' |
| Sunday evenings | Women's |