



SOUTH EAST WOMEN'S LACROSSE LEAGUE

SEWLA All Club Meeting Minutes

Date: 8 Feb 2024

Time: 18:45

Online via Zoom

Attendees:

Jane Lee - Senior League Officer
Emily Chong - Manager
Rob Clark - Chair
Brucie Morris - Officials
Ali Earnshaw Punnett - Schools rep
CeCe Green - Centaurs / SEWLA Treasurer
Bene Thornton- Secretary- Guildford gators
Kelly O'Callaghan - Central London
Debs Owen - Hawks Club Captain
Millie Boulton - Secretary / Hillcroft
Kate Summerfield - Hitchin Club Sec
Olivia Gadd - Reigate Chair
Megan Dixon - Clapham Lacrosse Social Sec
Melanie Priggen - Harpenden Lacrosse
Rhianon Jones - Camden Capybaras WR Vice Chair
John Pullinger - London City Panthers Mixed
Helena Copley - West London - Chair
Noora Virtanen - Spencer - Club captain
Lee Lomas - Caterham Cougars, Chair

1. Welcome & apologies

Apology: New Stars, Cobham

2. Items to be discussed and voted on:

3.1 Raising the age of entry in the Senior SE Leagues to 15

Summary discussion for: junior league now caters for U15 category; potential danger for younger players playing against adults; impacts sustainability of U15 league

Summary discussion against: little physical difference between 14 and 15 year olds; clubs to be trusted to only play girls that can handle the physicality

For further comments, please see appendix A below.

Results: 6 no; 7 yes; 3 abstain. Results to be verified at AGM. Changes of rules will come into effect next season.

Votes recorded:

Hawks - No

Centaurs - no

New Stars - No

Hitchin - No

Caterham Cougars - No

Cambridge - no

Gators - Yes

Hillcroft - Yes

Reigate - Yes

Yes - Central

Clapham - Yes

Blues - Yes

Camden - Yes

2 - abstain

West London - abstain

Abstain - Harpenden

Abstain - Spencer

3.2 Junior players to transfer / play up at senior league

Action: Committee to propose a motion for AGM

3.3 New Women's Rule proposal

The new rules include replacing 11m with 15m fan where 3 seconds and shooting space rule apply to this area.

Voting to either accept the rule book as a whole or decline to adopt.

Schools will meet at Nationals to discuss and decide. Clubs agreed to wait for schools' decision, as many use school grounds. Questions can be raised in the mean time.

Action: Defer to later meeting

4) League fixture weekends - planning for 2024/2025

Reasoning - there were too many free weekends between September and Dec 2023 resulting in too few matches being played and Jan-March being completely backlogged when this can be the worst

time of year for weather and cancellations. SEWLA didn't used to avoid international training weekends as a league because this affects the running of the league, it only benefits a few clubs and clubs need to be able to sustain themselves with a good level of club members. This was only done in the premiership, but in Div 1 and Div 2 we still had a lot of unnecessary free weekends.

Region would like to provide opportunity for players who play nationals / academy to play Guildford - wasn't obvious to clubs that games can be brought forward

Actions and considerations:

- League to make clearer in entry form that games can be played earlier
- Clubs with younger players would like to stay clear of half term / academy
- However senior league should allow for senior events otherwise there'll be no weekends
- To publish schedule as early as possible and have conversation with national coaches
- Div 2: playoff games announced too late to be arranged
- Rules for rearrangement - that there's a final date
- school holidays can vary between different counties/councils

5. Clarifications to Div 2 section playoff

Currently there are two Div2 sections and there are cross over games between them. A few clubs were not aware that matches would be played beyond the end of Feb and so organising these will be a challenge.

Question to league: What specifically is the purpose of the cross over games? Is it to agree promotion? In which case it is not material to the lower scoring teams. There was talk of having three divisions - so potentially the cross over games could be aiming to rank the teams to achieve this set up (which would be better as this season the two sub-divisions were very unbalanced).

For next season, will there be separate Div2 and Div3 based on performance/capability?

Answer: How many divisions we'll have next season will depend on the number of clubs in the league. Cross over games determine top 2 teams for Div 2 by playing top 3 teams in Div 2B vs top 3 in Div2A.

Action: League to make clear and send email and add dates to calendar of when league to finish

5) Development funding approval - deferred to committee meeting

6) AOB - SEWLA League rules suggestion / Q&A

a) Players competing in playoffs need to have played a certain number of games for the club.

Suggested: Players who have played 4 games will be eligible to play at playoff

Considerations raised:

- Clubs have large number of players but many have other engagements
- 40% too high

- 4 games suggested is reasonable
- how would teams know that their opposition selection has players who have x number of games?
- Not applied for this season

Comments on rules:

- Tighter regulations of who's officiating
 - clubs to submit names of umpires before the game
- Number of Protected prem players
 - 8 is already a high number, clubs with national players should not be penalised
 - A club might be only playing in div 1
 - Teams sometimes play 2nd team players in the 1st team

Appendix A

Further comments regarding raising minimum senior league age to 15:

1. Currently, transition to the senior League is possible at age 14+. This is impacting the sustainability of the U15 age-group of the Junior Leagues, since many young players aspire to transfer at 14 to the senior Clubs and senior matches.
2. There is little open discussion/preparation of appropriate mental support and physical development of junior players in and for senior matches. Without a solid developmental framework until U15+, the young player may be overwhelmed both physically and mentally by Ladies League matches.
3. Some Junior Clubs are having difficulty fielding U15 League teams. The Junior League is not perhaps as valued as in the past, with young players excited to exit to the senior Clubs at 14. The perception is that this is where 'they'll get on' and it becomes 'fashionable' to leave the junior club framework because of this. This impacts development, and learning the game at safe pace.
4. There's thus a valid question whether Clubs who play in the Ladies Leagues could be investing in developing U15 players *within* the Junior Leagues – with entry to the Ladies Leagues being post U15? To note, England Lacrosse generally doesn't field U15 players in matches at U19, U20, U21 or above presumably for the above reasons. Perhaps their view should be sought? Similarly, schools don't as a rule use U15s in more senior teams
5. Consideration could be given to keeping junior players at junior level till they are 15 by DOB, and perhaps till they have completed their U15 season within the Junior Leagues? Junior and Senior Clubs to liaise.
6. A 'development ticket' could be developed for girls transitioning from U15 to Ladies Lacrosse, noting mental, physical and skills abilities (England, for example, provide similar 'milestones met' after their camps)
7. It would be good news to keep both Junior AND Senior Clubs and teams running in appropriate league structures, with good and thoughtful exchange between the Junior and Senior Clubs.

