**Essex Metropolitan Netball Association**

**More Umpires-please help us to help you**

For information-text of email sent to Club Secretaries on 6 November 2021

Dear All,

I am pleased to advise that an updated version of the Umpires list is now available, which includes some new information following successful assessments. Please let me know if you would like a copy.

The Executive Committee is aware that some clubs have been experiencing difficulties sourcing umpires for their games in the Essex Met League and in the Junior League, particularly for the first fixture on 25 September. We have discussed this at length and would like to share our proposals with you. We all agree that we need more umpires and would like to ask for your help to achieve this.

**Please help us by:-**

* Encouraging your members to attend courses and follow the officiating pathway towards qualification
* Using the new Facebook thread to check umpire availability/request umpire support
* Asking your umpires why they don’t umpire: can we do anything to make umpiring more attractive? Please let us know
* Encouraging your qualified umpires to umpire in Essex Met (see proposal regarding suspending the reassessment programme)
* Encouraging your umpires to consider completing the data consent form, so that their contact details can be included on the Umpires list

**Umpire Numbers**

A shortage of umpires is not specific to Essex Met-as no assessments could take place between 16 March 2020 and 1 September 2021, there has been no “pipeline” of new umpires/umpires progressing to a higher award. Some umpires have also chosen to reduce their umpiring commitments, or to step back from umpiring, due to other commitments/interests.

Essex Met (including clubs based outside Essex Met which play in our Leagues) has enough qualified umpires to cover Essex Met and Junior Leagues games without difficulty. However, a significant number of qualified umpires choose not to umpire/be available to umpire or have chosen not to take part in our Reassessment programme and have therefore become ineligible to umpire. There are also a number of umpires who are potentially available to umpire but have chosen not to sign the data consent form and so I can’t include their details on the Umpires list. This is a personal choice and must be respected.

**Proposals**

Our proposals are:-

1. Pipeline/new umpires/umpires progressing to a higher award. We need your support to encourage your members to attend courses and work towards qualification. I contact all learners who have attended the virtual sessions regarding practical umpiring opportunities, as well as the pre-Covid learners and your support in encouraging them to respond to me would be welcomed. If a learner doesn’t wish to progress, that’s their decision, but it helps me to know if that’s the position.
2. Reassessment programme-this has already been suspended until 2022/2023 and we now propose to suspend it until further notice. This means that any umpire who hasn’t been reassessed or who was waiting for reassessment would become eligible to umpire at their current level of qualification. Any umpire who had been successfully reassessed would maintain their current level of qualification. Any umpire who had been unsuccessfully reassessed would require an observation.
3. Whilst the reassessment programme is suspended, we would introduce “spot checks” on umpires, to ensure that standards are being maintained. If two written complaints were received about an umpire in one season, the Executive Committee would review those complaints, to determine whether a reassessment would be appropriate.
4. For next season, we plan to introduce a Rules change, requiring clubs to provide 1 active qualified umpire for each 2 teams playing in each of the Essex Met League and the Junior League. This will be a condition of entry into each League.

Please let me know if you have any queries on any of the above, or if you would like any further information about the officiating pathway.

Jane

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