

**SHALL Meeting Minutes**  
**Thames Valley HC**

**5/3/13**

Committee Attendees:

Marilyn Walker (Chairman); Janet Slater (Secretary); Nicky Parry-Jones (Results Secretary); Bridget O'Leary (Website Administrator); Angela Durnin (Fines Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence:

Committee: Mel Cassel (Matchday Secretary); Liz Aeissame; Philip Pagels

Clubs: Cranleigh; Leatherhead; Spencer;

2. Matters Arising:

▪ Unpaid Fines (rule 9.6)

This season the Fines Secretary, Angela Durnin, has been emailing the captain of each team that incurred a fine directly so fines have not been posted on the website.

7 teams still have fines outstanding from before Christmas. 34 teams have so far incurred fines this term and notifications will be sent out shortly.

Angela advised the meeting that outstanding fines incurred before Christmas that were not paid by the end of the meeting would be doubled; fines incurred after Christmas that remain unpaid after 31st March would be doubled. All fines must be paid by the AGM or the offending team will not be eligible for inclusion in next season's competition.

▪ Missing match report forms (rule 7.3)

The Results Secretary, Nicky, reported that there were still 7 missing match report forms despite emails to the team captain from Fines Secretary advising that the team would be fined and that the form was still required, and a subsequent email from the Secretary giving them until tonight's meeting to get the match report form to Nicky or face a points deduction.

The Secretary asked the meeting if anyone had any strong objection to the imposition of a points penalty for non-submission of a match report form and nobody did. Richmond's representative did, however, ask when the points penalty would be applied as Richmond had 3 outstanding match report forms. The Committee response was that the deadline had been set for 5th March but, if the missing forms were received by the weekend then the points penalty would be waived.

3. Promotion/Relegation (rule 10.2 & 10.3)

The Chairman, Marilyn Walker, kicked off the discussion with clarification of the promotion/relegation position by stating that only the top team is certain of promotion and bottom team of relegation.

The Secretary then briefed the meeting on the approach that the Committee intended to take to the issues of promotion and relegation:

- Firstly, that the number of teams per division is maintained at 10 as far down the divisions as possible.
- There is the possibility that there will be a gap in the Premier division if no team is relegated from South 3B; this will not be known until the conclusion of the South 3B season (23rd/24th March). If no team is relegated into Premier then one team more will be promoted from Division 1 than is relegated from Premier.

- Due to teams dropping out of the League, there are currently only 9 teams in divisions 6 and 7 so these gaps will be filled by promoting more teams from the divisions below. This will also ripple down to the bottom divisions
- It was originally intended that there would be play-offs between the top 2 teams in divisions 10A and 10B but due to the fact that 2 teams have dropped out of higher divisions, there are an additional 2 places to be filled so it that is proposed that all 4 of these teams be promoted. No objections were raised to this proposal
- Divisions 10A and 10B be amalgamated (adjusted to account for 10B having played fewer games) then split into division 10 and 11. The reason for this is that several teams have been comprehensively trounced on a regular basis this season and expressed concern that they may face the same fate next year. New teams would join division 11. This proposal was received without objection
- The decision about how many teams to relegate/promote in each division would be based on where the gap in points/goal difference fell (between bottom & second to bottom or between second to bottom & third to bottom and for promotion, between 1st & 2nd or 2nd & 3rd) with the Committee making a judgement about the fairest outcome that would ensure the best competition in each division next season.

This explanation of the Committee's approach led to considerable discussion with many clubs expressing concern that there may only be 1 club promoted in a division. Several members of the Committee stated that this was not a change to the approach but the general belief was that, although there had been discussions in earlier meetings about the number of promotion/relegation places being flexible, there would be a minimum of 2 teams promoted. This view was reinforced by the positioning of the unbroken and dotted lines on FixturesLive which were amended at the end of February. The Committee accepted that there had been miscommunication of this point and the suggestion was made that the lines could be omitted completely next season to avoid further misunderstanding.

Clubs were also concerned that they would not know whether they were affected by promotion/relegation until after Easter but the Secretary advised that it would not be possible to decide anything until after the conclusion of the South 3B programme on the weekend before Easter and the Committee would not be able to meet up until after Easter.

It was also suggested that there could be a play-off between the second to last team in the higher division and the second placed team in the lower division to decide who should be in the higher division. Marilyn stated that it was not possible to do that this season but that if this was wanted by a majority of clubs then it could be introduced. There would, however, be issues with the timing of any such games in seasons that were hit by postponements or when Easter was earlier meaning that there were fewer weeks in the season.

The discussions lasted for about 40 minutes with some representatives wanting to revert to a straight 2 up 2 down system and others being behind the flexible approach. The Committee sought to reassure the clubs that no decisions were made without a great deal of discussion and that the overriding principle was to achieve the most competitive divisions.

4. Rule change suggestions for:

- Rule 6.4 - Player eligibility for postponed matches - must normally have played 50% of matches for team concerned up to date of original fixture

The Secretary suggested that changing the rule to fix the cut-off date for eligibility to the date of the rearranged fixture rather than the original fixture might make it easier for players to become

eligible to play in postponed games. The suggestion was generally welcomed so a rule change proposal will be added to the AGM agenda.

However, this led to more discussion about slip dates and the reason for rule 6.4.

The use of the February half term dates as slip dates caused a lot of problems with getting out teams so after much debate about the relative merits of including these dates as normal League weekends or just using them for slip dates, the Secretary asked if the clubs would prefer to avoid using either one or both half term weekends if there were enough weekends available to do so. The overwhelming majority wanted to avoid both weekends which the Secretary promised to try to do. (The Surrey County Council website is used for checking half term dates.)

Epsom's representative questioned the need for the 50% eligibility rule if, as happened on 16th February, all or almost all of a club's teams are involved in rearranged League matches which meant it was just like any other weekend. It was pointed out by the Committee that not every club was in that position and allowing exceptions for clubs which did have all their teams playing would significantly increase the administrative burden on the Secretary and Results Secretary. A comment was made from the floor that there would always be cases where the rule would seem inappropriate but it was unreasonable to allow exceptions or change the rules for cases that hardly ever arose and the proposed change to eligibility qualification should mean that such instances would become even more rare.

- Rule 6.1 (b) Postponements of matches if 3 or more players required for Regional, National or International commitments - at least 14 days' notice.

The Secretary proposed that the 14 day notice period might need to be reduced as clubs did not seem to be given this amount of notice by England Hockey. (Surbiton had 4 players called up to an England training camp). Angela Durnin pointed out that this could mean that the home team would not be able to cancel the pitch and would therefore incur pitch costs twice over, once for the postponed game and once for the rearranged date.

Marilyn Walker asked why there had been insufficient notice as the training squad was announced with squad training dates before Christmas. The reason was that 2 of the players had been injured for the original selection so had only been included late on. Marilyn suggested that clubs with promising youngsters had a responsibility to ensure that they managed this situation proactively so didn't she think the notice period in the rule should be changed. This was endorsed by the rest of the meeting.

#### 5. New teams next season

- Interest had already been expressed by Barnes, Epsom, Reigate Priory & Wanderers. At the meeting, Surbiton and Woking advised that they would also be entering new teams into the lowest division. Clubs were reminded that a formal request must be received by the Secretary by 31st March in order for a new team to be included in the League next season.
- An enquiry received from Teddington to enter a team in the bottom division of the Surrey League - currently have teams in South 1 & 3B and Middlesex Premier, 1 & 2.

Extract from SHA website:

All Clubs and Schools playing hockey must affiliation to their County, Region and England. All teams in a section (men's or women's) must affiliate through a single county, though some counties may make a small additional charge for those teams not affiliated to it that enter leagues under its control. Mixed teams where the players all play in registered men's and women's sides at the same club pay no affiliation fee, all others pay a standard registration fee.

The Chairman asked whether the clubs would be happy to agree to Teddington entering just their new bottom team into the Surrey League next season. Just such a request was made a few seasons ago and it was turned down on the basis that all the teams for a section (ladies) had to affiliate through the same county.

The meeting was not supportive of allowing the move based mainly on the difficulty of administering player eligibility.

The Secretary will write back to Teddington to refuse entry.

6. Any Other Business

- SHA finances

At the last League meeting, concern was expressed that there appeared to be problems and a lack of transparency in the way the finances were being managed. Marilyn Walker offered to try to find out what was happening and report back. Marilyn reported that the SHA finances now appeared to be being sorted out. The SHA Ladies League generates a regular income from fines which was ring-fenced for use in junior development when the men's and ladies' county associations merged in 2000. Marilyn reported that the SHA are intending to provide some financial support for a charity called Suburban Hockey which provides hockey coaches who work with schools in deprived areas to coach and set up links with local hockey clubs so that the children are introduced to hockey.

- Goalscorer award suggested (Oxted)

There was no support for this suggestion.

- Cath Blake from Barnes offered the Barnes clubhouse for the AGM again this season. She was thanked for the offer but no decision was made on the AGM venue.

- The Chairman thanked Thames Valley HC for hosting the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

**Club attendees:**

<b>Club</b>	<b>Representative</b>
Bank of England	Nicky Parry-Jones
Barnes Hounslow Ealing	Cath Blake
Berrylands	Teresa Parke & Sarah Candy
Byfleet Ramblers	Emma Lawton & Lu Donaldson
Camberley & Farnborough	Ali Holme
Cheam	Lois Hare
Epsom	Andy White
Guildford	Fiona Harley
London Edwardians	Andrie Galantiou & Janine Herholdt
London Wayfarers	Angela Durnin
Merton	Yee-Ean Ong
Mid Surrey	Ellie Hawksley
Mitcham	Emily Delahanty
Old Georgians	Sushila Sathiaraj
Old Kingstonian	Georgina Perry
Oxted	Terri Foggin
Reigate Priory	Janet Slater
Richmond	Alison Quinn
Sunbury & Walton Hawks	Nicky McAndrew
Surbiton	Ellie Vickery & Jo Firth
Thames Valley	Maria Lanzante & Clare Bowman
Tulse Hill & Dulwich	Marilyn Walker
Wanderers	Claire Mogford & Chrissy Blewett
Wimbledon	Joanna Close
Woking	Vicky Derman