

# ENGLAND NETBALL

## NATIONAL SCHOOLS NETBALL COMPETITION:

### RULES AND REGULATIONS

#### 1. OVERVIEW

The National Schools Netball Competition (hereinafter called “**The Competition**”) is a national competition organised by England Netball to enable schools to compete against each other to determine a national winner in each age group, whilst encouraging participation in netball through an open, fair and transparent competition.

The Competition takes place over a series of competitive rounds, with eligible top placed teams progressing through each round to the National Finals.

- These regulations set out below outline the Rules and regulations (The Regulations) upon which the Competition should be run.
- The Regulations must be followed by all Local Organising Committees (LOCs) in the management, administration and operation of the Competition.

#### 2. COMPETITION STRUCTURE

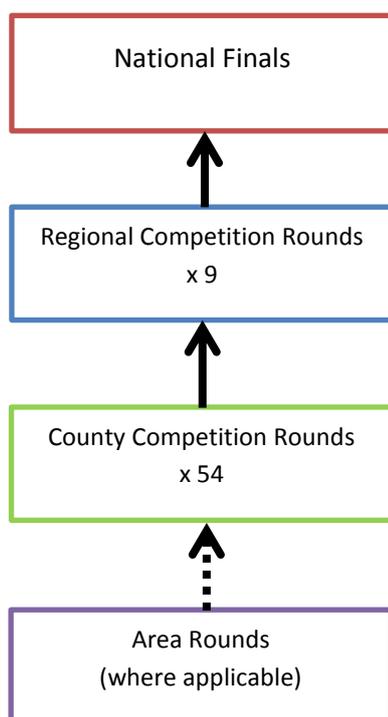
**2.1 The Competition shall comprise of the following rounds (Competition Rounds) held at the following levels (in ascending order):**

- County Rounds
- Regional Rounds
- National Finals

2.2 Where necessary, there shall be a level below the County Rounds called “Area Rounds”, which shall be held as competitions within a County to determine which teams progress to the County Round. It shall be up to the individual County Netball Association to determine whether Area Rounds are required in their county and these may have different regulations and structures to those outlined in these Regulations. However Sections 4, 7 and 8 must be included in regulations and enforced for Area Rounds.

2.3 Each Competition round will take place on a day specified by the LOC (see 3.1 for definition of LOC), which will be referred to as the Competition Day.

2.4 An overview of the Competition structure is as set out in the diagram below:



2.5 The winners and runners up of each Competition round shall progress to the next level, providing they meet (and continue to meet) the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 5. Eligibility shall be assessed before the commencement of each Competition Round by the LOC responsible for that Competition Round. If a winner or runner up is ineligible, the next placed eligible team will progress to the next level. The scoring system for the competing teams shall be as set out in Section 6.

2.6 The Competition is known as the England Netball National Schools Competition. The name shall be preceded by the name of such sponsor as England Netball may direct from time to time, as well as the specific competitive rounds at which the matches are taking place.

### 3. COMPETITION ORGANISATION

3.1 England Netball delegate the organisation and management of each Competition Round to the local netball association **at that level**, as follows:

- **Area Round** – responsibility of the **County Netball Association**
- **County Round**– responsibility of the **County Netball Association**
- **Regional Round**– responsibility of the **Regional Netball Association**.
- **National Finals**– responsibility of **England Netball**.

The local netball associations responsible for the Competition Rounds shall be referred to as **Local Organising Committees** (or “**LOCs**”).

3.2 The LOCs shall organise, manage and administer their Competition Round(s) on behalf of England Netball on the following basis:

- The LOCs shall abide by and comply with the Regulations set out in this document
- The LOCs shall be solely responsible and liable for the Competition Rounds managed by them
- The LOCs shall announce prior to the start of the Competition Round, the named person for receiving appeals of the Competition Referees decision, as outlined in Section 8

3.3 Each Competition Round will be contested between as many teams as shall be determined by the applicable LOC.

## **4. COMPETITION REFEREES**

4.1 A Competition Referee will be appointed by the relevant LOC for each Competition Round.

4.2 The Competition Referee will have the authority and jurisdiction to make decisions on any matters arising during the Competition Day including, but not limited to:

- altering or amending the playing schedule as necessary;
- determining if teams and/or players are in breach of these Regulations and imposing an appropriate penalty (including disqualification of any individual or team)
- maintaining and being responsible for a confidential Competition Referee Log Book (if appropriate);
- upholding the decision by any medical advisor, including but not limited to the Competition doctor or physiotherapist, regarding the participation of a player.
- Instances of unsportsmanlike behaviour including instances of teams predetermining the outcome of a match:
- any matter not covered by the Regulations; and
- consult with additional people to assist with the Competition, but the final decision and accountability will lie with the Competition Referee

4.3 If a player is suspended from a game, or ordered to leave the court and take no further part in the game, that player, team manager and coach will be required to appear in front of the Competition Referee immediately after the end of the match. At the end of the match the Team Manager / Coach and the player concerned must report immediately to the Competition Referee, who will decide what action should be taken.

## **5. PRE-COMPETITION MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

## 5.1 School entry and eligibility

- 5.1.1 Entry to the Competition for any school shall be through the County Association in which that school is based.
- 5.1.2 To be eligible for the Competition each School must affiliate to England Netball in advance of the first Competition Round of the Competition; and.
- 5.1.3 The appropriate affiliation fee must be received by EN Head Office [Membership Services] not less than **four days** before the Competition's first qualifying round (ie County Round or Area Round, if applicable).
- 5.1.4 Each school shall be entitled to enter only one team per age group, as follows:
- **Under 14s**
  - **Under 16s**
  - **Under 19s**
- 5.1.5 By entering a team in the Competition, the schools agree that:
- a) They are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation in the Competition
  - b) They will fulfil their obligations and responsibilities set out in these Regulations; and
  - c) They are bound by these Competition Regulations.
- 5.1.6 The Team Manager or Coach must carry a copy of the England Netball membership card for the school during the Competition Day (when available from England Netball)
- 5.1.7 If there is any dispute between the LOC and school over entry and eligibility, England Netballs Community Competition and Events Manager (nationalschools@englandnetball.co.uk) or their nominee must be contacted prior to the Competition Day.

## 5.2 Player eligibility

- 5.2.1 In order to compete in the Competition, all players must be in full time education and be registered with the school they are representing on the day of the Competition.
- 5.2.2 Should a pupil leave school on a Friday she is considered to be a registered member of that School only until the first Monday immediately following her day of leaving. A player re-registering with another school then becomes eligible to represent that school (within the same age group, as per 5.3.2) from the date of her registration and is not considered to have played for any other team in the Competition.
- 5.2.3 All participating players must fall within the correct age group for their team, as follows:
- **U14** = All players must be over 12 years of age and under 14 years of age
  - **U16** = All players must be over 14 years of age and under 16 years of age
  - **U19** = All players must be over 14 years of age and under 19 years of age
- 5.2.4 All players must play within their appropriate age group as at midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> August/1st September immediately prior to the Competition unless the England Netball Community Competition & Events Manager has given prior Age Banding approval in writing.
- 5.2.5 During all stages of the competition, team managers must carry with them all players:

- Proof of age, comprising one of the following:
  - Copy of birth certificate
  - Copy of passport
  - Copy of medical card
  - Letter of confirmation signed by the school's Head Teacher
- Their age banding reference number (if appropriate)

5.2.6 Pregnant players may not take part in matches in the Competition beyond the twelfth week of pregnancy.

### **5.3 Registration of squads**

5.3.1 Participating Schools must complete Squad Registration Sheets for each participating team. Each team may declare up to twelve (12) players on the Registration Sheet.

5.3.2 A player may only play in ONE age group, for which she is first named on the Registration Sheet, throughout all rounds of the Competition.

5.3.3 The Registration Sheet must be completed fully for each player and lodged with the relevant LOC prior to the commencement of the relevant Competition Round.

5.3.4 Teams may only use those players whose names appear on their Registration Sheet held by the relevant LOC.

5.3.5 Any changes or additions to the Registration Sheet must be lodged with the relevant LOC, prior to the start of each Competition Round. Additional registrations of players will not be accepted once the competition round has commenced.

### **5.4 Competition venues**

5.4.1 The relevant LOC is responsible for all arrangements with the venue.

5.4.2 Matches will be played wherever possible on a court with adequate surrounds and surface and with ancillary facilities for participants, including changing and showering facilities for teams and officials, unless otherwise agreed by the relevant LOC. Where any such facilities are not available, this will be communicated to all officials and teams before arrival.

5.4.3 It is the responsibility of the relevant LOC to conduct a risk assessment in relation to any proposed venues.

5.4.4 The relevant LOC are responsible for the provision of adequate first aid cover for its players and officials at all fixtures.

### **5.5 Competition scheduling**

5.5.1 All matches must be played in accordance with the schedule published by the LOC and take place on the date stated, unless otherwise agreed by the England Netball, the relevant LOC or its Competition Referee.

5.5.2 The relevant LOC must provide the teams and the umpires with confirmation in writing of the following information ten (10) days prior to the date of the relevant Competition Round:

- date
  - start time
  - travel directions (including postcode).
- 5.5.3 A LOC may only postpone or cancel a day's competition due to extreme and unforeseen circumstances, e.g., flash flood, heavy snowfall.
- 5.5.4 If a Competition Round is postponed or cancelled, it is the responsibility of the relevant LOC to ensure that the teams and umpire are informed immediately the postponement or cancellation is known.
- 5.5.5 Any postponed or cancelled Competition Round must be played before the next scheduled round unless otherwise agreed by England Netball or the relevant LOC. Injuries do not qualify as unforeseen circumstances.
- 5.5.6 The primary responsibility for rescheduling such fixtures shall reside with the relevant LOC.
- 5.5.7 Schools will be responsible for the organisation and costs of their own travel, and should allow sufficient travelling time to cover any unexpected delays.
- 5.5.8 The LOCs reserve the right to reschedule an individual match, Competition Round or the whole Competition where necessary.

## **6. PLAYING AND COMPETITION**

### **6.1 Match Rules and Format**

- 6.1.1 All matches shall be played to the INF (2011) Rules of the Game currently in force in England at the time, except where specific regulations apply.
- 6.1.2 All rounds shall be played in a format as decided by the relevant LOC.

### **6.2 Match Officials**

- 6.2.1 Match officials shall be provided for each match in the Competition, as follows:

#### **Scorers**

- 6.2.2 It is the responsibility of each team to provide a competent Scorer. This can be either an umpire, qualified table official or a person with working knowledge of scoring.
- 6.2.3 The two (2) Scorers from the teams shall constitute the official bench.
- 6.2.4 All teams are required to utilise the official scorecard supplied by the relevant LOC.

#### **Umpires**

- 6.2.5 It is the responsibility of the relevant LOC to allocate Umpires for the competition and to notify the teams of their appointment in advance of the fixtures.
- 6.2.6 For Area/County/Regional Rounds, Umpires must actively hold a Netball Europe Award at Level C or above.
- 6.2.7 For the National Finals, Umpires must actively hold a Netball Europe Award at Level B or above, or be confirmed as suitably qualified by England Netball.
- 6.2.8 Umpires appointed may be required to submit evidence that they have reached a minimum level 5.1 of the Multi Stage Fitness Test.

- 6.2.9 Teams will contribute to the Umpires' travel expenses, via payment which shall be determined by the relevant LOC, in line with England Netball guidelines.
- 6.2.10 In the event that an Umpire fails to arrive, or is injured or taken ill during a match, the following procedure will be applied:
- a) The relevant LOC must be informed immediately
  - b) If another umpire of the appropriate minimum standard (C Award) is available then she/he will umpire the match; and
  - c) Failing that, the next best-qualified umpire should be used.
- 6.2.11 The relevant LOC may appoint Court Managers from their database of support workforce to supervise and support the Umpires allocated to their courts.

### **6.3 Team Officials**

- 6.3.1 The Team Officials are: Coach, Manager, Captain and up to three (3) other personnel, at least one (1) of whom must be a primary care person and one (1) must hold an appropriate first aid qualification.
- 6.3.2 The Team officials and up to five (5) players, not on court shall constitute the Team Bench.
- 6.3.3 The Team Bench will be the area at the team's defending end at the start of the game to the right of the netball posts. The Team Bench does not change ends at half time.
- 6.3.4 The Team Officials and bench players may not move up and down the side lines or along the goal lines outside the court during play.
- 6.3.5 Coaching is only permitted from the Team Bench.

### **6.4 Kit and equipment**

- 6.4.1 Each team must provide a size five (5) netball, which must be clearly marked for identification purposes.
- 6.4.2 All players must wear positional bibs and teams must have a spare set in a different colour in case of a clash of colours.
- 6.4.3 In the event of a clash of colours, a toss of a coin between the two captains will decide which team retains their original colours.

### **6.5 Match timings**

- 6.5.1 It will be the responsibility of the LOC to provide a minimum of one (1) timekeeper, who will be responsible for timing all matches centrally. The time keeper should have a working knowledge of the INF (2011) rules.
- 6.5.2 Central timing, normally sounded by a hooter, will be used, but matches will start and finish on the Umpires whistle. Where possible, matches will be seven (7) minutes each way, one minute at half time and two minutes between rounds.
- 6.5.3 Central timers will commence timing when the game is started by the 'hooter'.

- 6.5.4 The Central Timer will signal the end of each half (either by hooter or electronic umpire device) to the Umpire, whose whistle shall end each half.
- 6.5.5 Play will be stopped when instructed by the Umpire who shall blow the whistle to stop play. To restart play the Umpire shall signal and blow the whistle for play to be resumed.
- 6.5.6 The hooter will sound at the beginning and end of an interval.
- 6.5.7 A warning will be given before the first game is due to commence 2 minutes and then 30 seconds prior to the start of each game.
- 6.5.8 Team officials must ensure:
- a) Captains toss for centre pass well before the start of each game.
  - b) All teams are on court, in position and ready to play, at the time according to the central timing on the court stated in the playing schedule.
  - c) No team starts a game with less than five (5) players.
- 6.5.9 Any team not on court as detailed in 6.5.8 a) to c) above will concede the match. 0 points will be awarded to the team conceding the match.
- 6.5.10 Instances of 6.5.9 match points for a win (5) will be awarded to the team on court, in position and ready to play at the correct time.
- 6.5.11 The Umpires must record on the Score Card, the name and arrival time of the team who arrived late.

## **6.6 Substitutes and Team Changes**

- 6.6.1 During the half time interval, substitutions/team changes may be made by both teams providing they take place immediately. The opposing team captain must be given adequate time to substitute, if she so wishes.
- 6.6.2 During a game, ONLY injured or ill players may be substituted during a game owing to the short games. No other changes can be made at this time by either side.
- 6.6.3 No extra time will be allowed for injury or illness.

## **6.7 Injuries and accidents**

- 6.7.1 Play may be stopped if the umpire deems it necessary due to the injury or illness of a player.
- 6.7.2 Team Officials are required to take great care in moving an injured player or ill player from the court.
- 6.7.3 Should the Primary Carer feel that an injury is critical (eg head, neck or back) and the injured person will be better left on court for the medical staff, the Officials should note the time lost during treatment and report to the Competition Referees who will adjudicate. (England Netball accepts most netball injuries i.e. knee, ankle etc. fall outside this exemption clause).
- 6.7.4 For all accidents or injuries on or off the court at the Competition, where any player, coach, spectator, volunteer or staff member is injured, the Competition Referee must complete an England Netball Accident Report form and return this to the relevant LOC. A copy must also be sent to Membership Services at England Netball which will be stored for insurance purposes. In addition, the relevant LOC must ensure the accident reporting

procedure as detailed at <http://www.EnglandNetball.co.uk/competitions> is followed in full.

6.7.5 This procedure should be followed for ALL injuries and accidents, regardless of whether or not medical treatment is given.

6.7.6 In the event that a match is abandoned for any reason, e.g., because of serious injury, the result of that match will be determined by the Competition Referees having regard to the score at the time at which play was suspended.

## 6.8 Scoring

6.8.1 The Competition tables will be compiled on the basis of the points awarded to each team.

6.8.2 Teams will be awarded league points as follows:

- 5 points for a win
- 3 points for a draw
- 1 point for a loss in which the team scores more than 50% of the winners score
- 0 points for a loss in which the team scores 50% or less of the winners score

6.8.3 In the Quarter, Semi and Finals matches of each Competition Round (where applicable), if there is a draw at full time, extra time of 2 minutes each way will be played, changing over at half time without a break. Teams will toss for centre pass and change ends. In the event of a draw at full time, play will continue without a break, until the next goal is scored.

6.8.4 Where two teams are level on points:

- a) Goal average (goals for divided by goals against) shall be used to determine their relative position - ie the team with the higher average score over the course of the competition round shall take precedence
- b) In the event that goal average does not differentiate between the teams, then goal difference shall be applied - ie precedence shall be given to the team with the greater difference between goals scored and goals conceded
- c) In the event that goal difference does not differentiate between the teams, then the head to head result between the two teams shall determine the positioning
- d) In the event that the head to head result does not differentiate between the teams, then the team with the greatest number of goals scored shall take precedence

**Note - Where one of the teams has its goal average, goal difference or total number of goals scored affected by conceded fixtures, then all goals scored by and against conceding team(s) in all fixtures shall be omitted from the calculations of both teams level on points. For example, in the event that one team received 5 points for a conceded fixture, then the goals scored by and against both teams level on points, in all games against the offending team, will not be included when its goal average, goal difference or total number of goals is calculated**

6.8.5 In the event that neither goal average nor goal difference nor head to head nor goals scored can differentiate between the teams, the winner will be decided with the extra time process between the teams as outlined in Section 6.8.3 above for Quarters, Semis and Finals.

## 6.9 Registration of Results

- 6.9.1 Scorecards must be checked and signed by the Scorer(s) and both Captains. Once the official scorecards have been signed no dispute can be logged, unless it is marked 'Under Protest' as in 7.1.2.
- 6.9.2 If the final score is not in agreement, the process outlined in Section 7 (Competition Complaints Procedure) should be followed.
- 6.9.3 In the event that Court Runners are not provided, it is the responsibility of the winning Team Captain/Team Manager to take both scorecards to the recorders table after they have been signed by both Scorers and Team Captains.
- 6.9.4 In the event of a draw, each Team Captain/ Team Manager will take responsibility for taking a scorecard to the Recorders Table.
- 6.9.5 A legible copy of the scorecard must be received by the relevant LOC (at the appropriate level of competition) immediately after the match.

## **7. COMPETITION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

7.1 On the Competition Day, all queries and complaints (a Complaint) should be directed to the Competition Referee in the first instance, which will be dealt with as follows:

7.1.1 Where the Complaint relates to the competition format or management, including (but not limited to) the schedule, the opposing team, playing surface or other playing arrangements, a protest must be made, before the start of the match (or as soon as possible after the issue becomes apparent during the match) to the Competition Referee by the relevant Team or Match Official. The Complaint must then be acknowledged by the Competition Referee who will decide what action should be taken; or.

7.1.2 Where the Complaint relates to the playing of a match, the scoring, and/or its result, the relevant team or match official, must do the following:

- Inform their opponents and the umpires of their complaint;
- Mark the score card with the words "Under Protest";
- Take the marked score card to the Competition Referee, straight after the match;
- Explain the issue in full to the Competition Referee;
- The Competition Referee will decide what action should be taken.

7.1.3 The Competition Referee's decision in relation to decisions taken under clauses 7.1.1 or 7.1.2 is binding. Parties to the complaint shall have the right to appeal the decision under Section 8 below.

7.2 Where a Complaint relates to the governance or administration of the Competition by the relevant LOC or by England Netball, such complaints will be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure of the relevant LOC or of England Netball

7.3 Where a Complaint relates to the behaviour of an individual or team participating, volunteering or attending the Competition which could be considered as a Disciplinary Offence under England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations, such complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the processes set out in England Netball's Disciplinary Regulations and should be referred to the Disciplinary Secretary of the Appropriate Authority..

## **8. APPEAL OF COMPETITION REFEREES DECISION**

8.1 A party to a complaint submitted under Sections 7.1.1 or 7.1.2 shall have the right to appeal a decision made by the Competition Referee in relation to that complaint; **if**

- the decision has a potential impact on a match result, a league table, or the outcome of the Competition Round; AND
- there has been a failure by the Competition Referee to follow these Regulations or the Competition Referee reached a decision on the basis of an error of fact.

These are the only grounds of appeal and any appeal must be submitted in accordance with the appeals process set out in this Section 8:

8.2 An appeal should be forwarded in writing from the Headteacher of the objecting school to the named contact (as per 3.2) from the relevant LOC within 2 working days of the match.

8.3 The appeal shall be accompanied by a cheque for £100 which shall be returned if the appeal is upheld or if there are any other extenuating circumstances. The Competition Appeal Committee (CAC) will decide whether the extenuating circumstance warrant the cheque being returned.

8.4 The named contact from the relevant LOC will establish a CAC which will consist of individuals that are independent of the Competition; one of those individuals will be appointed as the Chair. For England Netball, this will usually but not exclusively be 3 members of staff.

8.5 The Chair of the CAC will send the appeal to the opposing team and any other team that they believe could be impacted by the outcome of the appeal. These teams will be permitted 72 hours, from the date they receive the appeal from CAC, to submit any evidence or submission that they wish the CAC to consider.

8.6 All submissions and evidence must be submitted in writing. No parties involved in the appeal, including the appellant, will be able to make a verbal representation to the CAC.

8.7 The CAC shall meet and conclude the matter within 72 hours of receiving the evidence and submissions.

8.8 The CAC will immediately notify all the parties who presented submissions and evidence of their decision and any penalties imposed. The CAC shall have the discretion to publish the decision through whatever media it considers appropriate.

- 8.9 The CAC shall have the power of the relevant LOC to make all decisions and impose any penalties (including but not limited to, reprimands, the deduction of points, fines, suspensions and expulsions from the competition) relating to the appeal.
- 8.10 The decisions of the CAC shall be considered to be the decisions of the relevant LOC and shall be final and binding on all participants in the Competition. For avoidance of doubt, there shall be no further right of appeal under England Netball's Disciplinary Procedures Manual or otherwise.
- 8.11 The procedures in this section 8 shall be governed by the Arbitration Act 1996 and amounts to a binding arbitration agreement for the purposes of Section 6 of that Act. The seat of the arbitration shall be England.
- 8.12 If the circumstances require a decision to be taken sooner than permitted by this section 8, and all parties to the appeal agree, the timetable within which an appeal is raised, submissions made and the decision taken can be shorter than 72 hours stated in this Section. In such cases the CAC shall issue a revised timetable which shall be binding on all parties.

## **9. MISCELLANEOUS**

- 9.1 These Regulations shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with English law.
- 9.2 Any questions regarding these Regulations can be addressed to:
- England Netball Community Competition and Events Manager  
England Netball  
Netball House, 1-12 Old Park Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2JR
- 9.3 England Netball will be entitled to amend these Regulations each year in advance of the Competition and such amendments will take effect from the first date of publication of the completed amended procedure on the England Netball website.