

## **Response competitions review**

The document is based on the find from the Competitions review conducted by the CSC of England Korfball in 2023. In total 16/84 clubs responded (representing 19% of clubs).

### **Themes from review**

1. The CSC need to publicise how difficult it is currently to fit everything in. It is exceptionally difficult for the EKL Coordinator to fit in the fixtures and also the RSC to appoint referees of a suitable standard as currently referee numbers are down.
2. The overall majority response to whether the EKL Premier Division provides competition for top players is yes. However, following from 1., it is challenging to fit in all the fixtures.
3. EK do not decide how many places we get in European Competitions and dates it is held, that is the responsibility of IKF. EK gave feedback to IKF which was echoed by other countries, but the changes IKF made did not make it better for EK and causes problems with scheduling fixtures.
4. It is felt that the EKL Promo Divisions are an adequate stepping stone between Regional Leagues and the EKL Premier Division. However, the number of teams each Regional League is allocated should be equitable.
5. The Regional Leagues do not currently provide an equitable mechanism for promotion towards the National League. The Rules of the Regional Leagues should be more consistent. Guidelines should be given. Promotions should take some account the number of eligible first teams in the Regional League. Maybe, the Regional League should be restricted in number. Currently, the maximum is 10.
6. Most comments about national competition amendments are already covered in the EKL rules or not the responsibility of EKL.
7. Hall availability and size are an issue. Fixtures should be released earlier to help get suitable hall bookings.
8. Lack of volunteers and Common Minimum Standards putting a strain on volunteers and finances.

### **Proposed possible changes in the period 2025 to 2028**

For season 2024-25 we are required to maintain the status quo as arrangements for promotion and relegation have to be announced before the season starts. Therefore, any possible changes will start in the season 2025-26.

### **EKL**

Following the competitions review and findings the CSC discussed 2 options for the EKL Premier Division:

- 1) Maintain the current situation with 10 teams
  - a. Feedback from the review suggested the Premier Division can be two tiered and not all fixtures are competitive.
    - i. Is there a gulf between teams in the league?
  - b. Organising fixtures for a 10 team division has become more difficult with the need for rest weekends, European Club Competitions, International Tournaments, etc.
    - i. Would teams be prepared to start the season earlier?

- c. Having 10 teams still allows for wider spread of teams allowing the standard to be raised throughout country.
- 2) Reduce the Number of teams in the Premier Division to 9 teams
- a. Relegate one team from the Premier Division to the EKL Promo/Second Division
  - b. Maintains a competitive Premier Division
  - c. Allows for more rest days naturally

The CSC discussed 4 options for the EKL Promo/Second Division

- 1) Maintain the current situation with 4/5 teams in 2 Promo zones and playoff finals.
- a. No more travel than currently.
  - b. Organising fixtures for teams playing in Promo Division and Regional League has become more difficult.
  - c. Difficulty in agreeing on how many places each of the current 5 Regions and prospective 6 Regions are allocated.
- 2) Create a Second Division with 9 teams
- a. The 2 zones of the EKL Promo Division would form the Second Division and the teams wouldn't play in the regional competition.
    - i. the second division helps to grow the reach of korfbal
      - 1. There is a danger that the travel demands would be greater in the Second Division
      - 2. There is more pressure on the EKL Coordinator
      - 3. There is more pressure on the EKL RSC to organise referees when referees are currently down in numbers
      - 4. Cost implications
      - 5. Impact in numbers/standard of teams in some regional leagues
- 3) Create a one Promo Division system with 6 teams in the Promo.
- a. As well as playing in the Promo Division these teams still compete in their regions. One from each of the regions is represented within the Promo Division.
  - b. Pressure and cost implications on referees.
- 4) Create two Promo Divisions with 4 teams in each zone and Playoff Finals
- a. As well as playing in the Promo Divisions, these teams will compete in their regions. One team from each of the 6 proposed regions is represented, plus the team relegated from the Premier Division plus one other in the zone with only 3 teams.
  - b. No more travel than currently.
  - c. Less pressure on referees.
  - d. Less pressure on EKL Coordinator.
  - e. Maintains standard/numbers in regional leagues.
  - f. Each Regional League is treated equitably.

## **Regional leagues**

Based on the feedback from the competitions review the CSC feel it is appropriate to propose again the creation of a new Southern Regional League. It is therefore proposed that the Oxfordshire area is taken out of the WRL to form a new Approved Regional League with South Midlands Korfbal Association. It has also already been discussed that the Oxfordshire Area be split into two separate

areas. The clubs in the north of the area take on the title Oxfordshire Korfball Association and the clubs in the south of the area creating a southern counties korfball association. This split would happen in the season 2025- 2026 to coincide with the setup of the Southern Regional League.

The Approved Regional Leagues that will be in existence following the changes, which will take place at the end of the 2024-2025 season, would be as follows:

- LRL (London KA),
- SERL (Kent KA, Cambridgeshire KA, Norfolk KA),
- SRL (Southern RL with Oxfordshire KA, Southern Counties KA and South Midlands KA),
- WRL (South West KA and the Welsh Korfball Association),
- MRL (East Midlands KA and West Midlands KA),
- NRL (North West KA, Yorkshire KA and North East KA).

One consequence of this will also mean that teams are expected to have shorter distances to travel.

### **Actions plan moving forward**

The CSC are sharing the Response to the competitions review with the membership. The CSC are inviting clubs to comment on the 2 proposed options for the Premier Division and 4 proposed options for the Promo/Second Division:

#### **EKL Premier Division**

- 1) Maintain the current situation with 10 teams
- 2) Reduce the Premier Division to 9 teams

#### **EKL Second/Promo Division**

- 1) Maintain the current situation with 4/5 teams in Promo Division Zones and playoff finals, who also play in their Regional League
- 2) Create a Second Division with 9 teams.
- 3) Create one Promo division with 6 teams, who also play in their Regional League
- 4) Create 2 Promo Divisions in zones with 4 teams in each Promo Division Zone and playoff finals, who also play in their Regional League. One team from each of the 6 proposed regions is represented, plus the team relegated from the Premier Division plus one other in the zone with only 3 teams.

Additionally, the CSC will seek clarification as to:

- a. Would teams be prepared to start the season earlier?

**Please respond with your comments to [office@englandkorfball.co.uk](mailto:office@englandkorfball.co.uk) by 13/04/24.**