

NVL Promotion and Relegation for 2019-2020 Season

The Competitions Working Group agreed a staged process for finalising the 2019/2020 season;

Stage 1 – finalisation of the NVL league tables (this was published on 30 April 2020)

Stage 2 – determination of promotion and relegation, and league structure for season 2020/2021

The Competitions Working Group met on 14th May and 21st May to review the consultation and finalise the decision for promotion and relegation for the 2019-20 season. This document covers the process we went through, the rationale and the outcome. It is important to understand that in these extraordinary times we have had to make difficult choices, however we have maintained the values of Volleyball England, in particular being Open and Respectful in our discussions and recommendations. We are sharing this document so that you are aware of the information we considered, the process we followed and the results. We are circulating this paper to team secretaries as a final decision on the promotion and relegation.

At the same time as determining promotion and relegation we need to determine the league structure for next season. This has been impacted by teams discontinuing (both those who have already dropped out this season and for those planning to drop out for the upcoming season) and, in the lower divisions, by teams entering the league.

We would like to thank all of the teams that gave a clear indication as to their intentions to continue in the National League next season. We have also had teams confirm that they would not be entering next season and/or request to be relegated to ensure that their team can offer Volleyball at the right standard for players in their club. Having this information has allowed Volleyball England to fill gaps in Divisions which we might not have known about until a later date. This allows us to publish what we feel is the best league structure and start planning for an on-time season start (government allowing).

We are also in parallel with this considering contingency planning in case through government decisions we have to delay either the planning or the start to the season. Our default planning assumption for now is an on-time start; expect to hear more on this in the coming weeks.

We carefully considered the following information as part of the process

- 1) What other sports have done
- 2) What the input from our membership was (via email, conversations, webcast, etc.)
- 3) Any information previously submitted in relation to team's promotion or relegation as part of the consultation and appeal process.
- 4) Regulation I4 Promotion and Relegations from the NVL regulations

Constraints

- a. No Play-offs – this has already been communicated
- b. We need to make this decision now so that we can plan for our default assumption
- c. Number of teams entering/leaving

Scope

- All NVL leagues

Process

- 1) We firstly thought about the principles we should apply to this process and decided the following.
 - a. The decision needs to be transparent
 - b. Apply the same across all leagues
 - c. Fairness
- 2) We then considered a few key questions
 - a. Do we want to get a result or is null and void an option? Or put another way do we want to reward success and ensure that teams play at the right level, reflective of their performance (Promotion and Relegation). We felt that sufficient matches had been played that it was important that the teams who had earned promotion were promoted.
 - b. Would promotion without relegation be OK? No – we felt that sufficient matches had been played to determine which teams should be relegated to maintain fairness to all teams. Therefore, their position should be relegated even in these extra-ordinary times.
 - c. Do we want to apply our expert judgement or have no subjectivity – We decided that we should not apply subjectivity. The main reason for this is that although some decisions would be clear many would be finely nuanced and therefore divisive, we felt that continuing to be respectful and fair to all teams, we should not use subjectivity.
- 3) We then looked at the options we had and using the principles and answers to the key questions above we decided earlier to choose option b. **Option in Bold was the chosen option.**
 - a. No promotion or relegation – No, see 2a and 2b.
 - b. **Promote top and follow relegation rules.**
 - c. Promotion only (top of each league), no relegation – No, see 2b.
 - d. Promotion only (top of each league), relegation only when teams want – No, see 2b and 2c.
 - e. Promotion only (top of each league), relegation only when teams want, or they have lost every match – No, see 2b and 2c.
 - f. Promotion and relegation based on performance and CWG expertise? – We decided that we should not apply subjectivity in line with 2c.
- 4) We then applied that decision to each league and reviewed the final standings and concluded that this did indeed result in a fair and reasonable outcome for promotion and relegation based on our key questions and principles above.



MEN'S NATIONAL VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE STRUCTURE 2020-21 PROPOSAL

Division:	Super League	Division 1	Division 2 North	Division 3 North
	Durham Palatinates Men	Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University	Black Country Men 2	Leeds Gorse Mens 2
	IBB Polonia London	City of Bristol	DARKSTAR Derbyshire	Lincoln Cannons
	Leeds RGA VC	London Aces	Haughton Darlington	Manchester Marvels 2
	Malory Eagles UEL	Manchester Marvels 1	Hull Thunder	Newcastle Staffs 2
	Newcastle Staffs	Stockport Volleyball Club	Intervolley Manchester	Nottingham Rockets 1
	Richmond Docklands	Team Essex Blaze SR	Leicester Volleyball Club	Urmston Grammar Volleyball
	Sheffield Hallam	Team Essex Estonians SR	Liverpool VC	Wombourne VC
	Team Sunderland	The Miners Doncaster Volleyball Club	Sheffield 2	
	TeamBU Wessex	University of Nottingham Volleyball Men	Tamworth Spartans	Division 3 Central
	Tendring (Essex) Men	Weymouth Beach Volleyball Club	York VC	Cambridge VC (M2)
				England Cadet Boys
			Division 2 South	Loughborough Students
			Bristol VC	Norwich Spikers
			Coventry & Warwick Riga	Rhinos Volleyball Cambridge
			Guildford International	Stowmarket
			MK City	
			New Forest	Division 3 South
			Newmarket VC	Dartford
			Oxford & Brookes Students	London Baks
			Richmond VB	London Giants
			UK Armed Forces Men	Richmond VB 2
			Urbond Volleyball Club Portsmouth	South Hants
				Southampton Volleyball Club Men
				Surrey Spikers
				Team Bristol
				Wiltshire Mavericks

Key:	
Promoted team	New team
Relegated team	

League Structure notes: The competitions working group reserves the right to change the league structure if required e.g. if teams chose to leave, if required to balance the geographical split, if more new teams enter, or if government guidance requires it.



WOMEN'S NATIONAL VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE STRUCTURE 2020-21 PROPOSAL

Division:	Super League
Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University	
DARKSTAR Derbyshire	
Durham Palatinates Women	
London Inter Orcas	
London Inter Orcas 2	
Malory Eagles UEL	
Polonia SideOut London	
TeamBU Wessex	
Tendring (Essex) Ladies	
University of Nottingham Volleyball Women	

Division 1
Birmingham Volleyball Club
Bristol VC 1
Coventry & Warwick Riga
Dartford
Leeds RGA VC
London Lionhearts
Oxford Ladies
Richmond VB
Team South Wales
Team Sunderland

Division 2 North
Black Country VC
Chester Amazons
Leicester Athena
Manchester Marvels 1
MK City
Newcastle Staffs
Norwich Spikers
Tameside
Urmston Grammar Volleyball
York Falcons

Division 3 North
Hull Thunder
Leeds Gorse Womens 2
Leeds RGA Panthers
Liverpool VC
Manchester Marvels 2
Sheffield Honeybees
Stockport Volleyball Club
The Miners Doncaster Volleyball Club
York Vipers

Division 2 South
Bristol VC 2
Cardiff Falcons
Herts VC
Ipswich Ladies
London Giants
Reading Aces
Southampton Volleyball Club Ladies 1
Sussex Dolphins 1
Team Essex Trinity SR
Wessex W2

Division 3 Central
Ashfield Vipers
Coventry & Warwick Riga 2
Lincoln Cannons
Loughborough Students
Nottingham Rockets
Tamworth Spartans
Telford Ladies
UK Armed Forces Ladies
Wombourne VC

Division 3 South East
Ashcombe Dorking 1
Dartford Warriors
Northampton
Portsmouth
Rhinos Volleyball Cambridge
Richmond VB 2
South Hants
Sussex Dolphins 2
Urbond Volleyball Club Portsmouth

Division 3 South West
City of Bristol Ladies
New Forest Ladies
PETROC Beach Academy (North Devon)
Plymouth
Plymouth Mayflower VC
Southampton Volleyball Club Ladies 2
Yeovil

Key:
Promoted team
Relegated team

New team

League Structure notes:
 The competitions working group reserves the right to change the league structure if required e.g. if teams chose to leave, if required to balance the geographical split, if more new teams enter, or if government guidance requires it.

- 5) We then discussed what appeals we would consider and on what basis and who would hear those appeals. Appeals could be made on the process followed or option decided and not on how when applied this impacted teams. E.g. teams can't appeal and say they agree on the process followed and the option chosen but feel that they should not have been relegated as they feel that if the remaining matches had been played, they would not have been relegated. Appeals would be considered by a judicial panel in line with NVL Regulation G7.
- 6) It is important to note that the Competitions Working Group reserves the right to change the league structure if required e.g. if teams chose to leave, to adjust the geographical split or if government guidance requires it.

Responses received from consultation

We sent the document out for consultation and feedback and we received 92 responses. Of those the vast majority accepted that we made the right decision. The following were the questions that we felt required clarifying;

Question	Answer
Why has last place in the Women's Super League not been relegated?	The NVL Regulations state that 10 th place is relegated. While the 10 th placed team is absent from the table, the effect is that the 10 th placed team is still relegated.
Why not promote a team that won the vast majority of their games?	The Competitions Working Group have followed the NVL Regulations in determining promotion and relegation, following the finalisation of the NVL league tables.
Can we ask to be relegated?	The Competitions Working Group will consider exceptional requests to be relegated.
Can you confirm the account that the £100 appeal deposit should in lodge into?	Appeal deposits should be paid into the Volleyball England bank account, details are attached in the email.
Can we get access to the minutes of the meeting where the decision was made?	The published decision accurately records the decisions that were taken by the Competitions Working Group during their meeting. No additional minutes were prepared.
If a team were to drop out of a higher division, when and how would you decide who would replace them?	The Competitions Working Group would make a decision depending on the time of a withdrawal as to whether it is possible to promote a team. If it is, the Competitions Working Group would follow the process they have followed in these decisions to date, to prefer teams from higher divisions. If the Competitions Working Group had to select from teams in playoff positions from a lower division, it would do this by comparing a points per matches played score, followed by sets difference then points difference.

When will the new teams be added to Division 3 and Divisions 2 & 3 be balanced based on geography?	New teams have been added to Division 3, and Divisions 2 & 3 have been balanced based on geography in the latest 2020-21 league structure proposal.
How can Volleyball England expect clubs to commit before the deadline for appeals or before appeals even taking place?	Volleyball England has asked teams to confirm an intent to enter the 2020-21 season. By confirming this intent, Volleyball England are able to provide the best information to all teams and clubs on a potential league structure for 2020-21.
Why would Volleyball England publish their league structure for 2020-21 before the appeal date?	Publishing a potential league structure for 2020-21 gives teams and clubs the best information that we have on which to make decisions and to plan for next season.
Is Volleyball England being unfair in relegating teams?	As set out in point 2b above, Volleyball England felt that sufficient matches had been played to determine which teams should be relegated and that the final standings were fair, and no team or club had appealed against them. As a result, we therefore we did not feel it was unfair to relegate teams, as we have simply applied the NVL relegation regulations to the final NVL league table standings.

Nothing that Volleyball England received from the consultation meant that the competitions working group felt the need to change the decision.

The final decision was then ratified by the Board.

Next Steps & Timetable

- Any appeals to be submitted by 17:00 on 29th May 2020
- Appeals process
- Publish finalised League Structure for 2020-21 (after appeal)

Note: The information provided in this document is subject to new government advice.