

The enquiry -

*I thought I would drop you a line after talking to a few team members at my own club and at other clubs who we have been playing this season.*

*We are a little confused, I think, about how the restructuring of the divisions in the PPA Thursday league has taken place and wondered if you give us an outline of how teams were positioned in their new divisions; particularly, was promotion and relegation taken into account before/after/not at all when it came to constructing the new divisions?*

*The PPA league succeeds in providing a competitive and enjoyable league, but I've come across a number of players who seem, like me, to have no understanding of how the new structures have come into being and how teams have been selected for each of the new divisions.*

*Those players that I've talked to have expressed some frustration that it's not always clear what they're playing for in terms of promotion and relegation. We aim for the top 2 positions for promotion but there seems to be no guarantee that this will happen. We aim to avoid relegation, but there too seems to be no guarantee that this will not happen either and sometimes teams move up or down a couple of divisions seemingly at random.*

*Can you clarify how the new structure has been decided?*

*Best regards*

(For all those concerned, the reply)

First of all, let me quote from the Constitution, the Committee's responsibility in compiling the leagues for each Season.

#### **ENTRY TO LEAGUES/REGISTRATION**

01. The P.P.A. Leagues are open to all teams in the Peterborough area.

02. Any new venue must have their registration ratified by the appropriate General Meeting (GM).

**03. The Committee will attempt to place new teams in a Division reflecting on their ability.**

11. No team will be allowed to field more than 2 players who have dropped more than 2 Divisions (i.e. Div 1 to Div 4) within 2 seasons of playing in the higher Division. If however the players concerned have records in the higher Division that they feel are well below average they will be able to apply to the Committee for special dispensation. These teams have no limit on players who they sign on, only on the amount of higher Division players playing in any one match. CAPTAINS TO CHECK BEFORE THEY SIGN ON PLAYERS

**12. 10. No team at any venue will be allowed to sign more than 3 players from a team that dropped out of the league the previous season (CAPTAINS TO CHECK BEFORE THEY SIGN ON) without prior permission from the Committee**

## PROMOTION/DEMOTION

01. The top 2 teams in each division will be promoted. The bottom 2 teams in each division will be relegated, **subject to any league re-organisation that may occur.**

## COMMITTEE

06. The Committee shall base all its decisions on the Constitution in force at the time. If not covered in the Constitution, the Committee has the right to make any decision that, in their opinion, is necessary or beneficial to the P.P.A. Any changes made throughout the season will be presented at the following AGM.

During the course of Winter 2009-2010 it was agreed that we would endeavour to get all Leagues and Divisions in Summer 2010 starting and finishing on the same dates so that we could shorten the Summer Season and give more flexibility in Competitions and a much needed increase in the time from the close of Summer Season to the start of Winter 2010 - 2011.

Unlike the players the Committee Members have a lot of work to do especially from the end of one Season to the Start of the next and Registration of Teams and Fixtures can be complicated and time consuming depending on number of teams, no of Leagues, Divisions and Venues. Fixtures for teams with more than 1 team have to be calculated depending on the number of teams and tables available so that home and away fixtures do not clash. i.e 4 teams, 2 tables, every week 2 must be away and 2 at home. These also have to fit in with all the other teams in the same division with the same set up.

I can't predict who will get promotion or demotion but I know in a Division with 8 teams and 5 of them have other teams from the same venue playing on Thursdays, e.g., the fixture numbers have to be paired home and away. 1 & 8, 2 & 7, 4 & 5 and 3 & 6.

### **Not as easy as you might think.**

IF we had in the Thursday PPA Rules the same 64 Teams in 8 Divisions every Season then 2 up and 2 down would be SIMPLE.

As you probably know many pubs have closed, closed and re-opened under new management and teams have moved from 1 venue to another during or after the Season.

I have no control over which team a player or players decide to play for but I can use the above rules to ensure that the competition in each league is as fair as possible.

I also have no control of how many teams drop out from Season to Season e.g. some teams play only Summer or Winter and not always both and if any of those teams dropping out came 1st or 2nd top or bottom in any league then obviously the 2nd and 3rd equivalent would be considered for promotion or demotion.

Winter 2009-2010 started with 109 Teams after which 3 Teams withdrew.

Winter 2009-2010 started with 773 Players and finished with 1051 players. An increase of 278.

The teams are assessed for the New Seasons respective leagues based on the "team players" registered pre-season NOT the "team name" and final positions previous Season AND the NEW Number of Divisions.

Winter 2009-2010

Tuesday Ladies, 1 Division 9 Teams (9)

Wed World Rules 2 Divisions, 2 x 8. (16)

Thursday World Rules 2 Divisions, 1 x 9 + 1 x 10 (19)

Thursday PPA Rules, 7 Divisions 5 x 9 + 2 x 10 (65)

Total = 109 Teams

Based on the Registration received the Committee agreed as follows ;-

Summer 2009

Tuesday Ladies, 1 Division 8 Teams (8)

Wed World Rules 2 Divisions, 1 x 7 + 1 x 6 (13)

Thursday World Rules 3 Divisions, 3 x 7 (21)

Thursday PPA Rules, 8 Divisions 5 x 8 + 3 x 7 (61)

Total = 103 Teams

This meant every League and Divisions fixture List would be based on 8 per week meaning All Leagues and Divisions would Start and Finish on the same dates.

Obviously when you consider in Thursday PPA Rules we were going from 9 per Division to 8 in Div's 1 to 5 then it isn't rocket science to see that you cannot promote 2 and demote 2 and finish with 7.

The top 2 teams in Division 1 are never promoted anywhere, although alternatives have been proposed, so to reward wherever possible teams that won their Divisions I have promoted them. Teams have also dropped ... also affected the New set up.

**03. The Committee will attempt to place new teams in a Division reflecting on their ability.**

New teams would be placed in a New bottom Division unless the team players are on record and have previous "form", as I said it is not the "team name" that counts but the players that make up that team.

I could easily have counted 1 to 8 and drawn a line to make the first 5 Divisions and 1 to 7 for the remainder but I didn't, I dropped some teams to the bottom division 8 because on performance and ability they deserve to be placed in a league where they can enjoy pool and compete and not get despondent every week. They perhaps win 1 game in 14, never complain and are just as important to the PPA as the Top teams.

Some teams have a kind of "pride" which is above their ability but I have to go on Results not "ego".

I also look at team performances in KO Cup, now that we have Gold and Silver, as well as Individual Competitions.

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With 1 going up and 2,3,4 teams dropping down to leave 7 teams per Division, when you get to Div 4, 5 you have to form New 4, 5, 6, We can't have a 5a and a 5b.

If players want to move venue to "play with their mates " I can't interfere, it's every players right to sign wherever they socialise or prefer but I can move teams around if I think they are forming a team that is playing in a division below their ability as described in the Constitution.

I look up old players ranking records, team records from the 4 years I have personally and consult with my Committee colleagues to see if I have missed anything.

I don't just sit and use a pin to pick the leagues. If a team performed exceptionally well last Season because of new players or unknown ability (new team with no past form) e.g First and second place teams in Div 7, 120 and 110 pts respectively compared to the bottom 4 , 60, 59, 46 and 40 respectively, the next Season they will be placed in a Division of "fairness".

I believe your team has been placed in a Division which will be "fair" competitively, regardless of the Division Number 5 or 6.

The end of the Summer Season League table should reflect how right or wrong I have got it.

Last Season over 16 games the pt difference between top 3 in each league was very small.

As I said I can't predict after the start what "players" and "player ability" will be added to a team but I can control as per PPA Constitution and Trophy Hunters are discouraged.

Every team will eventually be promoted to its own level of incompetence and eventually like all sports divisions, excepting New Entries will consist of a top 3, 1 or 2 in the middle and a bottom 3.

I hope I have answered all your questions and if not please let me know any alternative things you can recommend to improve next season.

We have an AGM at the end of every Season to which every PPA Captain and Member is invited as well as Committee Meetings every month. There is a lot of voluntary work and time goes into the running of the PPA and you are most welcome to join us on the Committee if you believe you have the time and ability to help us make improvements.

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Each and every Captain gets a package with a booklet which contains the Current Constitution, Playing Rules, Committee Members Contact Numbers and various other useful bits of information BUT it's times like these that makes me wonder how many of the "team players" actually ever see it, let alone get to read it or be told what's actually in it.

Cheers

Dave Wilkie

Vice Chairman & Results Secretary