

# Competitions Review Update – September 2024



The document is based on the findings from the Competitions review conducted by the CSC of England Korfball in 2023-24. The initial aims for the review were to engage membership and evaluate whether the current competition structure is effective at supporting the needs of the membership.

## Key themes from review part 1

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 more equitable.

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 of the number of first teams in the Regional League. Maybe the Regional League should be restricted in number. Currently, the maximum is 10.

## Key themes from review part 2

Feedback from the membership indicated a preference to maintain the EKL Premier Division to a 10-team division. This was very clear from the review and will be maintained.

The membership had an appetite to start the season in September to allow for international breaks and rest weekends. The CSC has begun to implement this in the 24-25 season.

To address the concerns from the membership about the EKL Promo Divisions and Regional Leagues the CSC made four proposals:

- 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 a maximum of 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, who also play in their Regional League, followed by playoff finals. 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.

Feedback indicated the membership was in two camps:

- Create a National Second Division with a maximum of 9 teams.
- Create 2 Promo Divisions in zones with 4 teams in each Promo Division Zone and playoff finals, who also play in their Regional League.

The CSC felt that due to the split there was need to further consult the membership.

## Key themes from review part 3

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 24, the CSC met with 12 clubs to discuss the options to support competition within the EKL Promo Divisions. The two options:

- Create a National Second Division with a maximum of 9 teams.
- Create 2 Promo Divisions in zones with 4 teams in each Promo Division Zone and playoff finals, who also play in their Regional League.

We discussed. The clubs again were split in terms of the option.

## Action plan moving forward

The aim of the CSC is to grow Korfball and support the membership to engage in appropriate competition. Therefore following the 3 rounds of consultation, the CSC is considering creating a National Second Division with up to 9 teams, but not until the start of the 26-27 season. The decision on the National Second Division has been delayed because further reviews are needed to be conducted to ascertain the feasibility of the National Second Division. The creation of a National Second Division will put increased pressure on an already stretched RSC and refereeing pool. Additionally, it will alter the promotion from and competition within the regional leagues.

Therefore further work/consideration is required in the following areas:

- 1) Review of refereeing capacity.
- 2) Consult the regional leagues and areas.

## Eligibility for the EKL Promo Divisions 25-26

In the meantime, the makeup of the EKL Promo Divisions in 2025-26 will be as set out in proposal 4. This will take account of the change in Regional League structure as proposed during the previous competitions review that the Oxfordshire KA will be taken out of the WRL to form a new Approved Regional League. South Midlands KA will also participate in the new Southern Regional League, rather than SERL.

In addition, Oxfordshire KA will be split into 2 Area Associations, Southern Counties KA and Oxfordshire KA.

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

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

In order to take account of the forthcoming changes in Regional/Area League structure, the Promo Divisions in 2025-26 will be made up of the top team from each Regional League as follows:-

**South & East Zone Promo Division:** South East Regional League (SERL), London Regional League (LRL) and top Oxfordshire team in Western Regional League (WRL)

**North and West Zone Promo Division:** top SWKA/Wales KA team in Western Regional League (WRL), Northern Regional League (NRL) and Midlands Regional League (MRL).

Positions will be decided according to the National League Rule 10, but only based on the matches between the teams eligible for promotion, i.e. 1st teams of a club.

If the highest eligible team in a Regional League has been promoted to the Premier Division, the second highest eligible team in that Regional League may be eligible to play in the relevant Promo Division.

The team relegated from the Premier Division will also take part in their relevant Promo Division.

If a Promo Division only has 3 teams eligible, the 4th team in that Promo Division shall be the 2nd highest team in the participating Regional League which has the most first teams participating in it.

Additionally, it is recommended that Regional Leagues be restricted to 9 teams in one division.