

# ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

*Active Netball reserves the right to amend any League Rule or to incorporate a new rule if it is found to be necessary.*

## 1. GOVERNANCE

At all times, teams will be governed by the latest World Netball Official Netball Rules.

## 2. PLAYERS

- a) The Leagues shall be open to all players resident in the UAE.
- b) Players may only play for one club participating in their chosen League. Any player wishing to transfer from one club to another within a specific League, must notify Active Netball and their current club, before playing for their new Club.
  - Notification to Active is to be given via email. In the event of a team withdrawing from the League, players from that team may transfer immediately to another team, providing Active Netball is informed prior to them playing for a new team.
  - Should a player from a team which disbands during the season, wish to play for another team in the league during that season, they can transfer to this team immediately.
- (c) If a team has a majority of players who are 18 or under, they must have a responsible adult present with them at all matches for Duty of Care. The umpire must be informed of the name of the responsible adult and their name then noted on the result card.

## 3. PLAYING QUALIFICATIONS – AGE BANDING FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

- a) **Junior and Youth Leagues** comprise of: Minis, Foundation, Development, Youth Challenge, Youth Competitive and Youth Premier.
  - A player shall normally represent a team within their school year age group i.e. Years 1-2 Minis, Years 2-4 Foundation, Years 5-6 Development, Years 7-9 Youth Challenge, Years 9-13 Youth Competitive and Years 8-13 Youth Premier (via seeding tournament to determine eligibility).
  - If any young player is deemed by their coach and parent to be sufficiently advanced to play in a higher age group team, the league will review each case independently and if in agreement, they will register the player to the higher ranked team. Duty of Care will be a priority in decision making.
- b) **Senior Leagues** comprise of: Ladies Social, Ladies Competitive, Mixed Competitive,

# ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

Ladies Premier.

- Players aged 14 (or turning 14 in this academic year) plus may play in Senior Leagues with the exception of Ladies Social where a minimum age of 18 is required.
- c) No under 18 player can take part simultaneously in the Junior, Youth and Senior Leagues. (See Section 4 Guest and Borrowed Players for exceptions)
- d) No player selected to play in a League above her age, may then revert to a lower League.
- e) No player can be used as a borrowed player in the Senior Leagues, including within a Club structure unless they meet the required minimum age.
- f) Youth League players, aged 14 and over, may play in the Senior Summer League to see if they are ready to move up to the Senior Leagues. If they find that this is not the case and they wish to return to the Youth League in September, then their coach must email stating the reasons why they wish to revert to Youth League.
- g) Social League is an exception to this as the essence of participation is social connection and playing with friends. To balance the fairness and playing experience for all, we respectfully request that not more than 2 higher level (Prem/Comp) players are on court for a team, at the same time.

## 4) GUEST PLAYERS AND BORROWED PLAYERS

- (a) All Players MUST be of the required age of the League they wish to play in.
- (b) Each individual **registered** player may be 'borrowed' to play for a different team four times within one season. The player may be from your own division (ranked lower at the time of the match) or from a division or league below.
- (c) Each team can only use up to 2 'borrowed or guest' players in any one game.
- (d) A 'Guest' player is a player who is **not** registered in a team with Active Netball. They may play a maximum of 4 times in a season for a single team or multiple teams. A Guest may not play in a final/play off if they have not played at least twice in the rounds for that team.
- (e) Any player, whether borrowed and/or guesting, may only participate for a team a maximum of four (4) times per season.
- (f) A Guest player must register with a team if they wish to continue participating in that season of the league, after playing as a Guest on four (4) occasions. The player will need to be registered with Active netball a minimum of 6 hours before a fifth game is played.

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- (g) No visiting player aged 18 or over, selected to a Super League Franchise or National team in their home country, may take part as a Guest Player unless a game is a friendly game.
- (h) During seeding rounds, players may only play for the same singular team during seeding.
- (i) Please refer to Clause 5 for further guidance.

### 5. Common Sense and Good Sportsmanship Guide

- (a) The spirit of the league is built on fairness, inclusion, and enjoyment for all players. Teams and captains are expected to act with integrity and good sportsmanship when selecting and fielding players, especially when using guest or borrowed players.
- (b) Use of Guest or Borrowed Players:
  - (i) Guest players should be used to ensure a game can go ahead when a team is short of players — not to strengthen a team unfairly or influence the outcome of the match.
  - (ii) A player whose regular standard of play is Premier 1, should not play in lower divisions as a guest or borrowed player- even if they are not registered to a team in the current season.
  - (iii) Any player who currently plays for, or has in recent years played for their National Team, is not eligible to play as a guest or borrowed player in Premier 2 or 3. (Please refer to clause 5 for more information).
  - (iv) A player who has played as a Guest in Premier 1 and is of that level of play, may not register later in the same season as a player for a lower division team.
- (c) Captains, coaches and managers are expected to apply common sense when borrowing players, taking into account:
  - (i) The player's usual playing level and experience;
  - (ii) The impact on the balance and fairness of the match; and
  - (iii) The spirit of competition, which values participation and enjoyment above results.
- (d) Active Netball Expectation
  - (i) We respectfully ask all teams to uphold these values within our netball community. Active Netball reserves the right to review and take action if a team is found to have gained an unfair advantage through inappropriate use

# ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

of guest or borrowed players. Decisions will be guided by fairness and the principles of good sportsmanship.

- (ii) If there are any doubts, please ask the Active Netball team for further guidance.

## 5. TEAMS

- a) At least one representative from each Club must be nominated to be a Team Manager and be responsible for submitting their League registration, together with the appropriate fee.
- b) Clubs may enter any number of teams in the Leagues.
- c) Multi Club Teams:
- All Clubs must specify, before the first match, to which team players are registered. Clubs with more than one team in a Division, must notify Active Netball via email before the beginning of the season, which is the higher-ranking team.
- d) Teams may register the following number of players per team:
- Senior and Youth Leagues - 15 players
  - Junior leagues - 10 players
- e) A player can be registered to a team, a minimum of 6 hours prior to a match.
- f) No player may play for a lower rated team of their Club, unless they permanently transfer to this team, in which case Active Netball must be informed seven days prior to their playing a match for that team.
- g) Spectators are permitted to attend matches but they must behave in an acceptable manner, including not interfering with the movement of the match officials or making unacceptable comments to/on umpires or players, otherwise they will be asked to leave the court area immediately.
- h) To maintain fairness and a competitive balance across the Leagues, the following restrictions will apply to any player for the remainder of the 2025/2026 season who has:
- a. Represented a National Team (open womens) within the past two (2) years with a minimum of 10 international caps, or
  - b. Is currently registered within a National Squad Programme.
- i) Team restrictions:
- a. Game Day Squad Limitation:

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- i. A maximum of five (5) national players may be played in any match, across all quarters.
  - ii. In the 2026/2027 season, this will be reduced to a maximum of three (3) national players on court at any one time.
- b. Compliance and Monitoring:
- i. Teams will have to complete a team register at each quarter time. The scorebench will then confirm on-court eligibility before the start of each quarter.
  - ii. Teams who have a similar number of National players within their team, may by mutual consent agree to increase the number of national players allowed to play on court per quarter.
  - iii. Any team found to be in breach of these rules will forfeit the relevant quarter, with the score recorded as 7-0 in favour of the opposing team.

### 6. ILLEGAL PLAYERS:

- (a) Should any of the above rules from clause 4 and 5 be broken, the player will be considered to be an illegal player.
- (b) Where a team has used an illegal player, regardless of the result, the offending team will not receive any points for that match. The non-offending team will receive the winning points for that match.
- (c) In addition to 6(b), the following goals against will be recorded for the winning team:
  - Junior Leagues 10 goals,
  - Youth Leagues 20 goals,
  - Senior Leagues 30 goals.
- (d) During finals and play offs for promotion/relegation, NO borrowed players are permitted from within your division. Guest players may only be permitted to play if they are of the correct playing age. NO team may field a Guest player who has NOT played for that team **at least 3 times in the preceding round.**

### 7. GAME MANAGEMENT

- (a) Active Netball operates a four-level escalation process to address incidents or behaviour deemed unacceptable or inappropriate from any team or individual(s).

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- (b) All incidents must be recorded by the umpire on the official scorecard and will be reviewed by the Active Netball team.
- (c) The determination of which level is applied rests at the sole discretion of the Active Netball team. Should the Active Netball team feel that there is no redress of behaviour as the season continues, the escalation process will be applied. Where it is deemed appropriate, the Active Netball team reserves the right to escalate directly to a higher level without progressing sequentially through each stage.
- (d) Level 1 – Proactive Advice
  - (i) The team or individual(s) will be advised regarding their behaviour and reminded of expected standards of conduct. The team or individual(s) will be advised that should their behaviour not be addressed, further levels of redress may be applied.
- (e) Level 2 – Formal Warning and Points Deduction
  - (i) A formal warning will be issued to the team or individual(s). In addition, the team will incur a 2 point deduction from their league standings.
  - (ii) The point deduction will apply to the next game played by the team or individual(s).
  - (iii) If the incident occurs during a final or play-off, the deduction will apply immediately to that game's standings.
- (f) Level 3 – Round Suspension
  - (i) The team or individual(s) will be suspended from competing for the remainder of the current round of the league.
  - (ii) During this suspension, the affected individual(s) or team members may not participate in any other teams within any Active Netball league.
- (g) Level 4 – Season Suspension
  - (i) The team or individual(s) will be banned from participating in any Active Netball leagues for the remainder of the season.

Should the team or individual(s) return after serving their level 4 ban, they will automatically resume participation under a Level 1 status for the duration of a full season.

### 8. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO CONSENT

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- (a) By attending or participating in any Active Netball league, match, or event, all players, coaches, officials, and spectators acknowledge that photographs and video recordings may be taken for Active league and promotional purposes.
- (b) Active Netball may use these images and recordings in print, online, or digital media, including social media, websites, and promotional materials. Such use will always reflect the positive spirit, inclusivity, and community values of the league.
- (c) No payment or compensation will be provided for the use of these images or recordings.
- (d) Anyone who prefers not to be featured, must notify their club/manager who must then notify Active Netball in writing.
- (e) Filming or Photography by Teams and Spectators
  - (i) Spectators, coaches, and players are welcome to take photos or film matches for personal, non-commercial use, provided that:
    - Permission is first obtained from the opposing coach and any parents or guardians of players who may be recorded, prior to the start of the match; and
    - All filming or photography is conducted respectfully, without disruption to play or invasion of privacy.
  - (ii) Active Netball reserves the right to request that any filming or photography cease if it is deemed inappropriate or in breach of these guidelines.

### 9. DRESS

- a) All teams must wear positional/place bibs clearly marked front and back. Teams should also bring an alternate colour set of bibs in the event of a colour clash with the opposition.
- b) If a bib falls off during a game, the player should replace it immediately. Umpires have the right to refuse a player entry to court without both positional bibs, back and front.

### 10. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

- a) The score sheet should be signed by each Captain at the end of the game, as acceptance of the score. Teams are responsible to score the games using the official score sheet on the court. No other score card will be considered.
- b) Both team captains must record the name of the umpires on the score sheet.

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- c) The league scores will be updated on the Active Netball website within 24 hours of the match being played.

### 11. TIMES OF PLAY

- a) The start and finish of the league season will be decided by Active Netball.
- b) Matches will be played at the designated time at the Nakheel Netball Hub in JVC according to the schedule, unless re-scheduling is required due to Force-Majeure.
- c) If a game coincides with a UAE National Netball event or UAE National Netball, players are restricted by pre or post international competition protocols. Therefore where a team has 3 or more players involved, the Guest/Borrowed player rule will be extended to allow sufficient players of the correct age to field a team.

- d) League Matches will be 4 periods of time as follows:

#### Junior Leagues

- Foundation: 4 x 5 minutes;
- Development: 4 x 8 minutes

#### Youth Leagues -

- Challenge & Competitive: 4 x 10 minutes;
- Youth Premier (Divisions 2 & 3): 4 x 12 minutes,
- Youth Premier (Division 1): 4 x 15 minutes

#### Senior Leagues –

- Social: 4 x 10 minutes;
- Competitive: 4 x 12 minutes;
- Premier: 4 x 15 minutes;
- Mixed: 4 x 10 minutes

### 12. POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES

Where it is necessary to rearrange a game due Force Majeure, once the date for the rearranged game has been agreed by both teams, teams must confirm this with Active Netball. If either team is then unable to fulfil the commitment, they will be regarded as having conceded the game and the relevant points and goals will be awarded to the other team according to whether the match is a league fixture or a cup/plate fixture.

# ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

## 13. ABANDONED MATCHES

- a) Matches may only be abandoned in exceptional circumstances. The decision to abandon a match will rest with the match umpires.
- b) If a match is abandoned before half time, the match will be rearranged. Should the losing team not wish to rearrange the match, the result will stand at the time of abandonment.
- c) If the match is abandoned after half time, the score will stand at the time of abandonment.

## 14. LATE ARRIVALS

- a) In the event of the umpire arriving late and a match being unable to commence at the correct start time, the match may, with the agreement of both teams, be played at the later time when the umpire arrives.
- b) In the event of a Team arriving late and not having the required 5 players to commence the game, the following will apply:
  - One goal awarded to the non-offending team for every minute a team is not on court throughout Quarter 1.
  - If a team fails to arrive and be on court ready to play (having done the necessary umpire checks) by the start of Quarter 2, they will need to concede the game.
  - If the team arrives after the start of Quarter 2, the teams may, by mutual consent, agree to play a friendly match for the remaining time, with the late arriving team conceding the game.

## 15. FACILITIES FOR PLAY

All matches must be played at the Nakheel Netball Hub, unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of Active Netball.

## 16. POINTS AWARDED

- a) Point breakdown:
  - Five (5) points for a win,
  - Three (3) points for a draw,
  - Two (2) points for a team being within two goals of winning team's total, if they have scored a minimum of 10 goals;

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- One (1) point for reaching 50% or over the winning team's total, if they have scored a minimum of 10 goals;
  - Zero (0) points for a loss; and
  - Minus 1 (-1) point for conceding a match.
- (b) Senior and Youth League teams conceding matches, will be deemed to have lost that game by 20 goals and be awarded no points. Five points and 20 goals will be awarded to the non-offending team.
- (c) Junior League teams conceding matches, will be deemed to have lost that game by 5 goals.
- (d) All Clubs must ensure that their team(s) fulfil their fixture commitments. Teams may only concede a total of 3 matches, during any one season. Any further conceded matches will result in the team being withdrawn from the League. Re-entry to the League for any future season will be at Active Netball's discretion.

### 17. UMPIRES

- a) Umpires will be appointed by the Umpire Coordinators to ensure that umpires are appropriately assigned games suitable to their qualification. The Umpire Coordinators may at their discretion appoint a learner umpire, with a suitable mentor, as part of our Umpire Development Programme.
- b) It is a **requirement for all Senior Premier Teams to have a minimum of one qualified umpire** registered with their team by the 1st September each year, and as a minimum at least one trainee umpire undergoing a qualification within the season.
- c) New Teams/multi-team clubs entering the league will be given one season in which to establish themselves. Thereafter, all the above applies.
- d) No player is allowed to argue with the umpire or question the decisions of umpires at any time. Only the Captains have the right to approach an umpire, during an interval for clarification of any rule. **THE UMPIRES WORD IS FINAL.**

### 18. SCORERS

- a) Each team must provide a scorer on all League matches. Scorers may change at the end of each quarter.
- b) Both Scorers will sit and work together on their designated bench.

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- c) One will activate the flip scoreboard so scores are visible throughout the game, and one will record the score on the score sheet.
- d) Scorers should agree on their role prior to the start of the game but may agree to swap at the end each quarter.
- e) The Scorers will also keep note of the Centre Pass and shall call it, if appealed to by an Umpire.
- f) Scorers will notify the team Captains of the final score and obtain their signature as final agreement of the match score.

### 19. HEALTH & SAFETY

- a) No item of jewellery, except wedding rings or medical alert bracelets, shall be worn. If any of the accepted jewellery is worn, each must be taped to the satisfaction of the umpires. No ear/nose or body piercing can be worn, at any time, whilst playing.
  - Should a player be wearing any jewellery (minus the exceptions), the umpire will not permit the player to participate in the game, until these items are removed.
  - Smart watches may not be worn.
  - Taping/covering of these items will not be permitted.
  - No other adornments which could cause injury to any players may be worn.
- b) Leg/Arm braces must be suitably covered so as to not cause any injury to other players. The Team Captains must ensure the umpires are aware of any of their team players who are wearing braces before the start of the match.
- c) Hats may be worn at the discretion of the umpire as long as they do not represent a health and safety hazard to other players or umpires. Hats should be of a soft material and should not be used to hide sharp hair adornments.
- d) Gloves may NOT be worn when playing netball, with the exception of Social League and any medical reasons at the leagues discretion, if unaccompanied by a medical note. Gloves must be plain, soft leather type, seamless or with internal seams and umpires must be satisfied that they do not present an obvious hazard to other players.
- e) Animals, other than assistance dogs, are not permitted within the court playing area or on the courts.
- f) For health and safety reasons, no personal umbrellas/gazebos are permitted courtside.
- g) Fingernails should be cut short and filed smooth:

## ACTIVE NETBALL LEAGUE RULES 2025/26 SEASON

- Guidance on acrylic nails: If fingernails conform to this rule, the player may participate whether their nails are square or round.
- h) Sunglasses should not normally be worn when participating in Netball activities. However, sunglasses may be worn for genuine medical reasons, but an appropriate medical certificate must be supplied.
- i) Smoking/vaping is not permitted once you are within the Nakheel Netball Hub.
- j) **Pregnant Players-** Whilst the decision as to whether or not to participate rests solely with the relevant participant:
  - The participant's own health and the health of the unborn child are of paramount importance, WN strongly recommends that the participant:
    - (i) consults with their own appropriately qualified medical practitioner to inform them, on a voluntary basis, of their pregnancy and to obtain individual and specific professional medical advice before participating in netball (both during and following pregnancy), in particular regarding the risks of such participation;
    - (ii) acts in accordance with the medical advice received; and
    - (iii) attends regular check-ups with their medical practitioner throughout and following their pregnancy regarding their participation in netball, adjusting participation accordingly;
    - (iv) The participant will be responsible for ensuring she has appropriate insurance cover (it may be possible to obtain such cover through their National Association) for participating in the netball, during and following pregnancy; and
    - (v) By participating when pregnant, the participant will be deemed to have consented to any risks (including any risk of injury to the participant and/or the unborn child) that may arise from such participation. Aside from the liability for death or personal injury resulting from negligence, the participant will also be deemed to have waived any and all claims, causes and rights of action against World Netball and Active Netball, national associations, event organisers, players and match officials, whether at law or in equity, of whatever nature and in any jurisdiction or forum, that she may have as a result of such participation.