

Introduction to the 2020-21 season.

Welcome to the proposed rules to be used in the East Hockey Leagues for the coming season. The 2020-21 season will hopefully be unique for 2 reasons.

Firstly and unfortunately we are faced with the Covid-19 pandemic and it is necessary for the rules to change to reflect the severity of the pandemic, while at the same time running a competitive league program, which is supportive of clubs and teams.

In the rules to come there are some significant changes in the way games can be played and how teams are selected which reflect the situation we find ourselves in.

These also reflect some of the recommendations proposed by England Hockey as our sports governing body, however some of the recommendations just were not right for the way the East League operates so not all of the recommendations were accepted.

As a result of these the rules will not be perfect for every club in every situation. However these are the rules proposed by the East League Management Committee for use in the management of the East League for the 2020/2021 season.

We expect every club, every team, every player and every club official to play their part in supporting the rules and the spirit of fair play, promoting both the game of hockey and the league to ensure that every game played is done so where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the game in these troubled times.

Prior to play starting and clubs participating, clubs should be aware that the England Hockey policies regarding the management of Covid-19 should be followed by all clubs and all teams.

Secondly, England Hockey are still planning that the proposed Structure for Change will be implemented in the 21/22 season. This will have a significant impact on the East League, not least because we will be saying goodbye to our clubs in Kent as they move to the South-East area and we may see teams enter the new London or North-East area.

Two structures will be discussed at the Clubs Meeting to be held on Sunday, 13th September and once a structure is accepted the promotions and relegation rules will be developed.

Rules 2020-2021 season

proposed alterations to the League Rules are shown in Bold Italics.

1. League title, officers, management committee, and rules
2. League clubs
3. Players and team selection
4. Matches
5. Umpires
6. League structure, promotions, relegations
7. Discipline and penalties
8. Constitution and management of the leagues

1. LEAGUE TITLE, OFFICERS, MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, AND RULES

The Leagues shall be known as the East Men's League (EML) and the East Women's League (EWL), and shall be modified if necessary, to reflect sponsorship.

The League Officers are the League Chairman, the East Leagues Secretary (ELS), the Budgets Officer, the Divisional League Managers and the Results Coordinators. The League Management Committee consists of all the League Officers plus a representative of the East Region Hockey Umpires Association (ERHUA).

Rules 1 and 8 apply to all East Leagues. No amendment to these rules or to the structure of the East Leagues may be made after September 1st of the season in which either the rules or the structure apply, except that changes arising from decisions of the England Hockey Board (EHB) or changes already indicated in the wording of a rule may be implemented without delay.

2. LEAGUE CLUBS

2.1 Eligibility

All clubs based in counties in the East Region are eligible to play in the East Leagues. Other clubs located near the region may be invited to play by the League Management Committee. Clubs disaffiliated by a County, Region, or England will forfeit their league fixtures 0-5 during the period of disaffiliation.

2.2 Registering for the Leagues and Consent to Rules

Clubs playing in the East League must register their teams by 31st May each season. New teams may not be accepted if registration is late.

Clubs in all Leagues must register their officers for the coming season by 30th June. Officers must include a Club Liaison Officer, a League Liaison Officer, a Fixtures Secretary for each league in which the club plays, and an Umpiring Liaison Officer.

For the 2020/2021 season each club shall, under England Hockey guidelines provide a Covid Administrator. Details of all these officers should be updated on the East League website by 18th September.

There must be at least two different named officers for each league.

Late registration will increase league fees by 50%.

By registering for the East Leagues a Club consents to all the league rules, undertakes to ensure that all its officers are fully conversant with the rules by the start of the season, and takes responsibility for the actions of its players, officers, and members in relation to league matches.

2.3 Fees and other payments

League fees and other outstanding payments must be paid before the start of the league season. If a club incurs a fine or payment to a league during the season and a payment reminder notice is

issued, payment must be made within 7 days of the notice. Failure to meet either of these payment deadlines will make a club ineligible to play league matches and all fixtures during the period from deadline to payment will be forfeited 0-5. Such late payments to one league will not make a club ineligible to play in another. **A date for payment of League Entry fees will be agreed at the East League meeting on 13th September, 2020.**

2.4 Captains and Vice-Captains

All clubs shall notify the contact details of their team captains and vice captains to their East League Manager not less than 7 days prior to the start of the season. Failure to do so shall attract a £20 fine levied by the League Manager, this fine may be doubled if details are not received by the start of the season.

2.5 Fixture Cards.

Clubs with paper fixture cards must send a copy to the ELS, and if using electronic cards must email the file.

2.6 Press reports

To support sponsors Clubs may be asked to include sponsor names in published newspaper match reports and to send such reports for each League to the ELS twice each season by set deadlines, on penalty of £20 fines. This rule only applies when clubs are notified by the start of the season that reports are needed.

2.7 League Meetings.

A Club shall send a representative to the AGM and any SGM.

2.8 Presentation Day

Division winners must attend Presentation Day for the awards ceremony, on penalty of a £100 fine. Trophies must be returned by the end of March, on penalty of a £50 fine.

2.9 All East League Clubs shall attend the East League Pre-season Clubs Day, on penalty of £100 fine.

2.10 Authority to extend deadlines and apply penalties

The ELS may extend deadlines and apply the specified penalties in any part of rule 2 except 2.4.

3. PLAYERS AND TEAM SELECTION

3.1 Club membership and gender

Players must be bone fide club members and of the same gender as the League in which they play. University students playing only BUCS hockey (not county or regional league hockey) may play East League hockey for their clubs out of term time with the prior consent of the League Manager. The player must still be associated with the club and the match cannot be in a higher division or be crucial to relegation or promotion, all as determined by the League Manager.

3.2 Premier Division player registration and eligibility

A team playing in EML Premier A or EWL Premier must register all its players with the appropriate League Manager by the Monday before the start of the season (**21st September, 2020**) using the official Registration Form. There is no limit to the number of players, and additions can be made up to Jan 31st providing there is compliance with the transfer rule. All new registrations must be received by the League Manager by the Monday before the weekend in which the player first appears in an East League match.

During the season, and subject to the current Player Transfer deadlines stated in Rule 3.3, at any

time *two players* may be registered who would not comply with the current England Hockey League definition of eligible overseas players. Failure makes a team ineligible for promotion into the national league. (The EHL regulations are available on the England Hockey website).

3.3 Player Transfers

An East League transfer process must be completed before new players can play for a club in an East League match if they have played outdoor league hockey for another club in the current season or last played any hockey in another country. Note that it is playing for the previous club that is the issue; the formal membership status of the player at that club is not relevant.

If a transfer is from one East League Club to another, the receiving club must start the process using the East League website player transfer system. If the player is moving from a club elsewhere, the receiving club must email details of the player's name and previous club to the ELS and ask for a transfer. Any transfer requires the agreement of the club losing the player. Transfers cannot be started after Jan 31st.

The player cannot play for the new club before the Completion Date published on the East League website. The player can play for the present club up to, but not on or after, that date. A player may not play East League hockey again for a previous club during the season and cannot play East League hockey for more than two clubs in a season.

Notes: (1) A transfer is not required when a player changes clubs between league seasons. (2) A transfer is not required when a player moves from playing only junior hockey with one club to senior hockey with another club. (3) The ELS will allow some flexibility in transfers at lower levels of the league, e.g. in cases of inadequate or misleading information, but only on request and when this does not give unfair advantage.

3.4 Team selection: general principles

All teams must be selected on playing strength so that the strongest available side is put out at each level commencing with the highest team. If a team has a lack of available regular players, it shall use players from lower teams to make up the deficiency, and so on down the Club. (A "team" is the squad of up to 16 players listed on the League Teamsheet before the start of the match).

If a team is not involved in a match, the Club shall select its East League teams as if all teams were in fact playing, and shall not unfairly strengthen lower sides by including players from the squad of a higher team without a match.

There are specific restrictions on the selection of EHL squad players for East League matches, and these are set out in rule 3.5 below.

If there is a player shortage due to an unexpected unavailability, **teams may play down (known as doubling up)** players to make up the shortfall, subject to Rule 3.6 below. Clubs must not use this to unfairly strengthen lower sides, and this will be closely monitored by the League.

3.5 Team selection: EHL Clubs

A club in the English Hockey League may not play 13 of the 1st team players listed on an EHL teamsheet in an East League match in the same weekend. If there is no EHL match in a weekend the restriction must be based on the teamsheet for the last EHL match played, except that during the EHL winter break when 13 of the of the squad listed on the last two EHL teamsheets in November may not play in the East League. When EHL matches are played on a Sunday, Saturday East League team selections must anticipate the Sunday EHL teamsheet. **EHL** team players allowed under this rule to play for a lower team in the East League may only do so subject additionally to Rule 3.6.1. League Managers will monitor compliance by checking EHL teamsheets.

3.6 Team selection: Playing down

A player may only play for one team in one day unless in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances are set out in Sections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2. In each case the an officer of the club using a player provided by another team within that club must advise the League Manager of the receiving

team by 8pm on the day before the game where the selection is made in advance or by 7pm of the day of the game when the selection has been caused by a short term match day emergency (e.g. a player not arriving). In all cases the Captain of a team using a player provided by another team must advise the opposing Captain of this before the game and shall endorse the back of the teamsheet. The League will monitor the application of this rule very carefully to ensure that there is no unfair strengthening. In the event of a dispute the club **MUST** prove that the doubling up was due to a genuine and unexpected shortage of players and was not planned in advance to gain unfair advantage.

3.6.1 Bench players in Divisions 2 or higher: Bench players who do not usually have significant pitch time may play for a lower team in the East League in the same weekend to obtain match practice, providing the lower team is not more than two teams lower than the team for which he or she is a bench player. This allowance also applies to regular bench players in an EHL 1st team, but subject to rule 3.5.

3.6.2 Team shortages in divisions 3 or lower: Teams short of players **may play down 2** players from a higher team, subject to the restrictions set out below. This is only to enable a team to fulfil a fixture when otherwise it would have less than a **squad of 12 players** or is short of a goalkeeper.

(a) A goalkeeper may double up as often as needed as a goalkeeper.

(b) A team short of a field player may receive **two player(s) from other teams (including goalkeepers from other teams playing as field players)** playing on the same day, but the providing team must not be more than two teams higher, e.g. a 2nd team player can double up in the 4th but not the 5th team.

(c) The bottom team of a club may receive up to a further three players (so five altogether) from other teams to make up a squad of 12 players provided the other teams are not more than two higher in club ranking, and providing approval is obtained from the League Manager by 8 pm on the Friday before the match.

(d) Within a club where any team play down any player from a higher team the team the player participates in must have a squad of no more than 12 players and any subsequent lower team may not have a squad of more than 12 players. This rule is aimed at supporting the over-riding selection principle that if a team is short then players from lower teams should make up that shortfall in the first instance.

Doubling up players must not result in the receiving team having a squad of more than 12 players. The order of play does not determine which team is providing the player to the other. The higher team is the provider and the lower team the receiver, even if the player plays regularly for the lower team.

3.7 Penalties

If a team includes a player ineligible under any part of Rule 3 or banned under a disciplinary process or under Rule 7.3, the minimum penalty will be the award of the match to the opposition 5-0 or actual score to nil, whichever is the greater.

3.8 Covid Specific Restrictions

3.8.1 Where a game is postponed due to players in a team/squad being placed in isolation/quarantine following a team member being exposed to the symptoms of Covid-19 a postponement will be granted. The game should be replayed as soon as is possible. Clubs will be required to produce to the specific League Manager of ELS details of the reason behind the cancellation, including the originally affected player and details of the other players. In these situations it is reasonable that clubs will be able to provide the date the symptoms were diagnosed and test dates of that player(s).

3.8.2 Where a team has player(s) placed in isolation/quarantine and its club decides it is not possible for the game to be replayed the game shall be forfeit and be recorded as a 5-0 loss against that specific team. There will be no penalty applied to any lower teams within that club.

3.8.3 Where a game is affected by both teams having player(s) placed in isolation/quarantine or where local restrictions are applied and a game is postponed the game should be replayed as quickly as possible, however both clubs may choose to forfeit the fixture, there will be no penalty other than the fixture being recorded as a 0-0 draw, with a point being awarded to both teams.

3.9 Authority to extend deadlines and apply penalties

League Managers may extend deadlines and apply specified penalties in any part of rules 3.2, 3.4 -

3.10 The League Management Committee may extend the transfer deadline in rule 3.3.

4. MATCHES

4.1 Rules

All matches shall be played under the current FIH rules of hockey.

4.2 Pitches.

All matches in all divisions must be played on astro pitches of a standard approved for hockey by EH, except that approved 3 and 4G pitches may only be used for matches in the lowest two divisions of any quadrant of the EML and in Divisions 3 or lower in the EWL.

The home team must ensure that pitch facilities, including marking, goals, nets, and condition of floodlighting, are in good condition. If the umpires abandon a game because pitch facilities are inadequate, the home Club will be fined £20. The home club must inspect pitches during bad weather early enough to stop opponents travelling if match is cancelled because of pitch conditions (see also rule 4.7).

4.3 Dates, times, and venues

4.3.1 Dates and Slip Dates

Matches must be played on the dates set out by the Leagues at the start of the season.

Due to Covid the League Management Committee wish to provide flexibility to clubs by allowing them to play matches on Friday, Sunday or Monday of the specific Saturday date, as long as both clubs agree, and if neutral pool appointed umpires are required can be allocated, and the variation is reflected on the East League website at least 14 days prior to the game taking place.

Where scheduled games are played on a different day all selection rules given in Section 3 apply, in that the specific team must be selected as if all other teams within the club are playing.

If a Division has less than 12 teams its League Manager may, on request, allow a fixture to be switched to a League Saturday that is blank.

Where any game is postponed, for any reason, clubs shall complete the administration process of agreeing a new date for the game to be replayed within 14 days of the original game being postponed. Failure to do so may result in one or both clubs being issued with a fine of £20. **League Management Committee Note – This season it is key that all clubs follow this rule, so that there is no pile up of fixtures come the end of the season.**

For the 2020/2021 season the season end date will be Friday, 30th April, 2021. Any games not played at this point will be shown as void, however clubs shall have to explain why the fixtures did not take place and where fault can be proved to lie with a specific club a match may be awarded as a loss by a score of 5-0.

4.3.2 Times

Unless otherwise agreed by the League Manager, matches in EML Divisions 2 upwards of both EML and EWL must have a starting time 11am - 4pm in Sept, Oct, Feb, Mar, and Apr and 11am-3pm in Nov, Dec, and Jan. For other divisions start times must be 9.00am - 5pm.

Home clubs must consider the distance the away side has to travel when setting start times for

matches and must also allow for an adequate warm up period on the playing surface.

If a team is not ready to play 15 minutes after the official start time or by the time the pitch is free for use, whichever is the later, and as a result a game is not played, the League Manager may award the match 0-5 to the opposition. The umpires should inform the home Captain when 15 minutes after the official start time is reached, and if a game is not played the Home Captain must inform the League Manager. Note that significant travel problems beyond the team's control may excuse late arrival.

4.3.3 Notifying times and venues

At least 4 weeks before the start of the season, a club must input to the league website details of the venues and start times of all its home league matches to be played up to the mid-season break. The same information must be provided by the end of November for all matches after the break. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in the League Manager imposing a fine of £5 per fixture, though this may be waived under exceptional circumstances. The start of the season is defined as the first scheduled date on which an East League game shall take place.

With Covid restrictions this rule has been suspended. At the time of writing a large number of clubs still have not been able to book their venue. Once a venue can be booked we ask clubs update their first 4 weeks of fixtures onto the League website within 1 week of being able to book and the remaining games up to Christmas be placed on the League website within 2 weeks of bookings being possible. All games for after the Christmas period shall be loaded onto the League website by the end of November.

Changes made after this cut-off must be input to the league website and also be notified directly and immediately to opposition clubs and umpiring pool organisers. Messages left without response and emails without answers are not acceptable as notifications. An away team should not refuse time or venue changes notified at least a week before the fixture. An away team in need of information is expected to contact the home club.

If failure to give sufficient notice to all parties leads to a match not being played, the League Manager may decide on a postponement, award the match 0-5, or void the match.

4.3.4 Venue Availability

Clubs must prioritise venue availability for all their teams (both men's and women's) in ranking order with the highest ranked team having highest priority for any available pitch slots. Any pitch slots that become available either due to cancellation or game being conceded between 1200 and 1430 hrs should be re-allocated to clubs' next highest ranked teams or to where matches where opposing clubs have the most travelling. This is to ensure as much hockey is played as possible in a days best light.

If the home team is unable to provide a venue for a fixture the away team shall be given the opportunity to host the fixture at a venue and time in line with these regulations. In these circumstances the away team may agree to reverse a subsequent fixture between the teams or retain home advantage for the subsequent fixture.

At any time within 14 days of the fixture if a venue becomes unavailable after it has been confirmed, the home team must immediately advise the away team of a change of venue/time. If no alternative venue is available, the home team must advise the away team immediately who shall be given the opportunity to host the fixture in line with the paragraph above.

Any change of start time by the home team notified to the away team with more than 7 days notice must not be reasonably refused.

With any change of start time the new time must be within 90 minutes of the original start time or approved by the away team otherwise the away team shall be given the opportunity to host the fixture in line with the paragraph above.

If it is not possible to arrange the fixture on the scheduled date the home team may request to postpone it or choose to forfeit a fixture at no penalty other than the fixture being recorded as a 5-0 loss.

Where a team find it impossible to book a home venue that clubs season will be deemed to start once they can provide a home venue and that League Division will be subject to the shortened/curtailed season regulations.

4.4 Playing Colours and Numbers.

Teams should normally wear colours as notified to the League at the start of the season. Players shall wear shirts numbered as per teamsheet, goalkeepers shall wear a numbered shirt of contrasting colour, and captains shall wear an armband. The away team must have alternative colour shirts and socks and shall wear them if required by an umpire.

4.5 Teamsheets and Results Notifications.

4.5.1 Teamsheets

Teamsheets listing the full squads and their numbers must be handed to the umpires before the match. After the match the scores, scorers, and details of red and yellow cards must be added to the Home sheet. Both Captains must sign both sheets, and both Umpires must sign the Home sheet. Both sheets must be sent by the Home Club to the League Manager to arrive by the Wednesday following the match. EHL Clubs must also send their 1st team EHL teamsheet from the same weekend to the League Manager responsible for the highest division in which they play in the East League, by the same deadline.

Covid specific Teamsheets should be completed by both teams and handed to the umpire before the game. After the game team captains should use their own pen to detail scores and scorers on their own teamsheet and sign that teamsheet. Umpires should use their own pen to add details of red/yellow cards to the home teamsheet only and sign to confirm the result. Good practice dictates that home teams will take a stamped envelope addressed to their League Manager with them to the game and once the teamsheets are signed place the teamsheets in the envelope and then post the envelope in a postbox as soon as is practical, so that the teamsheet will arrive with the League Manager by the Wednesday. Where games are played on a Friday, Sunday and Monday, League Managers will advise their deadlines for receipt of teamsheets.

Following the East League clubs meeting held on 13th September 2020 it was agreed that, subject to team captains and individual League Managers having the correct technology that the home teamsheet should be completed by the home club captain, the away teamsheet by the away captain, the home teamsheet would still need to be signed by the umpires using their own pen and all of the information regarded in the paragraph above would be reported. The home captain would then photo the front and back of both sheets and sent them to their League manager via email. The homeclub would be required to retain BOTH teamsheets until the League Manager confirms receipt that the information they have received is legible. Where a picture cannot generate a clear image then the teamsheets will have to be sent by post.

4.5.2 Results notification

In both the EML and EWL the home club must input the result to the East Hockey website by 7pm on the day of the match.

Where a problem prevents a result being input directly to the website the home club must report both the problem and the result to their League Manager by 7.30pm on the day of the match.

Where games are played on a re-arranged date the results must be telephoned into their League Manager by 7pm on the day the game is played.

Where a game is canceled at short notice or abandoned once started this must be advised to the relevant League Manager by 7pm on the day the game is played.

4.5.3 Penalties

Failing to provide a match result or to notify a postponement or abandonment on time, failing to fully complete a teamsheet, or failing to send a teamsheet to arrive on time is a Reporting Failure. After a first Reporting Failure the team will be given a formal warning by the League Manager. For a second Reporting Failure a £20 fine will be imposed, payable to the League Budget Officer within 14 days (failure to pay on time will lead to a 1-point deduction). For a third or subsequent Reporting Failure the team will be deducted 1 point.

4.6 Postponements

For COVID specific cancellations please refer to Section 3.8 above.

4.6.1 Indoor postponements

Subject to the prior agreement of the League Manager, a Club playing in the Men's or Women's East or EHB indoor competition in December or January may postpone an East League 1st team match on the same date. The postponement must be agreed with the League Manager by the end of October, and the slip date match must be agreed with the other club by the same date, including notification to the umpires and an update to the League website venues and times section. The earliest slip date available to both clubs must be used for the match.

No postponement will be agreed after the end of October, except as follows. A Club qualifying for a later round in either of these competitions may postpone at short notice its 1st team East League match on the date of the next round. The postponement must be notified to the League Manager and the other Club by the day after qualifying, otherwise the postponement will not be allowed. The match must be rearranged to the next slip date free for both Clubs.

No postponements will be allowed for junior indoor commitments except for an EHB Club Competition Finals weekend, i.e. the culminating matches of a National Competition. This must be notified to the League Manager and the other club by the day after qualifying for the Finals weekend, otherwise no postponement will be allowed. The match must be rearranged to the next slip date free for both Clubs.

4.6.2 Other postponements

A League Manager has discretion to agree postponements for such events as a national or religious holiday, an EH outdoor knockout fixture clashing in date or being on a Sunday requiring travel on Saturday. League Managers will be as accommodating as possible but are unlikely to grant a postponement if the request is made at short notice, and will never grant a postponement because a team is simply short of players.

4.7 Abandonments and cancellations

When matches are cancelled at short notice or abandoned during play the League Manager will decide whether the match should be rearranged, awarded 0-5, or voided. Rearrangements are normally allowed for events such as the pitch being deemed unplayable by the home club because of weather conditions, an umpire failing to arrive and no replacement being found, a significant proportion of the visiting team failing to arrive because of major travel problems outside their control, or the umpires deciding that the game cannot start or continue because of weather conditions, loss of light, injury to a player, etc.

If pitch or ground conditions are debatable around the time a match is due to start, both Captains and both Umpires must agree that conditions are safe for play before the match can commence. Once started, only the umpires can agree to abandon a match.

If a home club cancels a league match because of pitch or ground problems but fails to properly notify the cancellation in time to prevent the away team from travelling, or if a match start is delayed for an hour or more for similar reasons and the league match is not played, the League

Manager will review the circumstances and may require that the home team reimburse the reasonable travelling expenses of the away team (failure to do so will lead to a £50 fine) and/or award the match 0-5 against the home side.

4.8 Slip matches

The East League season end date shall be 30th April 2021.

East League Slip dates are on Saturdays 12 Dec, 19 Dec, 13 Feb, 3 Apr, 10 Apr, 17 Apr and 24 Apr or any Sunday or any mutually agreed date between teams/clubs where a game is required to be played. We have included Sunday, 3rd April in as a date, we realise this is Easter Saturday and we realise that for many they would not be able to play on the this date. However there have been clubs previously who have agreed a fixture on Easter Saturday and the games have been played successfully, therefore we wish to avoid any questions in the future "Can we play on Easter Saturday?" As long as both teams agree (and if appointed umpires are required can be allocated) there is nothing wrong with playing on that date.

Clubs should brief their teams and players that players should expect to play hockey on any of these dates.

The EH calendar gives priority to League Hockey on all dates and clubs should be mindful of this. The League Management Committee will work with clubs to ensure that slip dates are maintained. This will certainly involve the fixtures originally scheduled for 19th September being moved en-bloc to 27th March.

Matches cancelled from the first half of the league season the clubs must have a date for the game to be replayed agreed within 14 days of cancellation of the original fixture. Logic follows that games cancelled during the first half of the season should reasonably be re-arranged to be played by the second Sunday after the start of the second half of the season (17th Jan).

Matches not played by the league cut-off date will be void.

In regard to slip matches involving teams with less than 12 teams in a division any free Saturday should be used as first priority but any Sunday may be used.

Note: Clubs allowed a cancellation due to indoor hockey commitments are encouraged to re-arrange the cancelled fixture to a date prior to the cancellation date. The reason for this is that club indoor hockey usually takes place in December and January. The weather in the months leading up to the indoor season is usually fair; therefore, a build-up of fixtures in the second half of the season can be avoided

4.9 Failure to Honour a Fixture

If a team fails to honour a fixture because of lack of numbers or disinclination to travel or similar reason, the League Manager will normally award the match 0-5 against and will also deduct 1 points. However, under exceptional circumstances the League Manager may instead decide that such a match is not forfeit and should be rearranged or voided.

A Home Club may charge the cost of pitch hire to a visiting side that has failed to honour a fixture and has not notified the Home Club at least two full days before the day of the match, e.g. by Wednesday for Saturday.

A team that fails to honour four matches, will be automatically withdrawn from the League and all previous results will be rendered void. ***Due to Covid any teams that cannot book a pitch due to local restrictions or any team where local lockdown/restrictions are in place shall be exempt from this rule.***

4.10 Post match hospitality

Due to the current Covid regulations there is no expectations that clubs will be able to provide either changing facilities or post-match hospitality to visiting teams, officials and umpires. There, however must be facility for the 2 captains and umpires to meet in a socially distanced manner post match to allow for the signing of teamsheets, completion of red card report forms, etc.

4.11 Authority to extend deadlines and apply penalties

League Managers may extend deadlines and apply specified penalties in any part of rule 4.

5. UMPIRES

5.1 Pool umpiring

5.1.1 Mandatory

The ERHUA Pool will appoint to all matches in EML Prem A, Prem B, and EWL Prem, and County Pools will appoint to all matches in EML 1, 2N and 2S and EWL 1N and 1S.

A club must nominate an appropriately qualified umpire each week to either the East pool or its County pool for each team in these divisions. An umpire must be named to the pool organiser by the local appointments deadline, but need not be the same umpire each week. Umpires will not normally be appointed to their own clubs. An umpire who is promoted to the national pool will continue to count as a nomination for the purposes of this rule for the remainder of the season.

If a club regularly fails to provide pool umpires, regularly fails to provide time and venue information as required by rule 4.3.3 or has a team that regularly behaves unacceptably towards pool umpires, a pool may refuse to provide umpires to a team in these divisions. When this happens the League Management Committee will review the circumstances and may award the match 0-5 against the offending team (whether or not the match is played using another umpire). Persistently offending clubs may incur further penalties.

5.1.2 Additional provision

County Hockey Umpire Association (CHUA) pools may provide umpires to lower divisions. This may be on a partial basis, for example one-in/one-out arrangements with some clubs, or on a full basis by preseason agreement with the East League. If a lower division spans more than one county, it will be acceptable for it to be pool umpired in one county whilst being club umpired or mixed pool/club umpired in another county. Umpiring may be arranged on a two-home umpire basis. Clubs should accept that umpiring arrangements may differ between counties and should support their local County pools as fully as possible.

5.2 Club umpiring.

Clubs must use their own umpires for matches in other divisions. Umpires in all matches in EWL Divisions 2 and above and in EML 3NE, 4NW, 5SE, and 4SW and above must be fully qualified Club Umpire (Assessed) or higher. In lower divisions Club Umpire (Unassessed).

A Club Umpire (Unassessed) may be used in EWL Div. 2 and EML 3NE, 4NW, 5SE and 4SW games if they are being assessed for their full Club Umpire (Assessed) qualification. In games of this nature it is the responsibility of the club of the umpire being assessed to inform the League Manager at least 48 hours prior to the game taking place. (Clubs should note that the League Management Committee expect as a courtesy, clubs should notify their opposition of this assessment).

Clubs must have twice as many Club Umpires as league teams, of which up to half may be registered Club Umpires (Unassessed). Before the start of the season, all clubs must input the list of their umpires on the East Hockey website. This list must be kept up to date during the season. Listed umpires must be EH registered and be members of a CHUA. An umpire should only be listed by one club

Using a club umpire in a league match who is not listed or is not a CHUA member will result in the match being awarded by the League Manager to the opposing side 0-5 or 0-score, whichever is the greater.

5.3 Umpiring Liaison Officers.

All clubs must appoint an Umpiring Liaison Officer (ULO) with whom pool secretaries and other clubs

can communicate on umpiring arrangements. Details of the ULO must be included in the club's annual application to join the League. For clubs receiving pool umpires, the ULO must operate according to the ERHUA job definition document.

5.4 Umpire replacements and changes.

If an umpire unexpectedly fails to arrive, the captains shall try to find a replacement. If a qualified umpire is required and only an unqualified or candidate umpire is available but is acceptable to both teams and is covered by club or umpiring association or individual liability insurance, the match may go ahead. Responsibility for ensuring that the proposed umpire is insured rests with the two Captains and their Clubs. The home club must inform the League Manager of these circumstances when reporting the result and also include an explanatory note on the home teamsheet.

If captains cannot reach agreement regarding a replacement umpire, the League fixture must be abandoned (see also rule 4.7).

Umpires should not normally be changed during any matches in EWL Division 2 and above, nor in EML matches in divisions **3NE, 3NW, 4SE, and 4SW and above**. However, a change may be made if an umpire is incapacitated during a match or if a temporary umpire is needed until a delayed umpire arrives. In lower divisions, umpires may be changed once, at half time, if the captains agree before the start of the match.

5.5 Umpires and the Leagues

Umpires must not adjudicate on League rules unless they are also East League officials. The Leagues will not adjudicate on umpiring decisions in matches.

6. LEAGUE STRUCTURE, PROMOTIONS, RELEGATIONS

As stated in the notes at the introduction of the rules the 2021-22 season will see the introduction of the England Hockey "Structure for Change."

At the clubs meeting to be held on 13th September two proposed structures will be presented for both East Men's and East Women's Leagues. A preferential structure will be chosen and from that a more detailed promotion/relegation table will be developed.

It is proposed that as a minimum there will be 2 promotions/relegations per division (of course we will take into consideration divisions where teams withdraw prior to or during the course of the season in these calculations.

Teams who are withdrawn from Divisions in the 2020-21 season due to Covid related concerns will be placed in a relegation position.

We will also take into consideration the advice from England Hockey regarding whether League Divisions are a full season, a delayed season, a revised season, a curtailed season or a shortened season. Due to local Covid lock down or restrictions the League management Committee reserves the right to apply these conditions on a per division basis.

Rules regarding promotions/relegations will be clarified with clubs once a League Structure is agreed and Rules 6.4 to 6.5 will be revised.

6.3 League positions

League positions are determined by the award of 3 points for a win, 1 for a draw, and 0 for a defeat. In divisions where teams do not have equal numbers of fixtures, positions will be determined on a points per game basis, i.e. total points won divided against number of games played.

After points or percentages, positions will be determined first by goal difference, then by goals for, then by the aggregate result of matches between the two clubs with away goals counting double. Teams that are still equal will share the position, unless there is a championship, promotion or relegation issue, when a play-off will be arranged by the League Manager on a neutral ground on the first available date. If there are more than two teams in a play-off, there will be a draw to determine who plays who, with a bye if there is an odd number of teams, and so on round by round until there is a final between two teams. If in any play-off match the scores are level at full time, no extra time shall be played, but a penalty stroke competition shall be used to determine the winner.

6.4 Promotions and relegations

Promotions and relegations are by one division.

In the 2021/2022 season there is expected to be significant movement of teams, due to teams moving between areas. Therefore it should be expected that significant additional promotions/relegations will take place based on whichever League structure is accepted. Additional relegations and promotions may also arise from the factors set out below.

6.4.1.EHL promotions and relegations

If the overall effect of promotions and relegations into and from the EHL is a net gain of clubs to EML Prem A or to EWL Prem, there will be extra relegations to maintain divisions at the **normal size of 12 teams**.

If EHL promotions and relegations lead to a net loss of clubs, there will be additional promotions to maintain divisions at normal size, and additionally in the EWL the number of relegations to County Leagues will be reduced.

6.4.2 Teams from the same club in the same division

No more than two teams from one club may usually play in the same division. If the relegation of a team means there would be more than two such teams in a division, the team with the lowest club ranking of those teams will be relegated irrespective of finishing position. If the promotion of a team would lead to more than two teams from a club in a division, the promotion will not be allowed. There can however be more than two teams from one club in the bottom division of a quadrant in either League.

6.4.3 Quadrant structure

Teams relegated from divisions 2N and 2S will be placed in their Club quadrants. As a consequence, three or more teams may be relegated into the same division 3, in which case there will be additional relegations from that division 3 and from lower divisions in the same quadrant to maintain as many as possible at 12 teams. Likewise, if there is only one or no relegation into a Division 3, there will be additional promotions from lower divisions in the same quadrant to maintain as many as possible at 12 teams.

6.4.4 New clubs and new teams

Teams from new clubs joining the East League will be placed in divisions based on estimated playing strength. An additional team from an existing club will usually be placed in the lowest division of its quadrant, but may be placed higher if of exceptional playing strength. As a result of either there may be extra relegations.

Clubs that merge will maintain their collective divisional positions.

6.5 Geographical splits

Following promotions and relegations from and into 2N and 2S in the EML, the teams will be rearranged between these two divisions to minimise travelling. This may mean a team switching from one division to the other. The same procedure will apply in EWL to 1N/1S and

2NE/2NW/2SE/2SW.

6.6 Withdrawals

If a club wishes to withdraw a team during the season, the team removed must be its lowest playing in the league. No exceptions will be made. The team will remain in the league table with all matches void and will occupy a relegation place. Teams withdrawn during the season would usually be placed in the bottom division if allowed to re-join the league in the following season.

If a club wishes to withdraw a team between seasons, that team would normally be its lowest playing in the league; however, if the club wishes to withdraw a higher team the league may agree if the change can be accommodated without significant adverse effects on other clubs, and if the request is made to the League before the deadline for entries of May 31st.

If a club for the 2020-2021 season withdraws a team due to membership issues associated with Covid-19 the team will be shown as withdrawn and placed in a relegation position in the specific division. If the team is reformed to join the following season the team will rejoin in the appropriate division, one level lower/one division lower.

7. DISCIPLINE AND PENALTIES

Clubs must abide by the intended spirit of how the game should be played; observe EHB guidelines and procedures for discipline and pitch-side conduct; ensure that players, officials and spectators treat umpires with respect before, during and after matches; and not put disparaging remarks about leagues or opponents in press reports or on the internet. The Leagues will apply severe penalties in cases of umpire abuse.

7.1 Application of penalties

The League Management Committee has authority to apply any penalty specified in any rule. In addition, League Officers have authorities to apply specific penalties as described in each rule. If a Rule does not include specific penalties, a first offence will lead to a written warning and a subsequent offence to a 1-point deduction, unless subject to Rule 7.2.

7.2 Additional penalties.

The League Management Committee may take action against any club, team, player, or other individual persistently or seriously breaking the rules of the Leagues, bringing the Leagues into disrepute, or acting in any way contrary to the interests of the Leagues. Penalties may include fines, the deduction of points, the reversal of results, the suspension of players from East League hockey, the relegation of teams, or the expulsion of teams or clubs from the League. The Committee will also use its authorities under this rule to support recommendations made by any relevant Disciplinary Body under the provisions of any regulation included in the EHB Code of Ethics.

7.3 Yellow cards

A player who receives a fourth yellow card in the season in East League matches shall be automatically suspended by his club for the next league day, and likewise each subsequent yellow card received. If a ban cannot be completed by the end of the season, it is carried forward to the beginning of the next league season.

A league day is a Saturday in the League Fixture List or a day on which the club is playing a slip. If the team for which the player normally plays has no fixture on the next league day, the penalty shall be applied to the next league day on which the team has a fixture or slip.

If a player is selected to play contrary to this rule, the penalties set out in rule 3.7 will apply, and further penalties may be considered under rule 7.2.

7.4 Appeals.

A club may appeal against a decision or penalty set by the League by sending an Appeal Notice to the

ELS not later than 7 days after the appellant was notified of the decision or penalty to be appealed against. There must be annexed to the Appeal Notice copies of all documents that the Appellant intends to rely on in the Appeal, including the written statements of any witnesses. A deposit of £120 must be sent to the ELS within 7 days of the date of the sending of the appeal.

7.4.1: Appeals against League Manager or ELS decisions

Appeals against a decision or penalty set by a League Manager or the ELS will be heard as soon as possible by the League Appeals Panel comprising three League Managers not involved in the decision being appealed. The Appeals Panel at its own discretion may hold a written or an oral hearing. The decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final.

7.4.2: Appeals against League Management Committee decisions

Appeals against a decision or penalty set by the LMC will be forwarded to the East Regional HA Appeals Committee, which will hear the appeal under its established procedures. The decision of the East Appeals Committee shall be final.

8. CONSTITUTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE LEAGUES

The Annual General Meeting of the league clubs appoints all league officers, determines all rule changes, and sets annual league fees.

The Leagues are managed by a League Management Committee consisting of all the East League officers and a Representative of ERHUA.

The Chairman of the League is a member by right of the Management Committee of the East Region Hockey Association.

8.1 Annual General Meeting

The AGM is held each year by 30 June. Notice of the AGM, nominations for Officers, fee proposals, and an agenda are sent to league clubs at least 14 days before the meeting. Budget details, explanatory notes on rule changes, and the minutes of the previous AGM are also made available to clubs by the same date.

The business to be transacted at an AGM is the annual report of the League Chairman, the election of Officers, the setting of league fees, amendments to league rules, and other agenda proposals. The meeting is chaired by the League Chairman, but if absent the meeting will elect a member of the League Management Committee. Those entitled to attend and vote are the clubs playing in the Leagues at the end of the previous season, an ERHA representative, and an ERHUA representative. A quorum shall be 25 votes present. ***Due to Corona Virus restrictions this was not possible. However a clubs meeting was held at 3.30pm on Sunday, 13th September. All clubs were extended voting rights as if that meeting were the AGM.***

8.1.1 Voting: A club has 1 vote for each East League in which it plays, and votes may be cast at the meeting or by post. Postal voting papers will be circulated with the Notice of the AGM, and must be completed and returned to the ELS before the meeting. The ERHA and ERHUA Representatives have 1 vote each, to be cast at the meeting. Voting will be organised so that clubs only vote on matters affecting a league in which they play. To be passed, proposals must gain more than 50% of the votes cast, except that changes in League Rule 8 require at least 75%.

8.1.2 Electing Officers: Nominations may be made by the League Management Committee or by a League Club. Club nominations must be sent in writing to the ELS by 30 April, and must include the written consent of the nominee and a written secondment by another League Club. Nominations will not be accepted after 30 April.

8.1.3 Amending League Rules: Proposals from Clubs to amend League Rules must be submitted to the ELS by 31 Mar. All proposals will be reviewed at the April meeting of the League Management Committee along with rule changes proposed by the Committee, and a composite draft Rules

Proposal will be prepared and made available to clubs as much in advance of the AGM as possible. Proposals will be amended in light of club comments, and a final version circulated with the AGM papers. Agreed rule changes will usually be implemented in the season following, but with the agreement of the AGM major changes may be implemented later.

8.1.4 Other Proposals: may be submitted to the AGM by the League Committee or by a Club participating in the League, subject to the same deadline dates and secondments as specified for rule changes. Such proposals will be made available to clubs as much in advance of the AGM as possible and will be circulated with the AGM papers.

8.1.5 Amendments to Proposals: To maintain the validity of postal votes no substantial amendments to proposals are allowed, but the AGM may agree minor changes to wording that do not change the intent of the proposal nor invalidate the basis on which postal votes were cast. The Chairman of the meeting is the sole arbiter of what is acceptable.

8.2 Special General Meetings

An SGM may be called by the League Management Committee, or within a month of receiving a request signed by the Chairmen of 25 participating clubs (Men's, Women's and Joint Clubs each being counted as one club) clearly stating the reasons for the meeting. At least 14 days' notice of the SGM shall be sent to all those entitled to vote. No other business shall be conducted at the meeting. Relevant procedures for an AGM apply.

8.3 Financial Policies

The financial policies of the Leagues are: to break even; to require participating clubs to pay a league fee per team; to apply a 50% surcharge to fees paid by clubs with late application forms; and to treat fines as unbudgeted income.

8.4 League Management Committee

The committee is responsible for all aspects of the East Leagues, subject to the overall authority of the AGM of the League Clubs.

It will meet to review league performance, resolve problems, and make decisions on any matter concerning the leagues. It may revise the structure of the leagues in the interest of all clubs and for the benefit of hockey in the region, consulting clubs and submitting any new structure to a General Meeting. It will organise the AGM, Presentation Day, and any SGM.

The committee will meet at least three times a year. A quorum is four members, one of whom must be the League Chairman or ELS. In the absence of the Chairman, the committee shall elect one of the members present as chair. The committee will appoint replacements to fill any vacancies in its membership.

The committee will endeavour to operate by consensus, but in the event of a vote the officers of one league will not vote on another league's business. All may vote on joint business. The Chairman, ELS and Budgets Officer may vote on any business. Proposals shall be passed by a majority of those present and voting, with the chair having a casting vote if needed.

The Committee may impose penalties and vary deadlines under any rule.

8.5 East League Secretary

The Leagues are managed overall by the ELS, subject to the authority of the League Management Committee. The duties of the ELS include: ensuring that all divisions are efficiently and consistently managed and that decisions are consistent with league rules; representing the East Leagues at EHB and Regional League liaison meetings; liaising with Umpiring Associations on matters affecting the leagues; ensuring that Clubs are kept informed of and consulted on relevant league matters; and carrying out league administration including club affiliations, preparing the league section of the East

Hockey Handbook, preparing league material for the East Hockey website, and organising League Management Committee meetings and minutes.

The ELS may impose penalties and vary deadlines as specified in individual rules.

8.6 League Managers

Each League Division is managed by a League Manager, whose duties include maintaining close liaison with the division's clubs and teams to help ensure the smooth running of the League, ensuring observance of league rules, resolving all issues that arise during the season, applying penalties where necessary, collecting and reporting match results and liaising with the League Results Coordinator, keeping accurate records of results and disciplinary cards, and presenting a full report of divisional issues to every League Management Committee meeting.

League Managers may impose penalties and vary deadlines as specified in individual rules.

8.7 Budgets Officer

The Budgets Officer shall agree a budget with ERHA Hon. Treasurer by 1st May each season, shall invoice and collect league fees, and shall collect league fines.

8.8 Results Coordinators

Each League has a Results Coordinator responsible for: ensuring that all published match results and league tables are accurate and current; applying match awards and penalty point deductions as agreed and advised by League Managers, the ELS, or the League Management Committee; and finalising promotion and relegation positions at the end of the season. The Results Coordinators of the Leagues shall work together to produce divisional allocations and fixtures for each new season.