London Storm Disciplinary and Complaints Policy

If any member* feels that he/she/they have suffered discrimination in any way or that the London Storm Dodgeball Club Policies, Rules or Code of Conduct have been broken, they should follow the procedures below.

1. **Principles**

1.1 In any sports club, differences and misunderstandings may arise. Successful resolution of differences depends on the willingness of the parties involved to communicate with one another. Where possible, the Club will look to resolve complaints informally at a committee level

1.2 Where a complaint cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be made in writing, via email, to the Club Secretary. Formal complaints will be investigated by an individual or panel appointed by the Club's Committee.

1.3 It is intended that complaints procedures should;

a) be easily accessible
b) ensure that all complaints are fully and fairly investigated
c) ensure that the complaints process supplies an effective response
d) ensure that proper redress is made

1.4 London Storm Dodgeball Club will respect a complainants' desire for confidentiality wherever possible

1.5 London Storm Dodgeball Club will use the feedback provided by both informal and formal complaints to ensure that its systems and Procedures are improved.

2 **What is a complaint?**

2.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the conduct of the club, its committee(s), coaches, volunteer officers, players, or with alleged unfair practice in connection with the club.

2.2 Grounds for a complaint shall include, but shall not be limited, to the following:

b) the violation of the Club's Constitution, Code of Conduct or Procedures

c) if the conduct of any individual, body, or organisation brings or is likely to bring the club into disrepute

1680069408. **Informal Complaints**

3.1 It is clearly desirable for any complaint to be resolved informally where possible and it is hoped that every attempt will be made to achieve this. An informal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing to the Welfare Officer(s) or in the event that it is in regards to the Welfare Officer(s) the Club President directly. Every effort will be made to resolve informal complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Where it has not been possible to resolve the matter informally, the Formal Complaints Procedure should be invoked. The request should be made in writing to the Welfare Officer(s). If the complaint concerns the Welfare Officer(s), the complaint should be made to the club's President. Thereafter, if a conflict of interest exists, the complaint should be made to an independent member of the Club Committee.

1680069968. **Formal Complaints**

4.1 A formal complaint should be made in writing to the Welfare Officer(s) where a complaint has not been resolved informally or where the matter is of a serious nature. Complaints of a serious nature would include gross misconduct, negligence or matters concerning the protection of young people or vulnerable adults. Verbal and anonymous complaints shall be reviewed for general improvement purposes but will not be investigated through the formal complaint's procedure.

1. A written formal complaint should include:
    a) Details of what occurred
    b) Details of when and where the occurrence took place
    c) Details of any witnesses
    d) Names of any others who have been treated in a similar way (only with express consent from the individuals in question).
    e) Details of any former complaints made about the incident
    f) An indication as to the desired outcome

*The Club Welfare officer may also take down these details**

4.2 A complaint should ideally reach the Welfare Officer(s) no later than thirty days after the alleged incident that gave rise to it.

4.3 Complaints alleging criminal activity may be referred to the Police.

4.4 Complaints that fall outside the authority of the Club may be referred to British Dodgeball.

4.5 Complaints about the protection of children or vulnerable adults may be referred to British Dodgeball, the Police or Social Services.

4.6 The Club Committee will appoint an Investigating Officer(s) to investigate the allegation. The Investigating Officer(s) will be independent of the matter being investigated and will remain impartial. In the majority of cases this will be the club Welfare Officer(s).

4.7 The Investigating Officer(s) shall have the power and discretion to co-opt, from time to time, other persons with specific skills or experience to help in the carrying out of their duties.

4.8 If the Investigating Officer(s), to whom a complaint has been referred, is not satisfied that it meets the criteria for a complaint he/she/they may refuse to allow it to continue.

4.9 Where a complaint is lodged more than thirty days after an alleged incident giving rise to the complaint, and where the Investigating Officer(s) is satisfied that it is in the interests of the Complainant, Club or other parties to do so, they may allow the complaint to continue. Before arriving at a decision, they may require an explanation of the delay in making the complaint

4.10 The Investigating Officer(s) shall notify all interested persons and/or bodies at once of any decision by them, whether to allow a complaint to continue, setting out the reasons for the decision.

4.11 The parties to the complaint shall be entitled to appeal against any such decision of the Investigating Officer(s) to the Club's Committee provided that the notice of appeal, setting out the grounds for appeal, is lodged with the Welfare Officer(s) within 14 days of the date upon which the Investigating Officer(s) sends the written notification of the decision.

4.12 The Club's Committee shall consider the grounds of appeal. In the case of an appeal against a decision of the Investigating Officer(s) to allow a complaint to continue, they may invite a written submission from the complainant. They may confirm or reverse the decision made by the Investigating Officer(s) and may grant or refuse permission to continue with the complaint. The decision of the Club's Committee shall be final.

4.13 If the Club's Committee allows an appeal against the refusal of the Investigating Officer(s) to allow a complaint to continue on the grounds of the lateness of the complaint, the party against whom the complaint has been made may raise the lateness of the complaint as an issue at the hearing.

4.14 May (at their sole discretion) hold a hearing (whether such a hearing is requested by either party) at which both parties will be entitled to attend and present their case with representation if desired.

5. **Complaints Panels**

5.1 The Club's Management Committee shall appoint a panel of suitably qualified individuals to hear and decide on complaints hearings. The individuals appointed by the Club should not be conflicted and shall remain impartial.

6. **Investigations**

6.1 Where a formal complaint has been received, the Club may appoint one or more individuals to investigate. In the majority of instances this will be the Welfare Officer(s).

6.2 The Investigating Officer(s) may ask that other individuals take part and give evidence and/or that further written documents or other evidence be supplied by any or all of them.

6.3 Any improper contact, approach or try to influence or intimidate any Investigating Officer(s), witness or representative either in person, online, or through an intermediary must be at once reported to the Committee who

may take such action as they consider appropriate. Such conduct may form the subject of a complaint.

6.4 It shall be for the complainant to prove the complaint on a balance of probabilities.

7. **Decisions**

7.1 The Investigating Officer(s) shall report their findings to the Club's Committee, who make their decision on cases before it by majority.

7.2 The Club's Committee may make whatever order it considers, such action may include: -

a) Warn as to future conduct

b) Suspend from membership

c) Remove from membership any person found to have broken the Club's Policies or Codes of Conduct.

d) Exclude a person from club activities and events, either temporarily or permanently.

f) Turn down a non-member's current and/or future membership applications.

7.3 The decision of the Club's Committee shall be final and binding. It will be communicated to the complainant in writing by the Welfare Officer(s) of the Club or another member of the Management Committee within one month of such a decision being made.

8. **Appeals**

8.1 Either party may appeal a decision of the welfare officer to the president (including a decision not to hold a hearing) by writing to the club secretary within 3 months of the welfare officer's decision being notified to that party.

9. **Confidentiality**

9.1 As far as is practical, confidentiality shall be preserved in the investigation of a complaint. Such an approach is in the interest of both the complainant and any other person or persons involved. If, however, another person is named in a complaint, we believe that normally they should know what is said about them and who is making the complaint. The Club may also act if a complaint is found to be malicious.

9.2 The Investigating Officer(s) and Complaints Panel shall be responsible for conducting investigations into formal complaints, conducting hearings, where it has been found there is a case to answer. The Investigating Officer(s) and Complaints Panel may recommend provisional suspension of an individual,

group or member whilst they are investigating or prior to a full hearing of the matter.

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