



Manchester Area Basketball League League Rules of Play



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The League will use the current FIBA Rules of Play unless stated otherwise in the MABL League Rules of Play

1. Construction of the League

1.1. League Structure

The MABL Committee shall determine the structure of the League based upon entries; there will be no right of appeal to this structure.

The League shall be divided into divisions that are equal, or as near to equal as possible, in the number of teams. Each division shall have a Divisional Officer to manage the day to day running of each division.

Each team shall play every other team both home and away, unless in exceptional circumstances as approved by the League Divisional secretary or Committee.

1.2. Points awarded per game

Two points will be awarded for a win and one point for a loss and the points for a forfeit (or a game not played during a season) will vary between 2 and -2 as defined by the Divisional Officer.

1.3. Divisional winners & final positionings

The team with the largest number of points on completion of the competition will be determined the Division winners.

If two or more teams are tied then the determining factors will be the least number of games forfeited followed by the current FIBA Rules of Play.

1.4. Trophies awarded at the end of each season

These trophies remain the property of the League. Trophies must be returned on request by the League and any damage repair or replacement costs will be met by the team with custody of the trophy.

1.5. Promotion and Relegation

Teams finishing first in the division shall be promoted. The team finishing second and the team who wins the playoff final will be considered for promotion. The team finishing bottom in each division will be relegated (unless this is the lowest division). The team finishing second from bottom shall be considered for relegation.*

** This rule will apply in conjunction with section 1.1. and is dependant on how many teams register for the season*



2. Cup & Playoff Competition

2.1. Play-off Competition

The Cup and Play-off Secretary will organise a play-off competition, which will be held at the end of each season. The number of teams eligible to enter the play-offs will be determined by the total number of teams entered in each division. The Cup and Play-off Secretary will determine the date and venue for the finals weekend.

2.2. Cup Competition

The Cup and Play-off Secretary will organise at least one Cup competition for all men's teams across all men's divisions and also at least one cup competition for all women's teams across all women's divisions, which will last over the majority of the season. The Cup and Play-off Secretary will determine / confirm the teams, dates and venues for all games in this competition.

3. League Registration's and Eligibility

3.1. Team Registration

All Teams must be registered with the national body (which is currently Basketball England) at least 7 days **before they play their first game of the season**. Failure to do so may result in a team being unable to play any fixtures.

3.2. Player Registration

All players must be registered with the national body (which is currently Basketball England) Registrar **before they play their first game of the season**. Failure to do so may result in a player being unable to play any future fixtures and the game being forfeit.

Players who join a club after this date must be registered with the national body and/or transferred to an MABL team prior to participating in any league game.

3.3. Coach Registration

All Coaches must be registered with the national body (which is currently Basketball England) **before they coach their first game of the season**. Failure to do so may result in the Coach being unable to manage any future games.

3.4. Player & Coach Eligibility

Only players over 16 years of age can play in the League.

Any players under the age of 18 years of age must have a disclaimer / agreement form signed by their parents and the respective club / team. Failure to do so may invalidate any Basketball England insurance policies, which may be in place and the player will not be insured to play.



All players and coaches must be able to show proof of a current player licence issued to them by the governing body (currently Basketball England) for each game. The licence numbers shall be entered onto the score sheet and only players with a valid licence number will be eligible to play and / or coach

A player is restricted to play for the club / team they have informed the League they are playing for and no other in the MABL until the player has been transferred to the new team on the governing bodies membership portal.

A player may only play for one team in any club each week.

3.5. Forms and Fees

All club membership application form for the next season must be received before the season starts and/or when requested by the MABL committee / membership secretary or by 31st July in the same year the season starts (whichever is the sooner)

Any associated fees must be sent to the League Treasurer who will accept BACS, CHAPS and other forms of electronic payment.

3.6. National League Players

There is no limit on registration of National League players for each team / club.

3.7. Non-European Players who have held a Foreign National League Licence

All non-European players who have held a foreign national players licence are not eligible for League registration without the express permission of the League.

3.8. Player Eligibility for the Cup Competition

- 3.8.1. Only players who have entered court will be considered to have played and will be counted for cup and playoff eligibility
- 3.8.2. Players are ineligible to play for any other team in the Cup if they have played in the cup for one team in the same season already. These players are not allowed to be 'loaned' back just for cup games
- 3.8.3. Should any match be postponed for any reason, any players deemed ineligible, will remain ineligible for the re-arranged fixture.



3.9. Player Eligibility for the Playoffs

- 3.9.1. Players are ineligible to play for any other team in the Play-offs, if they have already played in the play-offs for another team.
- 3.9.2. Prior to the quarter final qualifying game each season, it is the responsibility of a club/team to submit a 'player register' to the divisional secretary, which identifies eligible players (by surname, initial and their BE license number) participating in the playoff games. Submitting ineligible players in the 'player register' may result in the club/team being disqualified from participating in the play off finals.
- 3.9.3. Teams who do not have a qualifying quarter final game and go straight through the playoff final semi-finals must submit a 'player register' and conform to section 3.9.2
- 3.9.4. All eligible participants must be registered with Basketball England and associated with the club/team they are participating for by 31st January (of the year the playoff competition is held).¹

3.10. Player and Coach Transfers

Players and coaches wishing to transfer from one club to another must follow the player or coach transfer process as set out by Basketball England in their membership portal. Players and coaches must await formal approval before participating in any game. Any games, which are participated, by an unapproved player or coach may be forfeited.

4. Match Organisation

4.1. Scheduling the game

4.1.1. Confirming fixture with Visiting Team

At least 7 days before each match the home team must contact the visiting team to confirm the tip off time, venue, and team colours. If contact cannot be made 5 days prior to the game the Divisional Officer must be informed, otherwise sanctions may be applied at the discretion of the Divisional Officer.

4.1.2. Confirming fixtures with Referee's

The home team must contact the designated officials 7 days before the game and confirm tip off time and venue. If confirmation is not received from the appointed referees at least 5 days before the scheduled fixture, then the referees/officials Secretary must be informed, otherwise sanctions may be imposed by the Divisional Officer. If the result of no communication or confirmation from an appointed referee leads to a referee incurring costs for travel for a game that does not go ahead the home club will be responsible for those

¹ Example: to be eligible to play in the 2025-26 end of season play off competition a player must be registered with the club by 31st January 2026



costs. If the result of no communication or confirmation from an appointed referee leads to only one referee turning up to the game and the game not played the club/team responsible for confirming with the referee may forfeit the game and be liable for referee fees.

4.1.3. Action to be taken if fixture is not confirmed by the home team

Any away team not receiving confirmation 5 days before the game should attempt to contact the home team and inform the Divisional Officer. Otherwise sanctions may be applied at the discretion of the Divisional Officer concerned.

4.2. Team & player uniforms

4.2.1. Match uniform

The home team must have 2 different colour kits available and in the event of a clash the home team shall change otherwise risk forfeiture of the game.

4.2.2. Undergarments

MABL rules are consistent with FIBA subject to the following conditions;

Compression or religious undergarments and headgear can be worn by players if the clothing tightly 'hugs' the body and is not loose enough to cause safety issues to the player or other participants in the game – this will be determined by the referees / officials.

4.3. Tip off times

Tip off times shall be between **19:30** and **20:30** unless otherwise agreed by the League. A minimum of 10 minutes warm up time will be granted to both teams, which will commence when both teams have 5 players on the court. (Unless one team has arrived late for the fixture)

4.4. Court time

A minimum of 2 hours court time must be available for each game.

4.5. Game Courts

All games must be played on a court approved by the League. Teams wishing to change venues must give the Divisional Officer and website Officer appropriate notice before changing. Approval must be received from the Divisional Officer before changing court. Each Court must have sufficient clearance around it to prevent players falling or running in to walls. There must be no gym equipment hanging down or attached to any walls which will impact of the game, any teams can raise concerns via the Divisional officer.



4.6. Game Score sheet

The home team shall provide a score pad and keep a cumulative visual record of the scores throughout the game in such size that both teams and officials can see it at all times.

4.7. Game Clock

The home team shall provide a clock visible to both teams at all times which displays the scores and time. This must be of a size suitable to be seen by both teams when on court.

4.8. Completion of Fixtures

All fixtures must be completed by the date set by the League. Any disputes will be resolved by the Divisional Officer. No team can appeal the divisional officer's decision.

4.9. Postponements or Alterations to Fixtures

Any club/team playing out of a school's sports hall must obtain the school exam calendar (and any other dates the booked sports hall will be unavailable) by the end of September (of the year the season starts) and advise the Divisional Officer of any fixtures which cannot be completed due to the school or education centre sports hall being unavailable.

Where possible, the MABL will look to move these fixtures before the end of October. However, where these games cannot to be re-fixtured, then the Divisional Officer will decide the outcome. This may range from -2 to +2 points in the league table for either team.

If a club/team inform the Divisional Officer after the end of September about court unavailability due to exams or if they were unaware of exams taking place and a game cannot be played, it is likely the game will not be re-fixtured and the home team will forfeit the game receiving 0 league points. The Divisional Officer will decide the outcome and no team can appeal the divisional officer's decision.

Postponements and fixture alterations will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Postponements must be requested as soon as practicable before the scheduled date of the fixture and must have exceptional circumstances. This request must be made to the Divisional Officer at least 14 days prior to the fixture and their decision will have no appeal.

The Divisional Officer will determine if a postponed game shall be replayed or not and will advise of the date on which it should be replayed.

Any game postponed without the prior agreement of the Divisional Officer will be considered as unauthorised and subject to forfeit, where either one or both teams will receive no points in the league table.



5. Post Match Organisation

5.1. Score sheets

The winning team is responsible for sending a copy of the score sheet by email. All score sheets must be submitted to the Divisional Officer and Cup & Play-off Secretary (as well as the website coordinator/results coordinator within 7 days of the fixture. Submission is to be by e-mail in the form of a PDF or jpeg. Failure to do so may result in the loss of any winning points and no score being added to the league table.

The losing team must retain their copy in case the winner's copy becomes lost.

5.2. Completion of Referee evaluation Form

Clubs will be selected by the committee to complete a referees evaluation form at random throughout the season or where persistent issues are reported. The completion of the evaluation form is mandatory for the selected game. The Committee may impose sanctions on clubs failing to complete the evaluation form.

6. Match Officials

6.1. Floor Officials

The League shall set the policy for the appointment of officials. Neutral officials will be appointed to all fixtures by the League. Where it is deemed necessary, extra officials and/or observers may be appointed to fixtures. The League will pay the fees and expenses of the extra officials/observers in such a situation.

6.2. Table Officials

All clubs must appoint competent and qualified table officials who should be licensed by the national body (which is currently Basketball England). Where a qualified official is not available a competent table official must be appointed. When it is possible the competent table officials should be encouraged to attend a course at their earliest opportunity.

The MABL will support officials in gaining qualifications. These requests are to be made to the committee via the Divisional Officer.



Payment of Match Officials

- 6.2.1. All match officials must be paid their fees and expenses, (current at the time), before the commencement of the game on production of an official MABL referees expenses form.
- 6.2.2. If the game is a cup or playoff game where up to 3 floor officials are appointed, both clubs will each pay 50% of the total costs of the fees and expenses of the table officials, referee and the 1st umpire. The League will pay the fee and expenses of the 2nd umpire (if required)

7. Forfeits

7.1. Forfeit Reasons

- 7.1.1. Any game postponed shall be considered a forfeit unless the Divisional Officer deems the circumstances exceptional.

7.1.1.1. Other circumstances that will constitute a forfeit include:-

- Playing and ineligible player,
- A team walks off the court,
- Players participating under a false name,
- Inappropriate behaviour on court (deemed so by the divisional officer or MABL committee)
- When a team has less than 2 players remaining on court

7.2. Procedure to claim a Forfeit game

Any team involved in a game that is forfeited may claim the game if they believe they were not responsible for the forfeit. The team claiming the forfeit must send in a score sheet identifying the players who would have participated, to the Divisional Officer and cup and play off Secretary. Any claim must be made in writing or by e-mail within 7 days of the date of the forfeited fixture. Failure to do so may mean the additional winning league point is not awarded.

7.3. Consequences of Forfeiting a Game

- 7.3.1. Any home team that forfeits by non-attendance shall pay the legitimate expenses incurred by the opposing team. These shall be travel expenses at the rate of 35p per mile for a maximum of 3 vehicles from their home court of the travelling team to the court scheduled for the fixture and the cost of two referee fees.
For away teams forfeiting by none attendance they are to pay the cost of two referees and two table officials.



Claims must be made in writing to the Divisional Officer within 7 days of the forfeit. The Divisional Officer shall decide upon the validity of the claim and progress it accordingly.

The team shall be considered for removal from the League if the money is not paid 21 days after receiving the outcome from the Divisional Officer.

- 7.3.2. The score of a forfeited game will be considered to be 20-0 and 1 or 2 points will be considered for the team who were not responsible for the forfeit, but the responsible team will receive between 0 to -2 points for the forfeit
- 7.3.3. Any team that forfeits 3 games or more in one season shall be considered for disqualification from the League. The Committee shall determine this.
- 7.3.4. Should any team forfeit 2 or more games during a season they may not be eligible to participate in the playoff competition at the end of that season and may be excluded from promotion.

7.4. Appeals against Forfeits

Any appeal against a forfeit must be made to the Divisional Officer within 7 days of the forfeit. In the event of an appeal this will be carried out by a subcommittee made up of 3 other Committee members not involved in the original decision. The decision of this subcommittee will be final.

8. Player Discipline

8.1. The Role of the Disciplinary Officer

All disciplinary matters and referee disciplinary reports are to be sent to the Disciplinary Officer. The disciplinary Officer will then have the power to impose sanctions consistent with the offence.

Where appropriate the Disciplinary Officer may appoint a sub-committee to assist in disciplinary matters. No member of the Committee may have any connection with the team / club or individual involved in the incident.



8.2. Discipline Processes

In all instances reports by officials are to be sent to the Disciplinary Officer within 72 hours of the incident. A disciplinary report will be provided to the club along with any disciplinary measures awarded.

8.3. Disqualification of a Player or Coach

- An immediate disqualification is where an offence is committed and the player is immediately ejected from the sports hall
- A game disqualification is where a player or coach has received two unsportsmanlike fouls, two technical fouls (or one of each)

8.3.1. Immediate disqualifications will carry an automatic one-match ban, which cannot be appealed, and the player or coach shall go to and remain in, his/her team's dressing room for the duration of the game or, if he/she so wishes, shall leave the building as noted in FIBA rules section 38-8 (updated February 2018). The Divisional Officer will notify the team of the fixture in which this ban be served. Any player or coach receiving two technical fouls or two unsportsmanlike fouls (or one of each) or a coach receiving three bench technical fouls, shall go to and remain in his/her team's dressing room for the duration of the game or, if he/she so wishes, shall leave the building as noted in FIBA rules section 38-8 (updated February 2018).

8.3.2. Any additional ban awarded by the Disciplinary Officer may be appealed to the Divisional Officer. This must be done within 7 days of notification of the ban.

8.3.3. Where fines are levied these must be paid within 14 days of notice being received by the club Secretary. Failure to comply will result in a 50% increase in the fine per 14 days until payment is received. A player will be considered banned if the fine is not paid after 14 days until payment is received. If the fine is not paid after 14 days the club may be considered for suspension from playing in the League.

8.4. Discipline Appeals Procedure

Any team wishing to appeal a decision by the disciplinary Officer will have to pay a levy of £25 along with the appeal letter / email. The Disciplinary Secretary will then appoint a second sub-committee who will re-consider the matter. If the appeal is successful the £25 will be refunded, if the appeal is unsuccessful the fee shall be forfeited.

The appeals panel will inform the outcome of their decision within 21 days and this decision is final and no other appeal can be made.



9. General

9.1. Issues and events not covered in the League Rules of Play

Where possible all events and issues will adhere to the MABL League rules and FIBA rules, however, where specific and extraordinary issues arise the Committee have the right to determine the outcome of the extraordinary issue outside these rules.

This does not affect the right of the members requesting an EGM