

Hearts may have to wait until mid-October to resume playing

Hearts may have to wait until mid-October before resuming play if the final proposition for league reconstruction fails.

All 42 clubs have been given until 10:00am on Monday to submit their response in an indicative vote to a proposal that would see Hearts and Inverness Caledonian Thistle joining Dundee United in an expanded top flight, while Brora Rangers and Kelty Hearts, winners of the Highland and Lowland Leagues, would join the bottom tier.



Tynecastle Park

The plans would also save Partick Thistle and Stranraer from relegation to the third and fourth tiers respectively, but should there be insufficient support as seems likely then Hearts will be destined for the Championship.

In addition, a vote amongst Championship clubs on playing a reduced 27-game campaign starting behind closed doors in mid-October will take place and early indications suggest that this will pass.

The SPFL have also asked for assurances from Championship clubs that they will be able to fulfil all fixtures in the shortened season.

The Championship season usually lasts 36 games, with each side playing against the other four times but under these plans, that would be revised to three.

The promotion and relegation play-offs would remain in place.

Hearts owner Ann Budge has previously threatened legal action should the club's top-flight status be taken away.