

YORKSHIRE LEAGUE RULES 2006 - 2007

PREAMBLE

1. The Leagues will be governed by the Yorkshire Hockey Association (YHA) through the YHA Competitions Committee (YHACC), and will be known as the Yorkshire Men's Hockey League (YMHL), the Yorkshire Women's Hockey League (YWHL) and the Yorkshire Mixed Hockey League (YXHL). A sponsor's name may be prefixed to the League names for publicity purposes.
2. Each League will be administered by a Committee (The "Men's, Women's and Mixed League Committees respectively"), which shall consist of a Chair and an appropriate number of other Members. The respective League Committees will consist of a Chair, and a maximum of ten Members for YMHL (of which one will be a nominee from the YHA Umpires), six Members for YWHL and four Members for YXHL. One Member will be appointed Secretary and all Members may act as Divisional Secretaries of the respective Leagues. Details will be included in the list of Officials in the YHA Handbook/Website. At least three Meetings per year will be held and notes of these Meetings will be circulated to the YHACC. The Chair or other nominated Member will represent each League Committee on the YHACC. The Chair for each Committee will be formally approved at the Annual General Meeting of the YHA (in May).. The Committees will be nominated by the Annual Clubs Fixture Meeting (early June).
3. Each participating Club in the League will be affiliated to Yorkshire Hockey Association (YHA). Other Clubs affiliated to a different County Association may be admitted with the approval of YHA Executive Committee. Each Club will include in their submission of their Club Officials for the following season to the County Secretary, to be included in the YHA Handbook and on the Website, not later than the 30th of June of each year, a Match Confirmation Secretary to act as point of contact during the League season and a Results Secretary to correlate and communicate results. (See Rules 11, 25 & 28). Each club is reminded that they are responsible for the efficient administration and organisation of their club and as such must make every effort to ensure that all their members are aware of their responsibilities to others involved in the game. Clubs will be held responsible for breaches of rules and any misdemeanours committed by their members – whether players, officials or spectators.. Any serious misconduct could result in any of the penalties of rule 23 being applied. All clubs must have a code of conduct and disciplinary code which they abide by.

Each Club will submit to each League Secretary a list of Player's Registration, which will be a list of all players who are bona fide playing Members of their Club; no less than two weeks prior to commencement of the start of the League season. This also includes information on 1st XI starred players as detailed in Note 2. Any changes to the Player's Registration during the season should be forwarded to the League Secretary immediately. (See Notes 1 & 2)

STRUCTURE AND PROMOTION

4. The League will consist of such Divisions as may from time to time be fixed by the relevant League Committee.
Each Division will comprise of no more than 12 Teams, playing home and away (A maximum of 22 League matches). The actual number of Teams in any Division may be varied subject to no more than 22 League matches; dependant upon the total number of Teams to ensure viability. The bottom League only may have more than 12 Teams and play each other only once or be played on a regional basis with play-offs to determine final positions and promotion.
5. Promotion and relegation will occur in the League on the following basis at the end of the season. The winner of Men's Premier Division and Women's Premier Division will be eligible for promotion to the North Leagues as determined by NHA. The top two Teams from Division 1 Men, Division 1 Women and below will be promoted to the next higher Division and the bottom two Teams in all Divisions will be relegated to the next lower Division. There will be no relegation from the bottom Division.

When Teams are promoted or relegated from National/Regional Leagues, or Teams drop out of the League, then additional Teams will be promoted or relegated as necessary to maintain the normal number of Teams in a League. (See Note 3)

If new Clubs join the Leagues then: -

(1) if they have more than one Team they could be put in different Divisions.

(2) if after a season it is apparent that a new entrant's Teams are playing at an inappropriate level they should be considered to be moved up more than one League.

This would only be implemented provided that no additional Clubs are demoted and no Clubs denied promotion as per previous paragraph.

6. Points will be awarded as follows: 3 for a win, 1 for a draw, and 0 for a defeat. In the event of two or more Teams finishing with the same number of points, the Team with the best goal difference will be placed higher; if still equal, the Team with most 'goals for' is to be the highest placed. If still equal at the end of the season, the winner of the combined results of both matches played against each other will determine the final position. If still equal, then a play-off will determine promotion/relegation places.
7. The League Committee will advise participating Clubs of their status and fixtures for the following season at least two weeks before the Annual Clubs Fixture Meeting to be held on a date before 10th June each year with Clubs given at least 28 days notice of the Meeting.

All Clubs must have a representative at the Meeting; penalty for non-attendance is £50 per Club.

New Clubs wishing to join or Teams wishing to withdraw must notify the Divisional representative in writing or by email by the 15th April. The League Committees may use their discretion in accepting applications to join the Leagues.

8. University based Clubs will be permitted to rearrange fixtures as specified below. They must provide a list of term times dates to the nominated League Committee representative ideally at the club meeting in June and no later than October 1st. Upon receipt of the fixtures for the season, University based Clubs will identify those fixtures that fall outside their term dates where they cannot raise a Team, contact the opposition and rearrange the fixtures. These will be notified to the nominated League Committee representative
These fixtures must be arranged in the following priority a) the first midseason slip date then on a Sunday before Christmas, except with the permission of the Divisional representative. Non university based clubs must be given priority for the Saturday slip date. In all cases the relevant Divisional representative must be kept informed and have final approval. The second mid season date and any end of season slip dates must be kept for bad weather postponements. The list of match rearrangements should be completed at the Clubs Meeting and will be submitted to the relevant Divisional representative and update on the website (see rule 12) two weeks before the first scheduled League match in the forthcoming season.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £50.

9. All League matches will be played in accordance with the current "Rules of Hockey" as laid down by England Hockey. A Team must have seven players on the pitch including a Goalkeeper (or a player acting as a goalkeeper) before a match may start. A Team not completing a match unless abandoned by umpires for adverse conditions will be deemed to have conceded the match. Rule 23 will apply.
10. League fixtures will be played on such weeks fixed by the YHACC with slip dates similarly fixed. These will be notified with the Fixture List for each season. The home Club is responsible for ensuring that a League game is played on the appointed date, or on a re-arranged date in accordance with Rules 8, 21, 23, and 31.

11. The appointed Match Confirmation Secretary must provide details of times and venues of all scheduled and re-arranged home matches 14 days prior to the start of the season. This can be input direct to the website or sent in an agreed format to the website manager.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £50.

It is recommended that notification be given to opposition as early as possible, ideally by the end of July so that details can be included in Club Fixture Cards.

Any rearrangements made during the season due to postponements should utilise available Saturday slip dates. Once all slip dates are used up then Sunday or mid week matches will be necessary to meet the end of season cut off date.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement.

Any dispute regarding rearrangements should be notified by email or in writing to the Divisional representative who will rule or refer disputes to the appropriate League Committee.

12. Clubs entering the League must ensure that all Teams play every League fixture. League matches will not take place after the nominated end date of the season. The nominated date is normally the last scheduled slip date and will be advised to all Fixture Secretaries. Any Team failing to complete its League fixtures may be liable to expulsion from Leagues in addition to the penalties imposed by the League Committee as detailed in Rule 23.
13. If any Team defaults, other than because of a pitch being unfit, then the Team not defaulting may charge the defaulting Club for any costs incurred. These may include pitch hire costs if this cannot be cancelled, and if short notice cancellation, phone calls, refreshments and/or transport costs. Any team cancelling later than 20.00 on the Wednesday prior to the match will automatically be deducted 1 point
14. In the event of a Team being short of players, other players will be promoted from successive Teams such that the Club's lowest Team is short. In the interest of safety a goalkeeper may play for another Team (of the same Club) in the same playing week. In addition up to two players per Club may play for a higher side than usual as well as their normal side to cope with player shortages. In either case this must be declared on the Match Reporting Form before the start of a match. This should be an occasional emergency, not a regular event.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement.

Players may bench for a higher side and provided they play less than 10 minutes in the higher match they may play in another appropriate match that weekend. Team selection is expected to be consistent with players not playing for lower sides than they usually play for, particularly in rescheduled match or where a higher Team has no fixture. This includes players playing in National or Regional Leagues. Within the last four scheduled playing weeks of the League season (not including slip dates) any Club must not play in any Team a player who has played more than 50% of their games for higher sides in the current season, unless they have played four of the last five matches played for the lower side. A fixture may be postponed through a shortage of players under extreme circumstances only with the approval of the Divisional representative. A Team must have seven players (including a goalkeeper as per the Rules of the game of Hockey) on the pitch before a match may start.

15. All League matches will commence within the hours of 10.30 and 16.30 providing travel time for the opposition is not more than 1 hour for the 10.30 game or 1.5 hours for the 16.30 games. Dispensation on this Rule may be granted to Teams who are restricted to start times by pitch availability. This must be notified to and will be confirmed by the League Secretary. A start time may be mutually agreed outside these hours. Matches with Neutral Umpires should start between 12.00 and 15.00 to allow for Umpires travelling time except where Regional and National League matches make this unfeasible. It may not be possible for Umpires to be appointed outside these hours. Teams not ready to start within 15 minutes of the agreed start time will forfeit the match Rule 13 will apply. In extenuating circumstances Rule 23 will be applied.
16. All players including goalkeepers will wear shirts each bearing a different number of at least 9" in height and contrasting in colour from the shirts. Numbers will be worn in the centre of the back of the shirt. Goalkeepers shall wear a shirt of a different colour to both their Team and the opposition. If in the opinion of the Umpires, there is a clash of colours, the away Team shall change.
17. Matches in the Men's Divisions Premier, 1, 2 and 3 and Women's Premier 1 and 2 must be played on synthetic surfaces. Otherwise, matches may be played on grass or artificial turf or on a hard (all weather) surface (but not on tarmac or concrete) and approved by the League Committee.
18. If a match is abandoned, the result shall stand in cases where the match has been in progress for more than 50 minutes.
19. Umpires will be appointed by the YHUA to officiate in all Men's League matches in the Premier Division and subject to availability Division 1. In the event of non-availability of an appointed Official, the home Club should provide an Umpire graded EH Level 1 or higher. In the event of non-arrival of an appointed Official, the Team Captains should endeavour to secure a substitute(s) graded EH Level 1 or higher. In the event that two Umpires EH Level 1 or higher not being available, the match will be postponed. In all other matches in the Leagues, each Club must provide one Umpire unless mutually agreed to the contrary (see Rule 25). Clubs may by mutual consent agree for one Club to provide both Umpires for a match but this must be confirmed as detailed in Rule 25. For all League matches in Divisions 4 and above for Men Clubs, Division 3 and above for Women Clubs must provide Umpires graded EH Level 1 or higher. The Umpires' Registration Number must be included on the Match Result Card.

The failure by either team to provide an Umpire graded EH Level 1 or higher will incur a fine of £25.

The match will be declared a 3-0 loss against the defaulting Team unless both Teams agree to complete it with Umpires who are not of grade EH Level 1 or higher. This must be clearly stated on the match report form and agreed between the captains and the umpires before the start of the game. A friendly game may be played and again this must be stated on the match report form. Other matches may be umpired by suitably experienced Umpires (preferably qualified or those having taken a Level One Course) and Clubs are encouraged to arrange for all Umpires to seek qualification.

No person shall umpire and play in the same match but Clubs may agree for one Club to provide both Umpires, particularly for home matches, by mutual consent.

20. If the home ground is unfit on the day of the match, the venue may be changed by mutual agreement between the Teams and Umpires. The Home Team is empowered to postpone a match because of unfitness of its ground.

21. In the event of a postponement due to an unfit pitch, the visiting Team and the Umpires (if applicable) must be informed at least 3 hours before the agreed start time or if an early start no later than their departure time. The home Team is responsible for reporting the postponement and its cause to the appropriate Divisional representative by email or in writing within two days of the postponement. Postponement of any matches in Men's and Women's Premier or Divisions 1, 2 must also be sent by SMS to the YHA Website manager (see handbook for number) by 19.00 on the day of the match,

Failure to do so will incur a £15 penalty for each infringement.

The match must then be played on a date agreed by both sides on a) On a Sunday within 15 days of the postponement or the nearest midseason slip date. This must be agreed within 7 days of the postponement.

These should be amended on the website which will automatically notify divisional secretaries and neutral umpire's secretary where appropriate

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement.

22. Where both Teams are at the ground, if a dispute arises as to the fitness of the pitch, the responsibility for a decision shall rest with the Umpires after consultation with Ground Staff, if any. Both Umpires must agree to proceed with the match; otherwise the match will be postponed. After the commencement of a match, any question of abandoning a match will rest entirely with the Umpires. Matches postponed, or abandoned before fifty minutes play has taken place, must be re-arranged as described in Rule 21 above. Should a match not be played on its appointed date for any reason other than an unfit pitch, the home Club must submit a written or email report, copied to the opposition, to the relevant Divisional representative stating the circumstances relating to the match not being played and where possible identifying an alternative date. It is recommended that the away Team also submit a report.

23. For breach of any of the Rules the relevant League Committee will conduct an investigation and the Secretary/ Divisional representative shall inform the Clubs of the findings within 7 days by phone and an email or letter of confirmation shall be sent within 14 days of the meeting. It may: -

- impose a fine (the amount of which shall be determined by the League Committee up to a maximum of £75)
- direct that the match be played on a date determined by the Divisional representative or award the match 3-0 or declare the match as a 0-0 draw
- deduct up to six points from the offending Club

24. If any Team has more than two players selected for a County or higher representative matches, then the Team has the right to postpone and re-arrange a match, taking place on the same day, following the procedure set out in Rule 21.

For the purpose of this rule, Schools and Youth representative matches are regarded as a County or higher representative game.

25. At least 10 days before the match, the Match Confirmation Secretary of the home Club will reconfirm all fixtures with the opposition particularly confirmation of Umpiring arrangements, Team colours, start time and venue. They must also confirm, and contact by telephone the Neutral Umpires appointed (if applicable) by 20.00 hours on the Tuesday prior to the game to confirm the arrangements. (See Rule 14). If it becomes clear that a Club is not confirming start times with the appointed Umpires prior to the game as detailed above, the YHUA reserves the right to withdraw Neutral Umpires from the offending Club. Arrangements should be made for emergency contact in case of postponements, particularly for matches with early start times.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement by the home Club.

26. All home and away Teams are responsible for completing in full the League Match Report Form.

A form must be completed by both teams with the names and numbers of players including substitutes and handed to the Umpires before the start of the match and the matches must not commence until the forms have been completed.

Both Teams shall declare on the match form which player is the reserve goalkeeper who will take the place of an injured or dismissed keeper. Any player including a goalkeeper who is playing more than one match as allowed in rule 14 must be declared on the form.

On completion of the match both Team Captains must sign the form and ensure that the Umpires complete the result section of the League Match Report Form.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement by the home and/or away Club.

27. Immediately after the match the home and away Team Captains will fully complete the Match Report Form including scorers and the Club Number of each player to whom a disciplinary card has been given. The Umpires, who may add comments to the form, will sign it, and the home Team will post it by 1st class mail to the appropriate Divisional representative within two days of the match. It is recommended that the home Team retain copies.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement.

28. The results of matches in Men's and Women's Premier, 1 and 2 are to be sent by SMS to the YHA Website Manager (see handbook for number) by 19.00 on the day of the match.

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement.

29. The results of all Men's matches played in a week for a Club are to be updated on the YHA website by 19.00 on Sunday. To register for the YHA Results Input Service email the YHA Website Manager at pettigrew@blueyonder.co.uk

Anyone without access to Internet at the weekend please send your results to the YHA Website Manager after 19.30 on a Saturday or, preferably, on Sunday by SMS text message (see handbook for number)

The penalty for a breach of this Rule is £15 per infringement.

30. In each season a player who has played League hockey for another Club will not play for a Yorkshire League Club unless the League Committee receives evidence that a genuine change of Club has taken place, including agreement from the players previous Club. A player cannot play for their new Club until a formal request in writing to join a new Club, has been made to the relevant League Secretary and the relevant League Secretary has acknowledged the transfer request and informed the Clubs in writing of the earliest date the player may start playing for his new Club. Normally this will be 10 days from the receipt of the request. No player may transfer after 1st January unless there are special circumstances agreed in writing/email by the League Committee. Should a Club dissolve then all players will become free agents.

31. Each Club, by its entry into the League will be deemed to have given its consent to the Rules and to any amendments that may be adopted, and will be deemed to have agreed to abide by the decision of the League Committee and any penalty or sanction it may impose. (Subject to the Right of Appeal)

32. The League divests control of disciplinary matters covered by the EH Disciplinary Code to the Disciplinary Committee of the YHA

33. Fees or fines imposed on any Club shall be paid within twenty-eight days of notification to the Club concerned. If payment is not received within twenty-eight days an additional fine of an amount up to double the original fine will be levied.

Any fine not paid by the date of the Annual Clubs Fixture Meeting may result in expulsion of the Club from the League or a lesser penalty as decided by the League Committee.

34. Clubs shall have the Right of Appeal to the YHACC against a decision of a League Committee. Such appeals, together with a deposit of £50 (returnable if the appeal is upheld) must be sent in writing or emailed to the Chairman of the YHACC within 14 days of the notification of the decision of the League Committee.
35. These Rules may only be amended with the approval of the YHACC, and are subject to ratification by the YHA Executive and Northern Hockey Association Council.

Note 1 A list of all Club players must be sent to the League Secretary 14 days prior to the scheduled start of the League season. An Excel spreadsheet template will be made available for Clubs to enter in their players' details for player registration purposes. Each Club should maintain this spreadsheet and the League informed of any changes within two weeks of a new player first playing in a League match in writing or by email. Every player will be given a unique number by the Club (Club Number) and it is recommended that the player should play in a shirt with that number where practical. The information required for Players Registration is Club Number, First Name; Last Name; Date of Birth;

Penalty for non-compliance £50 for initial list, £25 for updates.

Note 2 Clubs are expected to select teams on merit.

A club with a 2nd team in the League must, at least 4 days before the first league match, provide a list of eleven starred 1st team players, selected on merit, this to include one Goalkeeper. These players are excluded from playing for the 2nd team. All starred players are expected to be available for selection for the first team, and clubs must notify the league of any players that are not available for selection, through injury or suspension for instance. Clubs are permitted to make a change to their starred list of eleven by faxing the swap details to the league before 8.00pm on the Wednesday before the next match. A goalkeeper must be replaced with another goalkeeper. Reasons for the change must be given and the League must approve the change before the destarred player can play for the lower team. Once a player has been destarred, that player cannot be restarred within four weeks of the date he was destarred. After 1st November Clubs are permitted to make a maximum of five individual changes to the list of ten starred players. The league will monitor the movement of players and shall have the power to change starred players, but, in doing so, must notify the clubs of any such changes before 8.00pm on the Monday before the next league match.

Additionally, after the end of January, any player, except Goalkeepers, whose name has appeared in the starting line up in more than 75% of 1st team league matches, cannot play for the club in a 2nd team league match unless permission has been obtained from the league. The signing of a team sheet or match card will be deemed to be a true record.

A club unable satisfactorily to justify its selection or subsequent action shall be deemed to have played an ineligible player. Rule 23 will apply.

Note 3 Where Teams are promoted to or relegated from higher Divisions then any gaps will be filled or surpluses removed by additional promotion or relegation in the affected Division. Final details may not be known until after any play offs but Clubs will be kept informed through regular newsletters (on the YHA website) of potential additional promotion and relegation.

Note 4 Only Men should play in Men's Leagues and Women in Women's Leagues except with the prior permission of the Divisional representative, this includes playing Junior Boys as goalkeepers in Women's League.