

Club chair, Secretary, since the publication of the PM's "Road Map" out of the latest "Covid Lockdown" the league Officers and Management Committee have been working hard to find a way that we can all return to playing football safely. Paramount to those discussions and plans was the need to get as MANY PLAYERS AS POSSIBLE back outdoors and enjoying football again.

It should be remembered that there **are** still a lot of unknown factors attached to this "Road Map". Everything we have planned is based on the 29th March date staying in place, there **being** no dramatic effect on the figures when the schools return and that there will be no tier restrictions imposed on us like the previous GLA Boroughs not being able to travel to Surrey for example.

After consultation with many of you, having taken on board some of the issues you are dealing with in respect of parental concerns, the financial **effects** you face and the balance of Covid Implementation plans at grounds etc we have come up with a plan as the way forward out of this hopefully last lockdown. We appreciate that it will not please or suit every **team's** specific needs as we know that, even within your clubs, there are mixed feelings on how we should move forward. That said, we have tried as hard as possible to ensure that we maximise the number of players we can get restarted which we feel is important. None of these decisions were taken lightly but sadly are **nonetheless** completely necessary and inevitable in the circumstances. The **League Officers**, like you and your **Committees**, have all put a great deal of effort into this season and we do share the disappointment of everybody including those who potentially may have ended up with awards etc. No one wanted this to happen but I don't suppose anyone thought that we would lose 21 of our 35 week schedule to Covid Restrictions and Lockdowns.

Taking everything into consideration, by both consultation and debate, the League Management Committee have made the following decisions:-

- **The earliest playing date for league arranged fixtures of any description will be the 11th April.** *The rationale behind this is that whilst allowed to play from the 29th March the following Sunday is 4th April which is Easter Sunday. This is a religious holiday and as such it being one of the two days we will not play league fixtures on if they fall on it. The other being Christmas Day. There is nothing to stop clubs arranging friendlies or club matches as they wish but it cannot be a league organised match.*
- **To end the 2020/2021 Competitive Season (u12-u18) with immediate effect. Accordingly, all League results for all Divisions will be expunged. There will be no winners or runners-up.** *The rationale behind this is a long list of factors only some of which we include as: The risk attached to the unknown factors, will the Road Map dates hold, will there be a reaction when Schools return, will there be any tier restrictions at the start or during that period, The sheer amount of games outstanding (Average = 9.8 matches) V the number of weeks left to play (5), The difficulties of keeping games local in this league to finish it i.e. Sandgate to Old Coulsdon Colts, is that local? Could we really justify this? Covid Self Isolating, the virus hasn't gone away. When pupils return with "Lateral Testing" as planned we will still have players sent home to self isolate that won't stop. We can't award those games where will that leave the competition? The issues caused by lack of pitches, The Surrey County Cup. We do not know if this will continue and have been told it may announced be next week. It is not yet in its first round so will ultimately cause no end of disruption to whatever we plan particularly in the top for divisions. The Weather it will only take losing a week or so to Rain, "Storm whatever" or worse to throw any plans into turmoil, the issues around the inevitable midweek games and the amount of awarded games being increased so more players actually don't get a game in that paper exercise which goes against what we are trying to achieve in getting as many playing as much as possible. In summary restarting the competitive season could lead us into an unprecedented mess which will ultimately end in failure and a waste of everyone's time and effort.*
- **To replace the competitive season with a NEW completion based on a champions league style cup set up.** *The rationale behind this is that we provide something for every team and therefore as many players as possible to get them playing again. The format is being worked on as we speak but as a rough outline the teams would be placed in groups of 4-6 depending on locality and ability. Teams would play each other and a playoff system would produce a winner. It will take about 5 weeks possibly more and as it's a new competition it is likely we could extend it by a few weeks until 23rd May. It will be offered to those WHO WANT TO PLAY IN IT AND THOSE WHO CAN i.e. who have pitches and players available. This we see as a great opportunity for as many players as possible to have something to play for yet fulfil the local aspects of Covid and the club and parental fears associated with it. IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AND WE WILL BE ASKING TEAMS WHO WANTS TO TAKE PART.*

- **Development football U7 – U11 will continue largely as is.** *The only main difference will be that games will need to be more localised yet still within your seeding groups. We will be doing this with your next set of fixtures for these ages. We will also consider a small local regional festival events again for those who “Want to and Can” Your fixture secs or Darren and I will be in touch shortly with the plans and an opportunity for you to comment on how it will work.*

Lastly there are a number of important factors to consider in the short and long term. Short term we need to look at the registration system and how we treat transfers or new registrations for the new competition and development football for this season. Long term we need to look at Season 2021/2022. Although seemingly a long way away we will be looking at how we can keep your costs to the league to a minimum, offer free football if we can, minimise the admin burden and effectively get teams placed in the correct peer group in terms of ability. We will strive to ensure, as far as possible, that no team which would have been promoted or relegated ends up in the wrong Division as a result of this decision.

These are obviously unprecedented and extremely uncertain times. We ask that you bear with us as we move slowly forward to try and put in place plans for the next few months. We will need to be positive and forward thinking in the hope that in the weeks ahead we can give the players the opportunity to get out and play football with their friends and put behind us the nightmare of the last two miserable seasons. The hope is with the vaccination process going so well and the numbers dropping we could approach next season in a far more positive place to have an undisrupted season.

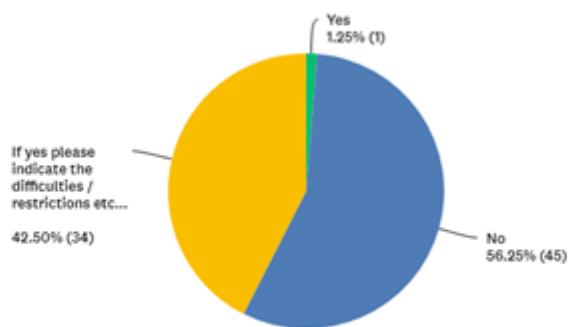
We sincerely hope that all of our players, coaches, Club Committees, parents, supporters and indeed everyone connected to the League remains well and stays safe. We ask that you continue to work with us towards the main aim which is of course getting back to our core business of providing fun and enjoyment to many thousands of young people through football.

Surrey Youth League Management Committee

Please see results of Pitch Status Survey (27th Feb -2nd Mar 2021)

Will you have any issues with any of your pitches from 11th April - 9th May
(Please point out whether it refers to all or 7v7, 9v9 or 11v11)

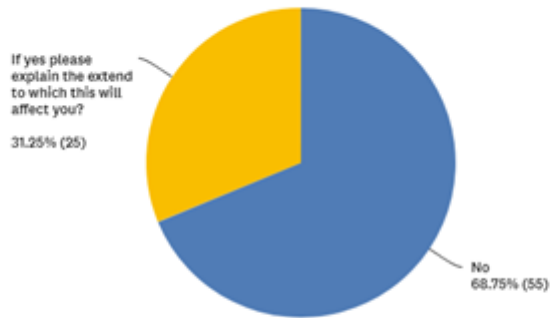
Answered: 80 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes (1)	1.25% 1
No (2)	56.25% 45
If yes please indicate the difficulties / restrictions etc you have below? (3)	Responses 42.50% 34
TOTAL	80

Will your club have difficulty fielding teams with players going to other sports

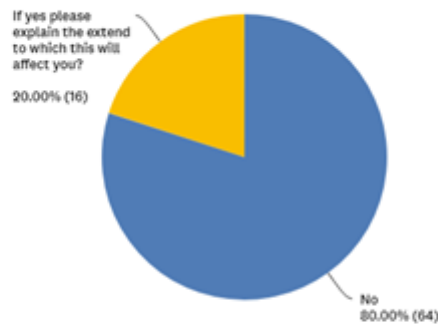
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% (0)
No	68.75% (55)
If yes please explain the extend to which this will affect you?	31.25% (25)
TOTAL	80

Will your club have difficulty fielding teams for any other reasons

Answered: 80 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% (0)
No	80.00% (64)
If yes please explain the extend to which this will affect you?	20.00% (16)
TOTAL	80