

Conference hockey to start on 17th October

Confirmation of Scottish Hockey's return to competitions on Saturday 17 October 2020 has been announced by Scottish Hockey's Management Committee.

Following consultation with clubs, and updated travel restrictions from the Scottish Government, competition will now take the form of temporary local conferences.

For the remainder of 2020, or until restrictions sufficiently ease to allow a full league restart, teams will play in conferences primarily split by distance. Within these conferences teams will play against teams similar to them based on previous ranking.

The season will run until December, should the appropriate restrictions not ease before then, and no promotion or relegation places will be awarded based on these conferences. Fixtures will be released early next week with teams playing each other either once or twice depending on conference numbers.



The Premiership, like the other leagues, is 'on hold' and may start, subject to financial modelling, board approval and entry numbers. Premiership teams will be placed into the conference structure for the immediate term.

European places will be decided either through a Premiership season, or in an 'end of season' competition involving Premiership clubs, subject to restrictions, in a format agreed by Premiership Management Group.

The management committee can also confirm that matches must be played on a synthetic surface, but not necessarily a water-based surface.

As a standalone structure there will be no impact on previous leagues. This allows clubs the freedom to participate without the threat of losing titles or relegation.

Clubs can enter this new format with a developmental approach and view it in the context of current challenges presented by Covid-19 restrictions.



Scottish Hockey's aim is to provide a structure that allows safe participation and as such will not be as stringent on previous rules and regulations. We ask that clubs enter with the right spirit and acknowledge that a "win at all costs" approach should be replaced with a development mentality.

A review of competitions and government restrictions will take place prior to January. A suitable format will be proposed after then for the remainder of the traditional season timeline.

Scottish Hockey's indoor season will not start until January 2021 at the earliest. This is due to current Scottish Government guidance, challenges in venue availability, as well as the prospect of the outdoor season potentially running until mid-December. Scottish Hockey will engage with clubs on the viability of the indoor season in the coming weeks.



David Sweetman, CEO, Scottish Hockey, said: “This will be Scottish Hockey’s most challenging season. Covid-19 will still be with us and we must all do what we can to deliver a good level of competitive activity as safely as possible, following all guidelines.

“Although there isn’t a perfect solution that’s ideal for all clubs to the COVID challenges, we’ve engaged and worked hard to find the best solution available at this time.

“It’s exciting to finally be in the position to confirm when we intend to start the new conference competition and I thank all the clubs, members, volunteers and staff for their hard work in getting to this point.”